

# Woodstock Girls' School

Independent School

Inspection report

DCSF Registration Number	330/6094
Unique Reference Number	131164
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Inspection dates	28-29 February 2008
Reporting inspector	Cecile Corfield

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 Children, Schools and Families about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

## Information about the school

Woodstock Girls' School is an independent day school for Muslim girls aged 11 years to 16 years. The school is situated in Moseley, Birmingham and opened in 1996. There are 119 students on roll. No student has a statement of special educational need. The school aims to '*provide an education for Muslim girls, which will enable them to achieve their goals and at the same time to practice their religion and beliefs without interfering with the everyday school routine*'. This is the school's first published report.

## Evaluation of the school

The school's quality of education is inadequate and fails its students. The curriculum, teaching and assessment of students' progress are inadequate and result in students not making the progress of which they are capable over time. The majority of the students do not enjoy their time at school and they have many concerns which are supported by their parents. Provision for students' personal development and care is inadequate. The school does not comply with a number of regulations for independent schools.

### Quality of education

The curriculum is inadequate owing to serious deficiencies in the planning of subjects and the general failure to meet students' needs, interests and aspirations adequately. The curriculum policy does not include any guidance for teachers on planning. There are no schemes of work for English in Years 9 to 11. The school has not suitably adapted the commercial schemes of work for art which have been selected for use in Key Stage 3. Although there is a programme of personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE), it is not effectively planned. Consequently, the planning is inadequate in English, art and PSHCE. In other subjects, planning follows the National Curriculum guidance and it is generally satisfactory. The needs of students who have learning difficulties are not identified and are not met through appropriate, individualised planning. As a result they do not make as much progress as they could. The curriculum is broad and balanced in Key Stage 3 and slightly narrower in Key Stage 4, although students have a reasonable range of subjects to study for GCSE. Provision for Urdu and religious studies is good. Provision for English, mathematics, and science is inadequate, resulting in unsatisfactory progress.

The range and quantity of resources, and the availability of specialist teachers, are inadequate to support some areas of the curriculum, for example in physical education (PE) and art, which results in pupils' inadequate progress. Students have insufficient textbooks in English and no textbooks in PSHCE, although the school has purchased some textbooks for several other subjects recently. Satisfactory use is made of the available resources. Only Year 11 students have regular access to the Internet for research outside the lessons in information and communication technology. The curriculum is not enriched by any extra-curricular activities that could develop students' creative thinking and physical skills further. However, a mathematics booster class was held after school for Years 10 and 11 from November 2007 to January 2008.

The quality of teaching and assessment is inadequate. Although some aspects of teaching are satisfactory, there are serious weaknesses in the planning of lessons and in the assessment of students' work that have a negative impact on students' learning. In most lessons, little heed is paid to the range of students' abilities and lessons are taught to the class as a whole. Some lessons are not planned and others do not have clear learning objectives, resulting in a lack of focus. Some teachers do not know students' prior attainments and others have insufficient understanding of this information. Furthermore, as the needs of students who have learning difficulties are not diagnosed properly, they are not met. Consequently, teachers plan work that matches students' needs and aptitudes approximately rather than closely. Most teachers have good subject knowledge. Some teachers circulate the room checking on pupils' understanding but some do not. Similarly, some teachers use effective questioning, others do not give enough time for students to think their answers through or they answer the question themselves. Most lessons have a satisfactory pace and teachers manage the students' behaviour effectively. Occasionally, teachers do not manage their time wisely when supporting individual students, which results in some students waiting a long time for help.

There is no framework in place to assess students' learning thoroughly and to monitor their progress over time to ensure that they achieve as much as they can. Although students are entered in the Key Stage 3 national tests, there is no baseline assessment with which to compare these results as a measure of progress. There is no system in use to identify students who underachieve in particular subjects. Teachers undertake end-of-unit and end-of-year tests, but there is no evidence that this information is used when they plan lessons. Marking is generally very brief and does not show students how to improve, although students receive some constructive verbal feedback in lessons.

