

Jamiatul-Ilm Wal-Huda UK School

30 Moss Street, Blackburn, Lancashire BB1 5JT

Inspection dates

7–9 February 2017

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Outstanding
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Outstanding
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Outstanding
Sixth form provision	Outstanding

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- Leaders ensure that the school is an extremely positive environment for learning. Pupils, staff and governors are highly committed to the school. Those involved in the school recognise its success, with confidence and humility.
- The principal is a clear figurehead within the closely knit senior leadership team. Individual roles and responsibilities are clear; senior leaders are strongly supportive of each other.
- Leaders and other staff are dedicated in their determination to provide the best possible education for pupils. Their expectations of themselves and pupils are very high.
- The school has a welcoming and open culture. Leaders seek out opportunities to deepen pupils' understanding of, and contribution to, the wider community. The development of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness is a very strong feature of the school.
- Teaching and learning are highly effective. No time for learning is wasted.
- Pupils make rapid progress in their Islamic studies and in their secular education. This leads to very high levels of attainment.
- Pupils' politeness and courtesy are impeccable. Pupils are highly aware of others and their needs. They typically behave very well indeed without the need for guidance from staff. Pupils report that there is no bullying.
- Pupils work very hard and enjoy their learning. Their attendance is very high.
- Staff and senior students are excellent role models for pupils.
- Parents are very positive about the quality of education the school offers.
- Sixth-form provision is highly effective.
- Governance has improved since the most recent education inspection. Governors understand the school very well. This enables them to provide strong support and effective challenge to leaders. The work of trustees strengthens accountability.
- A few documents lack precision in reflecting and recording leaders' work.
- Leaders have ensured that the independent school standards are met. They are systematic in checking that this is the case.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that leaders check that policies and other documents are as simple and precise as possible to support further school improvement.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- The principal works closely with other senior leaders to give a firm, clear direction to the work of the school. This strong leadership ensures high levels of effectiveness and success. Leaders' work is built on strong principles arising from the school's Islamic faith ethos. Leaders show determination to be true to these principles in providing the best possible education for pupils.
- Pupils and adults frequently compare the school to a family unit. Pupils care for each other and they value one another's successes. The school's atmosphere and ethos give pupils confidence which allows them to excel. The academic outcomes pupils achieve are very high and they also develop strongly positive wider attributes.
- The school is very well organised and runs efficiently. The pattern of learning through the long school day is well understood by pupils and progresses with a minimum of time being wasted.
- Leaders have an excellent understanding of what the school does well and how it can improve further. Leaders use a number of different approaches to check how well the school is performing. These include regular monitoring of pupils' achievement, an annual audit of the opportunities provided to build pupils spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding and an annual principal's report. This report gives an honest and accurate summary of the school's work. The frequent senior leadership team meetings enable leaders to have a very good shared awareness of the effectiveness of the school. This allows them to provide continuing challenge and support to teachers. The school improvement plan provides a helpful summary of intended actions to improve the school. However, it lacks sharpness in setting out how the impact of these actions will be judged.
- The senior leadership team has been extended since the previous inspection. Leaders' roles are clear. Some leaders have additional responsibilities outside the school. This allows them to embed the work of the school into the wider community.
- Leaders have ensured that there is a rigorous system to manage teachers' performance. Leaders regularly observe classroom practice and scrutinise other aspects of teachers' work so that they can provide support and identify any training needs. This system is not closely linked to teachers' pay but is based upon the shared commitment to do the best for pupils.
- The curriculum includes different aspects of Islamic studies and a balanced programme of secular education. Where appropriate, teachers link the learning in these two main aspects. The school day is longer than in many other schools. This allows leaders to ensure that the time allowed for learning in different subjects is sufficient. Leaders ensure that curriculum materials for personal, social and health education help pupils to develop the skills and knowledge which are relevant for life in modern Britain while being consistent with the school's ethos.
- Leaders and teachers ensure that the strong development of pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural awareness is a thread through all aspects of their study. Staff and pupils seek ways to contribute to the wider community. Examples include fundraising in response to the floods in the north of England in early 2016, contributing to Salvation Army work to

support the homeless and litter-picking in partnership with a local school serving a mainly White British community. Pupils have very recently completed a joint project with pupils from a school in a rural part of Cumbria. Such work gives pupils a broad understanding of the range of people and contexts in modern Britain. Aspects such as democracy and the rule of law are taught formally and, in addition, emphasised in the daily life of the school.

