

# Al Jamiah Al Islamiyyah

Independent School

Inspection report

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DfES Registration Number	350/6017
Unique Reference Number	130285
Inspection number	301486
Inspection dates	1-2 May 2007
Reporting inspector	Caroline Broomhead HMI

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 162A of the Education Act 2002 (as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005).

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## Purpose and scope of the inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005, in order to advise the Secretary of State for Education and Skills about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

## Information about the school

Al Jamiah Al Islamiyyah is an independent Muslim boarding school which is registered with the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) for 170 boys aged 11 to 21 years. There are currently 158 students on roll, including 43 who are aged between 18 and 30 years. 98 students are boarders. There are no students with statements of special educational need and a small number for whom English is an additional language. The school is a registered charity. It moved to its current premises in June 2006 and has been undergoing significant building work since that time. At the time of the move the school was visited by an inspector from Ofsted and an inspector from the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) and recommendations were made concerning the premises and accommodation. The school has not yet received a full boarding inspection since it moved to the new premises, consequently there is no report available on its compliance with the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools (NMS). This inspection looked briefly at the boarding provision but did not conduct a full inspection against NMS.

## Evaluation of the school

Al Jamiah Al Islamiyyah provides a good standard of education for its students and as a result they make good progress in their learning. A strong sense of purpose and community is evident throughout the school. The boys know that they are expected to work hard and achieve their best and most endeavour to do so. Although the trustees and staff have the care of the students at heart, the standard of provision which they make for their welfare, health and safety is inadequate. A significant number of the independent schools' regulations are not met.

## Quality of education

The curriculum for Islamic Studies is good and for secular studies is satisfactory. Under the clear direction of the headteacher the secular curriculum has improved and is becoming broader. The school does not have a formal written curriculum policy, but there are written plans, based mainly on the National Curriculum, covering all subjects and these support teachers' planning well. The secular curriculum, which is half of the curriculum time, includes English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology (ICT), religious studies and

Urdu. The curriculum does not provide opportunity for students of compulsory school age to study aesthetic and creative areas of learning. Plans are being made to introduce, later this year, calligraphy and Islamic design to address this weakness. Also physical education is currently very limited because of the building work which is taking place. The school has good plans to remedy this in the near future by providing three sports pitches within the grounds and creating an internal multi-gym facility. At Key Stage 4 there are GCSE courses in English, mathematics, sciences, religious studies, Urdu and citizenship. The school has recently introduced the BTEC First Diploma in ICT and this is proving popular with students in Key Stage 4 and post-16. Students over the age of 16 study courses which are run on site by staff from Preston College. These include Business Studies, ICT and Medical Sciences. The headteacher has appointed specialist subject teachers to cover most areas of the curriculum and this has contributed to the improved academic results which have been achieved over the past few years. Specialist facilities have been installed in science and ICT. Resources to support the teaching of secular subjects, for example reference and textbooks, are very limited and restrict students' learning.

The Islamic Studies curriculum is based on the system of Dars-e-Nizami. This programme of theology is intended for students who would like to become Imams and religious scholars. The course is intended to be achieved in six years and it is offered in mixed age classes according to students' levels in Islamic studies. The programme offers broad and balanced provision for the Islamic curriculum and study of the Arabic language. This includes *aqeedah* (beliefs), *seerah* (life of the prophet), Islamic History and Arabic Language with literature, syntax and Etymology. It also contains Qur'anic *tafseer*, (translation and interpretation) *tajweed*, (recitation) *tahfeez* (memorisation), *Hadith* the traditions of the prophet. Islamic theology covers most aspects of social life which also include topics related to personal health education and most social, moral and cultural aspects of the curriculum.

Teaching and assessment are good overall in both Islamic Studies and in the secular curriculum. Mutual respect between staff and students is a strength in this school. This contributes significantly to the school's calm learning environment in which students listen and concentrate well. The students know what is expected of them regarding their behaviour and attitudes to work and homework. Staff have high expectations and most of the students respond positively to this. As a result they achieve good academic results and make good progress in their learning.

The secular teaching is monitored regularly by the headteacher, who has an accurate view of where there is good practice and what needs to be improved. He has correctly identified that resources are very limited, a point which the students agree with. He has made good suggestions to teachers for how they might encourage more student participation in lessons, for example through debate. In some lessons the teaching methods used are not sufficiently varied and the students become restless, particularly in double lessons of one and a half hours' duration. In the weaker lessons teachers do not always ensure that students have understood what has been taught; they move on too quickly leaving students unsure about whether they have

got something right or not. Students' work is assessed regularly through end of topic tests and mid year examinations and their progress is monitored closely. However, the system for grading progress does not show how well students at Key Stage 3 are achieving in relation to National Curriculum levels. Marking is variable and does not make clear for students what they could do to improve further. The information gleaned from assessment is not always used as well as it could be to inform teachers' planning, with the result that in some lessons the same work is set for all students regardless of their ability or prior learning.