As a direct result of the inadequate curriculum, teaching and assessment, students make inadequate progress over time, in relation to their starting points. However, students achieve very well in Urdu and religious studies, which demonstrates that they are capable of success.

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

Provision for students' personal development is inadequate, as reflected in the students' dissatisfaction and poor attendance. Whilst their behaviour can be good in lessons, it is generally inadequate, particularly at break times. Most of the oldest students are disaffected and demoralised and their attendance is unsatisfactory, particularly in Years 10 and 11 in the current term. They feel that they do not achieve as well as they could and say that the redeeming feature of the school is having teachers they can turn to and who will support them when they need it. Their capacity for future success is not developed satisfactorily, as their acquisition of life skills is weak and there is no careers education in place. The school says that parents will not allow the students to have work experience, but this is not what students say. Preparation for the students' future economic well-being is limited to workplace role-play.

Students' scope for contributing positively to school life is insufficient. Assemblies are too short to give worthwhile opportunities for making presentations or discussing important issues. A suggestion box is appreciated by students and governors pay attention to it. Students' major request for a canteen is to be provided during this school year. The school has strong ties with the local mosque, which helps the students to be positive members of the community. There is limited provision for students to learn about cultures other than their own and the students recognise that they know little about world faiths. However, the school has plans for next term which include inviting parents and students to meet with people from different religious backgrounds who will talk about differences and similarities between faiths. Provision for PSHE is unsatisfactory overall. The amount of work that is available for scrutiny in students' exercise books does not reflect regular teaching. The citizenship programme gives students a satisfactory insight into British institutions and into issues of collective responsibility, but it is not taught regularly enough.

## Welfare, health and safety of the students

The provision for the students' welfare, health and safety is inadequate. Although the headteacher is designated as the child protection officer, she has not had the training required by the regulations. Some teachers had training in 2006 from the local authority, but new members of staff have not yet had appropriate training. Although there is a first aid policy, it is not implemented effectively as there is no qualified first-aider on the staff. All the other required policies are in place and fire safety procedures are thorough. Consequently, most students feel safe. However, the behaviour policy is not implemented satisfactorily, resulting in students' inadequate behaviour. The attendance registers indicate the use of masking fluid. In order to meet requirements, all corrections should be clearly visible. Attendance levels are too low with 89% attendance in the previous school year. There were 11% authorised absences, which is a high proportion. The school promotes healthy eating through the curriculum and by banning unhealthy snacks. However, students are not

encouraged to drink water throughout the day. The provision for PE is inadequate, students do not have sufficient opportunities for physical exercise.

The school fulfils its obligations under the Disability Discrimination Act 2002.

### Suitability of the proprietor and staff

The required checks for the suitability of the staff and the governors are not complete. Most checks have been logged. The remaining few have been applied for but not yet received from the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB). As a result, the school's single central record does not meet regulations. Also, it does not detail the number of each CRB check.

### School's premises and accommodation

The premises and accommodation are satisfactory. Classroom size is appropriate for each year group. The maintenance and decoration of the building is in good order. The science laboratory is small but the school sensibly arranges for smaller groups to have practical lessons. The arrangements for students who are ill are unsatisfactory. At present, the designated space is in the staffroom, which is not suitable, and there is no washbasin. Furthermore, the toilet facilities are too far away from the room. The playground is covered in loose gravel which is a health and safety hazard. There is no equipment, such as seating and tables to make the outdoor environment more conducive to quieter activities.

### Provision of information for parents, carers and others

The provision of information for parents is satisfactory. Parents have two appropriate reports about their children's progress each year and two meetings with teachers. Fathers have a separate meeting to discuss the school and, as a result of one meeting, the toilet provision has been improved. In response to the pre-inspection questionnaire, many parents expressed disquiet with several issues. The majority focussed on the lack of academic progress their children make and unacceptable behaviour, with which the inspectors agree.

### Procedures for handling complaints

The complaints procedure meets requirements.