- Pupils, parents and staff express very positive views about the school. They are proud to be associated with it.
- Leaders are rigorous in their checks that the school meets the independent school standards.

Governance

- Governance has improved since the previous inspection with the introduction of a formal governing body. Its members have a wide range of skills and experience which allow them to understand the breadth of the school's work. They are very well informed and use the information they have to ask very challenging questions of leaders. They contribute well to setting the school's clear strategic direction.
- The proprietorial body of trustees expects the governors to provide informed challenge and support to leaders. The trustees continue to provide an additional tier of scrutiny and to check that the school continues to meet its fundamental aims.
- Governors and trustees manage the school's finances effectively. The resources provided are sufficient. Where additional funds are needed, for example to support curriculum development, these are made available. The school has recently embarked on a project to build a girls' school adjacent to this school. Leaders are confident that this project will not have a negative impact on the school.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders and other members of staff are highly aware of their responsibility to make sure that pupils are properly safeguarded. Leaders provide a regular programme of training and have close contact with the local authority and police about aspects of safeguarding. A senior leader has provided specialist safeguarding advice to the local safeguarding children board.
- The school's documentation about safeguarding is up to date and there are rigorous systems to make sure that staff stay abreast of current guidance, for example by reading the most recent statutory guidance about safeguarding. Leaders have provided translated copies of this for any members of staff who lack confidence in reading English. The safeguarding policy is readily available on the school's website.
- Any adult-aged students studying in the school's wider provision who have regular contact with younger pupils are required to undertake safeguarding checks. Visitors are closely checked and their details are recorded. Separate documents are used for this in the morning and afternoon. This makes it harder for leaders to complete overall checks.
- Leaders ensure that pupils are very well equipped to understand the risks of extremism and radicalisation. Older pupils are eloquent in explaining why violence towards others

has no place in Islam. Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe when they are using computers, mobile phones and other communication devices. The school's computer system is filtered to reduce the risk of pupils accessing inappropriate material online.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Outstanding

- Teaching in both Islamic studies and the secular curriculum interests pupils and challenges them to try hard and do well. Pupils learn very effectively and so make rapid progress. This, in turn, leads to their high attainment.
- Teachers' expectations of learning and behaviour are very high. Much of the learning in Islamic studies relies on pupils being trusted to work hard by themselves. Even the youngest pupils rise to this challenge. Inspectors saw calm and dedicated learning taking place in the Islamic studies classes.
- Continuing assessment and feedback are built in to Islamic studies lessons. This means that teachers can match pupils' work to their recent progress. Regular formal testing roughly every term allows pupils and their teachers to judge longer-term progress. Leaders and teachers use the results of formal tests to decide whether pupils are ready to move on to the next class. This approach means that the most able receive continuing challenge to do as well as possible.
- The high standards expected of pupils are also seen in secular learning. Teachers ensure that pupils concentrate by asking well-focused questions as arguments are developed. Teachers ensure that class discussions and the questions they set link to examination board requirements. This helps pupils to be well prepared for their eventual GCSE examinations.
- Much of the learning is developed orally, which contributes to the strong development of pupils' speaking and listening skills. Inspectors saw how this approach was used effectively to give feedback to pupils during their lessons and so help them correct any mistakes and refine their thinking. Pupils know that they are expected to support each other's learning and do this willingly and respectfully towards each other.
- If teachers identify that pupils are falling behind the high targets set in subjects, including English and mathematics, they offer additional teaching closely targeted to pupils' learning needs.
- Teachers' subject knowledge in both Islamic studies and other subjects is strong. Teachers use this, together with their close awareness of pupils' learning needs, to plan activities which challenge different pupils.
- The quality of teaching is consistent across the school and pupils know what is expected of them. Teachers reflect regularly on the impact of their work. This supports strong learning. Since the previous inspection, a number of teachers of secular subjects have extended their work to Islamic subjects. This gives easier access to training for the Islamic studies teachers and also further ensures consistency in effective classroom practice.
- Teachers take opportunities to use subject lessons to provide opportunities for broader learning. For example, an inspector saw ideas about democracy being developed as part of pupils preparing persuasive writing in English. In addition, teachers skilfully weave appropriate references to Islamic values into secular learning when these are relevant.