The teachers of Islamic Studies are caring, courteous and well qualified in their subject. Almost all of them are British and communicate in English; they understand the students' needs well. There is a regular examination and assessment system in place and results indicate that students make good progress in Islamic Studies. There are good and appropriate resources within Islamic Studies to meet the needs of students and theology teachers.

### Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils

The school's provision for the students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. It meets the school's aims. Most students attend regularly and enjoy school. Their behaviour is good and they help each other. They are assertive and some expressed a wish to be more involved in making decisions about the school. Relationships between staff and students are excellent. The students have great respect for their teachers and show their affiliation to their faith. In Key Stage 3 and through GCSE Religious Studies they learn about the six major religions. They are also given information about British institutions and the British political system in the citizenship programme. There is an assembly programme in which the students learn how to deliver their religious sermons. They then offer their religious services to the local Muslim community during the holy month of Ramadhan. This is extended internationally. For example a group of students recently visited the holy cities of Makkah and Madina in Saudi Arabia. However, opportunities for students to contribute to the wider local community are limited. Students take a range of pathways when they leave the school; most go onto become Imams or go on to further or higher education and are given adequate guidance in making their decisions.

### Welfare, health and safety of the pupils

Provision for the students' welfare, health and safety is inadequate. Most students say that they feel safe and well in the school, although they are less positive about how secure their property is. They are encouraged to eat healthy food, but regret that opportunities for them to take regular exercise are limited due to the on-site building work taking place. The school has appropriate policies in place to tackle occasional incidences of bullying and successfully secures a calm and courteous environment for living and learning. However, day to day practices for ensuring the welfare, health and safety of students are unsatisfactory. The child protection officer

has received appropriate training, but other staff have not yet received training in line with regulations. Arrangements for conducting risk assessments are not sufficiently robust and the school does not ensure that its policies are implemented routinely. For example, inspectors found that chemicals in the science room were not stored in a locked cupboard, electrical equipment in use had not been tested, rubbish was not cleared away regularly and parts of the building were cluttered. There are poor standards of hygiene and cleaning throughout the school. All these pose risks to health and safety. Inspectors raised concerns with the school about whether there is sufficient adult supervision of the boarding area during the night for the number and wide age range of students. They also alerted the school to the need to carry out appropriate checks on adult students aged over 18 years who are accommodated in the same building as those under 16 years.

The school is taking steps to improve physical access to the building and has recently installed a ramp to what will be the main entrance. However, it has not drawn up the required 3 year Disability Access Plan to further improve access.

### Suitability of the proprietor and staff

The school's arrangements for the recruitment of staff involve checking applicants' previous employment history, identity and references prior to appointment. However, they do not check the medical fitness of staff nor the validity of applicants' qualifications as required by the regulations. Every member of staff has undergone appropriate checks with the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB). The school is aware that the four older students who have been given responsibilities as 'tutors' in the boarding accommodation are required to have enhanced CRB checks and the school should ensure that these are carried out without delay. The staff records are in many cases incomplete and the school is aware that it needs to establish a central recruitment record and retain copies of supporting documentation for each member of staff.

### School's premises and accommodation

Since the school moved to its current premises in 2006, it has been undergoing significant building work. This has caused disruption to the students' academic studies and therefore had a negative effect on their results in public examinations. It has also seriously affected the provision for students' welfare, health and safety. New toilets and washing facilities are being built but in the meantime day students are using facilities within the boarding area. There are no toilet facilities for staff or visitors and they also are having to use the facilities in the boarding area, which is unacceptable. The standard of hygiene in the toilet and washing areas is unsatisfactory and poses a health risk. Parts of the building are in a poor state of maintenance and decoration. The classrooms are generally tidy and fairly clean but some are too small for the number of students in each class and hinder their movement around the room and their learning. Other parts of the building are dirty and unhygienic, in particular the corridors and landings and some bedrooms. When

the current building work is completed, expected to be by the end of summer 2007, the school will have more spacious classrooms available as well as plenty of toilet and washing facilities, as well as outdoor recreational areas and sports pitches. At present the outdoor space cannot be used for physical education or recreation but the boys do sometimes use nearby parks as a temporary measure.

## Provision of information for parents, carers and others

The school has established a website which provides a range of information about the school's aims and the curriculum offered, although some of this has yet to be updated. The prospectus, which is the main means of communicating with parents and prospective parents, has yet to be updated to reflect the school's new address. Also, it has a number of omissions in respect of information which must be provided for parents and others and these are detailed at the end of this report. A small percentage of parents completed and returned the questionnaire during the inspection. They were generally positive about the school, although a small number indicated that they were not aware of the procedures for handling complaints. Parents are sent progress reports twice a year giving grades for their sons' efforts and achievements. These are very brief and do not provide sufficient detail about what they have been studying or any other activities they may have been involved in. This may explain why a small number of parents indicated that they are not sufficiently informed about their son's progress at school.

