

# Inspection of Madrasatul Imam Muhammad Zakariya

Keswick Street, Bolton, Lancashire BL1 8LX

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Inspection dates: 27 to 29 February 2024

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<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
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The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
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Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Outstanding</b>
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Personal development	<b>Good</b>
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Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
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Sixth-form provision	<b>Good</b>
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Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good
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Does the school meet the independent school standards?	<b>Yes</b>
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## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils consider it a privilege to be part of this caring school community. They describe it as a happy place where they grow in confidence and express their religious identity freely. Pupils in key stage 4, and students in the sixth form, said that their Islamic learning is just as important to them as their academic qualifications. They are successful in both.

Pupils know that the school has high expectations of them. In their conduct and their achievement, pupils respond to these expectations well. By the time they leave school, pupils are ready to take their next steps in education. Most move on to ambitious college courses. Many former pupils visit the school to share their experiences of university study and their professional careers.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They are thoughtful and polite when they debate their opinions about social and moral issues. The school provides them with a rich and diverse education. This broadens their cultural understanding and helps them to develop a deep respect for people from all faiths and backgrounds. They learn to challenge religious and gender stereotypes constructively. This prepares them well to make a valuable contribution to society.

## **What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?**

Pupils study a broad range of academic subjects in tandem with a programme of Islamic education. The proprietor has ensured that these two strands combine to provide a rich and ambitious curriculum. Pupils' religious and secular studies complement each other well. Both strands are delivered by teachers with subject-specific expertise. They draw on this expert knowledge to explain new concepts and ideas clearly.

There are very few pupils who have identified special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The school's approaches to identifying and assessing these needs have been recently developed. Nevertheless, staff are quick to spot pupils in their classes who are struggling with their learning. Staff adapt their delivery of the curriculum to provide support for these pupils, including those who may have SEND.

Most pupils learn and remember the curriculum well. They layer new learning on top of what they already know. However, when this is not the case, the assessment strategies that staff use do not pinpoint the missing knowledge that pupils may have. This sometimes means that pupils' gaps and misconceptions go unnoticed by their teachers. On other occasions, staff move pupils on to new learning without first checking that they have the prior knowledge that they need. This hinders pupils from learning all that they can.

Pupils benefit from frequent opportunities to read. For instance, they read widely as part of the literature curriculum and develop a love of reading for pleasure through their use of the well-stocked library. They confidently read aloud in front of their

peers. That said, if pupils struggle with reading, the shortcomings in the school's assessment strategies also hinder staff in identifying specific gaps in pupils' reading knowledge. This means that pupils who fall behind their peers in reading are less likely to catch up quickly.

The school provides a comprehensive programme of personal development across all key stages. This incorporates a well-considered careers programme which highlights strong female role models. The school also ensures that pupils learn well about keeping themselves safe in the wider world. For instance, they learn about healthy relationships, consent and how to identify harmful misinformation online. Pupils told inspectors of their pride in how their school celebrates differences and helps them to form strong friendships.

Pupils profit from a range of extra-curricular opportunities. These encourage pupils to be creative, adventurous and contribute to their community. For example, they collect donations for a local foodbank, practice calligraphy and visit a nearby outdoor activity centre. Pupils recognise how these opportunities help them to develop their confidence and become leaders.

Students in the sixth form have chosen to stay at the school to complete their religious education. The school has thought carefully about the curriculum that these students follow. They continue with the careers and personal development programmes that began in key stages 3 and 4. They learn important skills for adult life, including financial management, public speaking and personal safety. This ensures that they are well prepared for their future choices.

Staff feel well supported in their work. They told inspectors that they are consulted about decisions that affect them. The proprietor has ensured that staff benefit from suitable training to carry out many aspects of their roles. However, a lack of external governance and support has hindered some other aspects of the school from improving further. The board of trustees provides a clear vision for the academic and religious life of the school. At times, this board lacks the specific expertise needed to provide appropriate challenge to leaders and staff for a few other aspects of the school's work. For example, their work to identify and support pupils' additional needs. Added to this, some of the school's systems do not provide the proprietor with enough oversight of how well some of its policies are being implemented.