### 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:

- establish a written curriculum policy supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work, which are implemented effectively (paragraph 1(2))
- provide personal, social, health and citizenship education which reflects the school's aims and ethos (paragraph 1(2)(f))
- provide appropriate careers guidance for secondary students (paragraph 1(2)(g))
- ensure that the curriculum provides for all students to learn and make progress (paragraph 1(2)(i))
- adequately prepare students for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life (paragraph 1(2)(j))
- ensure the teaching enables pupils to acquire new knowledge, and make progress according to their ability so that they increase their understanding and develop their skills in the subjects taught (paragraph 1(3)(a))
- encourage pupils to apply intellectual, physical or creative efforts and to show interest in their work and to think and learn for themselves (paragraph 1(3)(b))
- ensure that lessons are well-planned, that effective teaching methods and suitable activities are used, and that class time is managed wisely (paragraph 1(3)(c))
- ensure that teachers show a good understanding of the aptitudes, needs and prior attainments of the students and that these are taken into account in the planning of lessons (paragraph 1(3)(d))
- provide resources of an adequate quality, quantity and range and use them effectively in English, ICT, art, PSHCE and PE (paragraph 1(3)(f))
- put in place a framework to assess students' work regularly and thoroughly and utilise the information to plan teaching so that students can make progress (paragraph 1(3)(g)).

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (standard 2) and must:

- enable pupils to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence (paragraph 2(a))

- encourage pupils to accept responsibility for their behaviour, show initiative and understand how they can contribute to community life (paragraph 2(c))
- provide pupils with a broad general knowledge of public institutions and services in England (paragraph 2(d))
- assist the students to acquire an appreciation of and respect for their own and other cultures, in a way that promotes harmony between different cultural traditions (paragraph 2(e)).

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

- prepare and implement written policies to safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are students at the school in compliance with DCSF guidance *Safeguarding children and safer recruitment in education (2007)* (paragraph 3(2)(b))
- implement its written policy to promote good behaviour amongst students (paragraph 3(2)(d))
- provide a satisfactory written policy for first aid and implement it effectively (paragraph 3(6))
- maintain the attendance registers in accordance with the Education (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (paragraph 3(9)).

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

- ensure that an enhanced criminal record check has been made by the proprietor in respect of any member of staff appointed to a position at the school and that the enhanced criminal record certificate which is the subject of the application was obtained before or as soon as was practicable after his/her appointment (paragraph 4(2)(b))
- ensure that the chairperson has checked the other members of the proprietorial body to confirm their identity, right to work in the UK, enhanced CRB check, or where appropriate confirmation that he/she does not contravene section 142 of the 2002 Act (paragraph 4B(4) and(5))
- in relation to each member of a body of persons named as the proprietor in post on or after 1 August 2007, ensure that the register shows whether a



check was made of: his/her identity; right to work in the United Kingdom; and whether an enhanced CRB check was carried out and certificate obtained, or where appropriate, confirmation that he/she is not barred from working in school under section 142 of the Education Act 2002. Ensure that the register also shows the date on which any check was completed or certificate obtained (paragraph 4C(6) and (7)).

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

- improve the facilities for students who are ill, in accordance with the Education (School Premises) Regulations 1999 (paragraph 5(l))
- ensure that there are appropriate arrangements for providing outside space for students to play safely (paragraph 5(t)).

## School details

Name of school	Woodstock Girls' School
DCSF number	330/6094
Unique reference number	131164
Type of school	Muslim day school
Status	Independent
Date school opened	September 1996
Age range of students	11-16 years
Gender of students	Girls
Number on roll (full-time students)	119
Annual fees (day students)	£850
Address of school	11-15 Woodstock Road Moseley Birmingham West Midlands B13 9BB
Telephone number	0121 449 6690
Email address	woodstockgirlsschool@hotmail.co.uk
Headteacher	Mrs T Mahmood
Proprietor	Governing body
Reporting inspector	Cecile Corfield
Dates of inspection	28-29 February 2008