

Darul Uloom Leicester

Independent School

Inspection Report

DCSF Registration Number	856/6004
Unique Reference Number	120345
URN for Social Care	SC006329
Inspection number	334315
Inspection dates	12–13 May 2009
Reporting inspector	Mohammad Ismail
Social care inspector	Christy Wannop

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). The inspection of boarding was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000.

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE
T 08456 404040

www.ofsted.gov.uk



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.

The inspection of boarding provision was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 having regard to the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools in order to assure children and young people, parents, the public, local authorities and government of the quality and standard of the service provided.

This was a light touch educational inspection (LTI) which focused principally on the quality of education provided by the school; its provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development; the arrangements for safeguarding pupils and the improvements the school has made since its last inspection.

Information about the school

Darul Uloom is an independent Islamic educational institute for boys aged 11 to 23 years. Established in 1992 and located in the Belgrave area of Leicester, it offers secondary and further education as well as advanced Islamic education. This prepares students to become imams or Islamic theologians. There are 106 students on roll, 40 of whom are boarders. It aims 'to nurture self-respect and confidence and to raise the self-esteem of its students as Muslims, enabling them to integrate successfully in the multicultural society without compromising their Islamic beliefs and values'. The school offers a complete course of Islamic theology and secular education at Key Stages 3 and 4. Present accommodation is only sufficient for the number on roll. The trust has acquired the next door building, which is in the process of refurbishment. The academic and boarding aspects of the school were inspected simultaneously. The school had its last section 162A inspection in March 2006.

Evaluation of the school

Darul Uloom Leicester is a good school. Its curriculum for Islamic studies and secular education is good. Teaching is good overall and all teachers are well qualified. The school's welfare, health and safety and boarding provision are satisfactory. The school has improved and meets all but one of the educational regulations.

Quality of education

The school's curriculum is good. It is based on a policy which sets out clear objectives for learning. For its Islamic studies curriculum, the school follows *ders-e-nezami*, which is of good quality.

This programme involves a six-year course which includes Qur'anic studies, the study of hadith (accounts of what the Prophet did, said or approved), and other aspects of Islamic theology. Arabic and Urdu are included as modern foreign languages within the secular curriculum.

The secular curriculum is good. There is a detailed curriculum policy, supported by well prepared schemes of work for each subject and long-term and medium-term plans for all subjects. Most National Curriculum subjects are provided, although music is not offered; instead students read *nasheed* (Islamic songs) and recite the Qur'an. Personal, health and social education (PSHE) is taught through citizenship and Islamic studies. A regular careers advice programme starts in Year 9 and work experience is arranged for students in Year 10. Extra-curricular activities, for all students and particularly boarders, include a good variety of sports, and visits to locations at home and abroad. The students organise a weekly programme in which they deliver speeches on selected topics. They also have the opportunity to lead prayers. Regular assemblies are offered under a well planned programme of topics. The school's annual members' day provides an opportunity for the students to demonstrate their talents and skills.

The quality of teaching and assessment is good. As a result students make good progress and attain high standards throughout the school. Students say that they learn a lot in school and enjoy learning, and this is reflected in parents' very positive views. Lesson planning is thorough and lessons are well prepared. In the best lessons, sharply focused questioning and opportunities for student collaboration lend interest. In the majority of lessons, students display excellent attitudes to learning because teaching engages and challenges them. In English and information and communication technology (ICT) lessons, students make excellent progress because the teaching is outstanding, and they have good opportunities to work independently on tasks that are well-matched to their abilities. In the small number of satisfactory lessons, teachers' explanations are not clear enough and individual students' needs are not met sufficiently. In most lessons, the purpose of learning is clear so that students know what they have to achieve.

The school keeps accurate records of students' progress throughout the school in both areas of education. Formal assessment is conducted twice yearly. School examinations and end of unit tests are followed by immediate actions to support students finding difficulty in their learning. Marking is variable. In some subjects, it is very effective because teachers tell students what they have achieved and how to move forward in their learning. In others there is not enough guidance. A whole-school system ensures all students understand the meaning of the grades on their work. Homework is set regularly to reinforce effectively what is learned in lessons.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils

Provision for students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and is enhanced by the boarding provision. Students behave well and help each other. Inspectors found students to be assertive, expressive and respectful. Students have

great respect for their teachers and express their affiliation to their school and faith. They learn about other cultures and about British institutions in their citizenship, religious education, English, Islamic studies and history lessons. The students are informed about tolerance in society and respect for others. However, the school does not have strong links with the wider community and local institutions. Attendance is good. Regular daily prayers are held and students have the opportunity to conduct and lead these sessions in turn. This practice reflects well on their spiritual development.

Safeguarding pupils' welfare, health and safety

The school's provision for the welfare, health and safety of its students is satisfactory. Safeguarding arrangements meet requirements. The vast majority of students feel safe and well cared for at the school. There are two child protection officers who are known to the school community; students know who to contact in case they need help. The child protection officers and all members of staff are appropriately trained. A trustee is nominated to be part of any investigation. Regular fire drills are conducted and a fire risk assessment has been carried out, but concerns have been expressed by the local fire officer. The school's fire officer and staff are not fully trained in fire safety. The school meets the requirements of Disability Discrimination Act (2002).

Effectiveness of the boarding provision

The quality of boarding is satisfactory. Improvements have been made since the last inspection of boarding in May 2008. The school has taken action in relation to the majority of the 11 previous recommendations about boarders' welfare.

There are satisfactory arrangements in respect of accidents, first aid and medication to ensure boarders' health and well being. There is an appropriate policy on countering major risks to health, including substance abuse. Catering for boarders is satisfactory with adequate quality and choice, and provision for special dietary, medical and religious needs.