## Procedures for handling complaints

The school has a written complaints policy which indicates that any complaints will be handled informally initially or if necessary can be taken forward more formally in writing with a possible hearing before a committee. However, the policy does not include all the detail required by the regulations, as listed at the end of this report. The school reports that it has not received any formal complaints in the last 12 months.

## Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school meets all of the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2003 as amended January 2005, with the exception of those listed below.

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of the curriculum (standard 1) and must:

- ensure that the curriculum gives students of compulsory school age experience in the following areas of learning: aesthetic and creative and physical (paragraph 1(2)(a)(ii))

- ensure that classroom resources are of an adequate quality, quantity and range and that they are used effectively (paragraph 1(3)(f)).

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety (standard 3) and must:

- prepare and implement written policies to safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are pupils at the school in compliance with DfES guidance *Safeguarding children and safer recruitment in education (2007)* ensuring that all staff receive the required child protection training (paragraph 3(2)(b))
- establish policies and procedures which have regard to the DfES guidance *Health and safety: responsibilities and powers (DfES 0803/2001)* (paragraph 3(4))
- ensure that the school fully meets all the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools (paragraph 3(3)).

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of suitability of proprietor and staff (standard 4) and must:

- prior to the confirmation of the appointment of all staff, ensure that appropriate checks have been carried out to confirm their identity, medical fitness, previous employment history, character references and, where appropriate, qualifications and professional references and take such information into account in determining whether their appointment will be confirmed (paragraph 4(c))
- ensure that CRB checks at a standard level have been carried out on all students over the age of 18 years who are resident in the boarding accommodation (National Minimum Standard 38) (paragraph 4(d)).

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of the premises and accommodation (standard 5) and must:

- provide sufficient toilets and washrooms for students, staff and visitors (paragraph 5(k))
- ensure that all parts of the building are maintained in a tidy, clean and hygienic state (paragraph 5(n))
- ensure that there is a satisfactory standard of maintenance of decoration (paragraph 5(q))
- ensure that flooring is appropriate and in good condition (paragraph 5(s))
- ensure that there are appropriate arrangements for providing outside space for students to play safely (paragraph 5(t))
- Ensure that the school meets National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools (paragraph 5(u)).

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of the provision of information for parents, carers and others (standard 6) and must:



- provide for parents, carers and others:
  - the current address of the school and the name of its headteacher (paragraph 6(2)(a))
  - the name of the proprietor(s) (paragraph 6(2)(b))
  - particulars of the school's policy on and arrangements for admissions, discipline and exclusions (paragraph 6(2)(e))
  - particulars of the educational and welfare provision for students for whom English is an additional language (paragraph 6(2)(f))
- make available and ensure that parents are aware they can request particulars of:
  - policies relating to bullying, child protection, health and safety, the promotion of good behaviour, and sanctions adopted in the event of students misbehaving (paragraph 6(2)(h))
  - academic performance during the preceding school year, including the results of any public examinations (paragraph 6(2)(i))
  - details of the complaints procedure adopted by the school together with details of the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year (paragraph 6(2)(j))
  - the number of staff employed at the school, including temporary staff, and a summary of their qualifications (paragraph 6(2)(k)).

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of procedures for handling complaints (standard 7) and must ensure that:

- the complaints procedure is available on request to parents of students and prospective students (paragraph 7(b))
- the complaints procedure sets out clear timescales for the management of any complaint (paragraph 7(c))
- the hearing panel appointed by the proprietor consists of at least three people who have not been directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint (paragraph 7(f))
- where there is a panel hearing of a complaint there is provision that one person on the panel is independent of the management and running of the school (paragraph 7(g))
- the complaints procedure stipulates that the complainant, proprietors and headteacher, and where relevant, the person complained about, should be given a copy of any findings and recommendations (paragraph 7(i))
- the complaints procedure provides for written records to be kept of all complaints indicating whether they were resolved at the preliminary stage, or whether they proceeded to a panel hearing (paragraph 7(j))
- the complaints procedure provides that all correspondence, statements and records of complaints are to be kept confidential (paragraph 7(k))
- Ensure that the complaints procedure meets the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools (paragraph 7(l)).

In order to comply with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 2002 the school should devise a three-year accessibility plan.

## School details

Name of school	Al Jamiah Al Islamiyyah
DfES number	350/6017
Unique reference number	130285
Type of school	Muslim Boarding School
Status	Independent
Date school opened	1995
Age range of pupils	11 - 30
Gender of pupils	Boys
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Total: 158
Number of boarders	Total: 98
Annual fees (day pupils)	£850
Annual fees (boarders)	£1750
Address of school	Willows Lane Deane Bolton Lancashire BL3 4HF
Telephone number	01204 665779
Fax number	01204 62622
Email address	admin@al-jamiah-al-islamiyyah.co.uk
Headteacher	Dr S Haneef
Proprietor	Al-Jamiah Al-Islamiyyah Trust
Reporting inspector	Caroline Broomhead HMI
Dates of inspection	1-2 May 2007