At the start of the inspection, there were a small number of the independent school standards ('the standards') which were unmet. The proprietor ensured that these were rectified during the inspection. These did not impact on the welfare, health or safety of pupils. The proprietor has ensured that the school complies with schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010. There is a suitable plan to improve how well pupils with a disability can access every aspect of what the school offers.

The school does not have a website. The proprietor has ensured that information about the work of the school, including policies which meet the current statutory requirements, are made available to parents on request.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The proprietor has ensured that staff are well trained and knowledgeable about their safeguarding responsibilities. This creates a culture of vigilance and care in the school. Staff are not complacent. They report any concerns about pupils' safety to school leaders who seek help and advice from external agencies as appropriate. Pupils at this school are safe. They receive support when it is needed.

However, the proprietor has not ensured that procedures for maintaining records of leaders' and staffs' actions are as rigorous as they could be. At times, this information lacks clarity. It is also sometimes poorly organised. This makes it difficult for the proprietor to have a clear and accurate overview of safeguarding arrangements across the school.

Added to this, the proprietor's systems for ensuring the physical safety of the premises could be improved. While appropriate action is taken to address many potential risks, some others have the potential to go unnoticed.

### What does the school need to do to improve?

#### (Information for the school and proprietor)

- The strategies that teachers use to assess pupils' knowledge, including their reading knowledge, do not identify specific gaps in pupils' learning accurately. This makes it difficult for teachers to revisit any missed or forgotten learning before moving on. The school should ensure that teachers use effective assessment strategies to identify any gaps in pupils' knowledge so that these can be addressed appropriately.
- Some of the proprietor's quality assurance processes lack rigour. They do not provide the proprietor with enough reassurance that the standards are met consistently. The proprietor should further strengthen its processes to ensure that the school's policies and procedures are implemented as well as intended.
- Some information related to safeguarding is not properly recorded. This has the potential for crucial details and patterns linked to pupils' well-being and safety to go unnoticed. The proprietor must ensure that safeguarding records, including information regarding the destinations of pupils who leave the school roll, are clear and comprehensive.

### How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	133285
<b>DfE registration number</b>	350/6018
<b>Local authority</b>	Bolton
<b>Inspection number</b>	10299190
<b>Type of school</b>	Other independent faith school
<b>School category</b>	Independent day school
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 19
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Girls
<b>Gender of pupils in the sixth form</b>	Girls
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	121
<b>Of which, number on roll in the sixth form</b>	19
<b>Number of part-time pupils</b>	None
<b>Proprietor</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair</b>	Dr Mahmood Chandia
<b>Headteacher</b>	Amena Sader
<b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>	£1,600
<b>Telephone number</b>	01204 384434
<b>Website</b>	None
<b>Email address</b>	admin@mimz.org.uk
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	5 to 7 November 2019

## Information about this school

- Madrasatul Imam Muhammad Zakariya is an Islamic faith school for girls. The school provides both a religious and secular education for its pupils.
- The school is operated by a registered charity, number 1091631. The proprietor body of the school is the board of trustees for the charity.
- The school operates from premises located at Keswick Street, Bolton BL1 8LX.
- The school's previous standard inspection took place from 5 to 7 November 2019.
- The school is registered to admit up to 123 pupils aged from 11 to 19. At the time of the inspection, there were no pupils in the school older than 17.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

Inspectors carried out this inspection under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008. The purpose of the inspection is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

The school meets the independent school standards. These are the requirements set out in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with members of the board of trustees, including the chair, and with the headteacher, senior leaders and staff.
- The lead inspector spoke with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors reviewed a wide range of documentation, including that relating to the standards and the curriculum.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors: reviewed the checks that had been carried out on staff to ensure their suitability, took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents expressed through Ofsted Parent View. They also considered the responses to Ofsted's surveys for staff and pupils.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at social times, in lessons and around the school.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in English, mathematics and science. They met leaders and teachers and visited a sample of lessons. Inspectors spoke with pupils about their learning in these subjects. They also considered the curriculum across some other subject areas and looked at examples of pupils' work.
- The lead inspector made a tour of the school premises.

### **Inspection team**

Ben Hill, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Kevin Sexton

Ofsted Inspector



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