The school has generally made satisfactory progress in helping boarders to stay safe and secure at the school but further improvements are necessary. The school does not comply with local fire service requirements and the school is taking action to remedy this. However, the general management of health and safety is improved. Boarders practise emergency fire drills and staff regularly carry out safety checks on equipment. Staff are trained in health and safety and are alert to day-to-day safety hazards. The school continues to develop a system of risk management, but this does not cover all areas of the school grounds or all the boarders' activities.

Boarders are cared for by staff who are carefully selected and vetted. Adult boarders who look after the younger boarders are not checked in this way but they work under the direct supervision of staff members. Child protection procedures, systems and training are now well established. Bullying is not tolerated and boarders benefit from an atmosphere where aggression is unacceptable.

One boarder commented; 'No bullying, no one to embarrass you, this is a great school.' The use of discipline is fair and boarders say they feel safe and are confident that staff want the best for them. They feel that staff respect their privacy, commenting that; 'They respect that we need time on our own or as groups of young people and they give us that.'

Communication between boarding and education staff is good, with effective links on matters such as child welfare, health, home and school contact, and support. An 'Independent Listener' visits regularly to provide an additional reference point for children. Boarders receive good personal support from staff and commented on the trust they had for tutors and the principal. The school has good communication with parents; boarders can phone home and return for regular visits, and parents are welcomed at the school.

Staff encourage boarders to get the most out of life and enjoy sports in their free time. However, some boarders asked for more green space, equipment and more organised activities. Staff encourage students to make a positive contribution and develop self-confidence especially through the *Anjuman* programme, a good programme of student debates on issues faced by youth in modern Britain. Whilst boarders are encouraged to contribute their ideas and suggestions about boarding to staff, some are not confident that the school always listens or acts on their views.

All adults support boarders to achieve their full potential. They encourage skills for adulthood through the secular and religious curriculum, offer careers advice and opportunities for responsibility in boarding. One boarder commented, 'When you grow up, you'll see the benefits and this will help you a lot.'

Boarding accommodation is satisfactory and bathing and toilet facilities are clean and sufficient. Boarders like their bedrooms and say their possessions and money are safe. Whilst there is no common living area for boarders, the school has identified space to provide a common room and a social focus for boarders.

Leadership and management of boarding is improving. Parents, boarders and staff have good information about the school's boarding principles and practice. The principal, headteacher and trustees ensure that the quality of the environment and the application of the school's principles of boarding are of an equally good standard throughout. New boarders say they get good support to settle in and benefit from the fraternal ethos within the school. The promotion of equality and diversity is satisfactory and boarders say there is no discrimination and they feel equal and included. The school promotes tolerance, and children learn about alternative beliefs, other cultures and religions. They have limited opportunities for community integration through sports for older students and other local activities.

Staff are largely long-standing, committed and dedicated; policies and procedural guidance support care practice. A staff training scheme is beginning to ensure that staff have appropriate skills, but does not yet include staff induction, supervision or appraisal.

Adult students who take additional responsibilities are briefed on their roles. The school's management team has improved the formal written monitoring of risk assessments, major punishments, complaints and accident records to show how they take action to reduce risks and make improvements. An accountable and effective system is emerging for improving the welfare of children in boarding.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school meets all but one of the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2003 as amended January 2005.

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

- maintain a satisfactory level of fire safety, identified by its risk assessment under the Fire Precautions (Workplace) Regulations 1997, the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 and by any report from the Fire Authority (paragraph 3(5)).

In order to meet the National Minimum Standards (NMS) for boarding Schools and associated regulations the school must:

- take action to fully meet the recommendations of the fire service; notably to review and develop the fire risk assessments and ensure staff training in relation to fire safety (NMS 26.5)
- put in place an effective system of risk assessment, with written records, to identify all the risks from buildings, activities and grounds (NMS 47.9)
- ensure all adults, including volunteers working as 'gap' students with boarders, are included in the school's recruitment process, and are CRB checked (NMS 38.4).

What the school could do to improve further

While not required by the regulations, the school might wish to consider the following points for development.

- Enhance links with the wider community and local institutions.
- Provide more extra-curricular activities linked with its curriculum subjects such as history and art, and provide more leisure-time reading books in the library.
- Continue the good practice of staff having responsibility for their students' progress monitoring records to provide consistent guidance.

Inspection Judgement Recording Form

outstanding	good	Satisfactory	inadequate
-------------	------	--------------	------------

The quality of education

Overall quality of education		√		
How well the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of pupils		√		
How effective teaching and assessment are in meeting the full range of pupils' needs		√		
How well pupils make progress in their learning		√		

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Quality of provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development		√		
The behaviour of pupils		√		

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The overall welfare, health and safety of pupils			√	
--	--	--	---	--

The quality of boarding provision

Evaluation of boarding provision			√	
----------------------------------	--	--	---	--

School details

Name of school	Darul Uloom Leicester		
DCSF number	856/6004		
Unique reference number	120345		
Type of school	Muslim boarding		
Status	Independent		
Date school opened	1992		
Age range of pupils	11–23		
Gender of pupils	Boys		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 106	Girls: 0	Total: 106
Number of boarders	Boys: 40	Girls: 0	Total: 40
Annual fees (day pupils)	£1560		
Annual fees (boarders)	£2280		
Address of school	119 Loughborough Road Leicester Leicestershire LE4 5LN		
Telephone number	0116 266 8922		
Fax number	0116 299 2458		
Email address	Darululoomleicester@btconnect.com		
Headteacher	Mr Musa		
Proprietor	Trustee Board (Charity No: 1041254)		
Reporting inspector	Mohammad Ismail		
Dates of inspection	12–13 May 2009		