- Some teachers complete additional work as markers for the national examination boards. This gives them secure knowledge of the standards they are assessing. Teachers also check pupils' work against that in other schools to make sure that their assessment is accurate. The assessment policy does not fully reflect the school's current systems.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- The school's culture has looking after others at its core. A pupil summed this up by saying, in a completely positive way, 'We are there for each other and stand up for each other.' Pupils are taught how to moderate their behaviour and show maturity in their relationships with each other.
- Teachers model the high standards expected in their respectful approach towards pupils. Inspectors did not hear raised voices from staff or pupils during the inspection.
- Older pupils are very positive role models for younger pupils. Opportunities for this are built into the leadership of extra-curricular activities by older pupils.
- The pupils who spoke to inspectors said very clearly that there is no bullying. They were confident that, should incidents of any kind arise, these would be quickly resolved by staff. The school's records indicate that instances of poor behaviour, including bullying, are extremely rare.
- Pupils are provided with independent guidance about possible careers. Where the school can provide suitable further study for a pupil at age 16, this is offered. However, if a more suitable course is available elsewhere, transition to such other provision is carefully supported.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils' manners are impeccable. They are respectful while remaining friendly towards visitors and members of staff.
- Pupils value their education highly. Their conduct in lessons is very good indeed. Pupils demonstrate the skills they need to make collaborative learning very successful but they also have the ability to work alone. Inspectors saw no examples of disruptive behaviour in lessons. In fact, pupils go out of their way to try to enhance each other's learning.
- Teachers issue a small number of detentions. These are mainly for not completing homework. The school's open culture is demonstrated by the appeals system, which may be used by any pupil who feels that a detention is unfair. Fixed-term exclusions from school are extremely rare indeed.
- The school is calm and orderly. Pupils move between activities quickly and with minimal instruction from staff. This means that very little learning time is wasted.
- Pupils' attendance is very high.

Outcomes for pupils

Outstanding

- Pupils make rapid progress throughout the school. This leads to very high attainment in Islamic and secular studies.
- Some pupils enter the school having not completed national curriculum tests in their previous schools. This makes it harder for leaders to establish pupils' academic starting points. In response, leaders use standard tests to assess pupils as they enter the school. These indicate that pupils' overall starting points are typically around the national average.
- In recent years, very nearly all pupils in Year 11 have achieved five or more GCSE passes at grade C or above, including in English and mathematics. In addition, the proportion of pupils gaining A* and A grades in different subjects has been high. This represents attainment which is well above average and indicates the very rapid progress which pupils make, including the most able. Over time, pupils' high attainment has increased further.
- As the school is independent, leaders do not have detailed information about whether pupils would have been considered disadvantaged elsewhere. However, leaders know that some pupils' homes lie in areas of significant deprivation. Inspectors saw no differences between the strong achievements of pupils from different backgrounds.
- Leaders confirm that pupils make very rapid progress in their Islamic education.
- Inspection evidence including observation in lessons and scrutiny of pupils' work confirms that current pupils learn very well across different subjects. This picture is further supported by the detailed information collected on the school's own system for tracking pupils' achievement. Pupils currently in Year 11 completed the first part of their science GCSE in 2016. Their achievement in these examinations continued the pattern of strength seen from previous year groups.
- Pupils' high attainment together with the strong development of their wider skills means that they are very well prepared for their future careers, whether these build further on their Islamic or secular education.

Sixth form provision

Outstanding

- The very positive characteristics of education seen in the rest of the school are also evident in the sixth form. Leaders are uncompromising in their ambition for learners and ensure that the provision reflects the school's ethos.
- Teaching and learning is highly effective and allows learners to very successfully build on their previous Islamic study. A small number of A-level courses are offered in partnership with Preston College. If leaders judge that they cannot offer a programme which is in the best interest of a particular learner, they are open in suggesting that the learner's needs may be better met elsewhere.
- Inspectors saw learners in the sixth form making rapid progress. However, some tracking data held by visiting staff was not available to inspectors. Frequent discussions take place between staff from the external provider and school staff to confirm that learners are achieving as well as possible.

- A small number of learners who join the sixth form from other schools have not previously attained a grade C at GCSE in both English and mathematics. Such learners have been successful in passing resit examinations.
- Learners' conduct in the sixth form is exemplary. This was seen in lessons and demonstrated by the gracious way that sixth-form learners communicated with and looked after the inspection team.
- Leaders keep the sixth-form curriculum under review. They have recently introduced BTEC in science to extend the range of subjects offered. Leaders have undertaken development work for the sixth-form personal, social and health education programme. This ties current thinking on topics such as counselling and legal processes to a secure background of Islamic principles. The materials seen by inspectors successfully built these principles into an open, tolerant and inclusive approach.
- The sixth-form curriculum in school is extended through other experiences. These often relate to possible career opportunities. Sixth-form learners value the independent advice they receive about such opportunities. Other activities are as diverse as support to the local community and work at a local wildlife trust site.
- Very few learners leave the sixth form once they have started their courses. Many choose to stay at the school once they become 18 years old to continue their Islamic education to degree level.
- Learners are very positive about their experience in the sixth form. They would confidently recommend it to others. One simply said, 'It becomes home.'

School details

Unique reference number	131389
DfE registration number	889/6005
Inspection number	10020865

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

Type of school	Other independent school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	11 to 25
Gender of pupils	Boys
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Boys
Number of pupils on the school roll	465
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	96
Proprietor	Trustees of Jamiatul-Ilm Wal-Huda
Chair	Mohammed Munshi
Principal	Abdulsamad Ahmed
Annual fees (day pupils)	£1,400
Telephone number	01254 673105
Website	www.jamiah.co.uk
Email address	info@jamiah.co.uk

Information about this school

- This school provides day and boarding places to male, Muslim students, providing them with both Islamic and secular education.
- One of the purpose-built school buildings also provides boarding accommodation for students aged under 18 years. As well as classrooms and the boarding provision, the school has its own mosque.
- There are no pupils who have special educational needs and/or a disability. No pupil has an education, health and care plan or a statement of special educational needs.

- Pupils are of mainly Asian heritage. All pupils speak English as their first language.
- The school does not make use of any alternative, off-site educational provision.
- The school's provision continues post-18 to provide degree-level courses of Islamic studies.
- The school's senior leadership team has been extended and arrangements for governance formalised since the previous education inspection.
- The school's most recent education inspection was conducted by the Bridge Schools Inspectorate in December 2012. That inspection judged that the school was providing a good quality of education.

Information about this inspection

- The lead inspector toured the school site accompanied by senior leaders.
- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in Islamic and secular lessons. Inspectors visited two assemblies, one of which was led by pupils. Inspectors observed pupils' conduct in lessons, during movement between lessons and at breaktime.
- Inspectors held meetings with the principal, who is also chair of the trustees, and senior leaders. Inspectors also met with a group of governors and a group of teachers. They met formally with groups of pupils and spoke to others during lessons and at other times during the school day.
- Inspectors examined pupils' books and folders of work during lessons and in a scrutiny of samples of written work across a range of pupils and subjects.
- Inspectors reviewed documents to confirm compliance with the independent school standards and to provide other inspection evidence. These documents included policies, health and safety records and other safeguarding information, the school's own evaluation of pupils' achievement, records of self-evaluation, development planning, minutes of meetings, and the attendance and admissions registers. Inspectors examined the school's website.
- Sixty-six responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, were received over the inspection period. Thirteen of these responses included additional written comments about the school. Fourteen members of staff responded to a paper questionnaire during the inspection. A letter was received from a past pupil.
- The DfE asked Ofsted to consider aspects of the school's curriculum during this inspection.
- The school's boarding provision was not inspected during this inspection. The most recent inspection of boarding was undertaken by Ofsted in August 2015. Provision for students aged older than 18 was not inspected.

Inspection team

David Selby, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Linda Griffiths

Ofsted Inspector

Bernard Robinson

Ofsted Inspector

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