

Darul Uloom London

Foxbury Avenue, Off Perry Street, Chislehurst, Kent BR7 6SD

Inspection dates

18–20 June 2019

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Sixth form provision	Requires improvement
Overall experiences and progress of children and young people in the boarding	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Inadequate

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Teaching and learning require improvement. The organisation of the curriculum does not build pupils' knowledge and skills sufficiently well across subjects.
- Although leaders have made important improvements to the school, self-evaluation is not precise enough.
- The quality of pupils' skills in reading and writing lags behind those in mathematics and science.
- Leaders have not ensured that all the independent school standards and national minimum standards for boarding schools are met in full.
- Governance is not strong enough. A lack of expertise among governors makes it difficult to hold leaders to account.
- Extra-curricular opportunities are limited.

The school has the following strengths

- Leaders have improved many aspects of the school in a short time. Much of the accommodation has been upgraded.
- The planned curriculum in key stages 3 and 4 gives pupils a wide experience of learning, including in science and creative subjects.
- Relationships between pupils and teachers are strong. Pupils are respectful of others and know how to keep themselves safe.
- Safeguarding is effective. Records are detailed, and concerns are followed up with outside agencies effectively.
- Outcomes in mathematics and science are strong. This is because teachers give pupils useful information about how to improve their work.
- Pupils are articulate and mature. They understand fundamental British values and respect those who have different lifestyles.

Compliance with regulatory requirements and national minimum standards for boarding schools

- The school must take action to meet the requirements of the schedule to The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, the national minimum standards for boarding schools and associated requirements. The details are listed in the full report

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - all the independent schools and national minimum standards are met in full
 - trustees hold senior leaders to account systematically so that improvements are consolidated and sustained
 - self-evaluation is used routinely to identify strengths, weaknesses and areas for improvement.
- Improve the quality of teaching by:
 - ensuring that strong and probing questions are used to check pupils' learning and deepen their learning
 - ensuring greater opportunities for pupils to develop their reading and writing skills
 - sequencing work so that it builds pupils' knowledge and skills in an organised manner.
- Improve the quality of the boarding accommodation by:
 - ensuring that toilets, showers, wash basins and rooms are clean and of the required quality
 - there are sufficient showers for boarders.
- Extend the range of after-school activities, including providing opportunities for pupils to use facilities in the local community.

The school must meet the following independent school standards

- The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that the school premises and the accommodation and facilities provided therein are maintained to a standard such that, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of pupils are ensured (paragraph 25).
- The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that, where the school provides accommodation, regard is had to Standard 5 of the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools (paragraph 30).

The school must meet the following national minimum standards for boarding schools

- Suitable toilet and washing facilities are provided for boarders. These must be accessible from the sleeping accommodation. Separate toilet facilities are provided for boys and girls, unless each toilet facility is provided in a separate room intended for use by one pupil at a time, the door to which can be secured from inside. Toilet and washing facilities provide appropriate privacy for boarders (NMS 5.3).
- Boarding houses and other accommodation provided for boarders is appropriately lit, heated and ventilated, cleaned and maintained. Reasonable adjustments are made to

provide adequate accessible accommodation for any boarders with restricted mobility (NMS 5.4).

- The school premises, accommodation and facilities provided therein are maintained to a standard such that, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of pupils are ensured (NMS 6.2).
- There is an appropriate range and choice of activities for boarders outside teaching time, including sufficient and planned free time each day. Suitable risk assessments are in place for any activities which may put boarders at risk of harm (NMS 10.1).
- Boarders have access to information about events in the world outside the school, and access to local facilities which are appropriate to their age (NMS 10.4).

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
The effectiveness of leaders and managers in the boarding	Requires improvement
How well children and young people are helped and protected in the boarding	Requires improvement

- In the short time they have been in post, senior leaders have successfully tackled the weaknesses identified in previous inspections. For example, the breaches of the national minimum standards identified in the previous inspection are now met, as are the independent school standards. Leaders have a clear plan for improving the boarding provision further based on the needs of boarders. However, some national minimum standards remain unmet.
- Improvements have been made to the curriculum so that pupils study subjects that cover a range of experiences. As well as English, mathematics and science, pupils study history, religious education (RE), Arabic and art. In addition, personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education is included in the key stage 3 and 4 curriculum. As a result, pupils gain the knowledge and skills needed to go onto more advanced work in the sixth form. The Islamic curriculum provides a strong moral and spiritual experience.
- Despite these strengths, the way the curriculum is organised does not ensure that pupils make strong progress in developing their knowledge and skills across all subjects. For example, topics in history are not always sequenced logically, so that pupils do not have enough knowledge to move onto more complex work. In addition, the sixth-form curriculum is narrow, although leaders are introducing new courses to broaden provision.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is supported well through the personal social and health education (PSHE) and religious education (RE) programmes. Pupils study the main faiths represented in Britain, and show respect and tolerance for different beliefs and lifestyles, including about gender and sexual orientation. The careers education programme is fairly new, but supports pupils to prepare for the next stage of their lives appropriately.
- Staff morale in the boarding section is improved. Staff report effective supervision and said that managers are more 'approachable'. Leaders respond to their concerns more effectively. Similarly, boarders respect leaders and said that they are 'easy to talk to'.
- Leaders have worked to tackle the concerns raised by external reviews. For example, leaders have acted upon the recommendations of the environmental health officer to improve the cleanliness of the school kitchen. Similarly, efforts to improve the physical environment of the building have improved. Classrooms and corridors have been painted, and new lighting installed.
- Despite these improvements, some weaknesses remain. While leaders have responded well to the concerns identified by external checks and reports, the quality of self-evaluation remains weak. Leaders do not identify areas for improvement precisely enough. For example, there is still variation in the quality of teaching and learning.

Additionally, the emphasis on examination results is sometimes at the expense of developing pupils' understanding.

- The provision of extra-curricular activities is limited. There are few after-school activities to enrich pupils' learning. As a result, there are restricted opportunities for pupils to develop their wider learning in areas such as reading for pleasure or developing new interests.
- The maintenance of the boarding accommodation requires improvement. The accommodation is not routinely clean or maintained to a high enough standard. Inspectors found toilets, showers, wash basins and bedrooms to be dirty and requiring updating in some places. There are insufficient shower facilities for boarders, and they do not provide enough privacy. Managers failed to respond effectively to one safeguarding concern about shower use.
- There are weaknesses in the quality of the school environment that present risks to boarders. Inspectors found it easy to access rooms that were marked 'hazard'. These rooms contain disused furniture and other hazardous materials. They provide opportunities for boarders to be out of sight and unsupervised. In addition, the school entry system at the front gate does not work. The gate remains open throughout the day, compromising the safety of pupils.

Governance

- There have been some important improvements to the school's governance as a result of better oversight of the work of senior leaders. Support for and challenge of senior leaders is now more rigorous.
- However, the capacity of trustees to maintain this rigour is not secure. It relies too heavily on the expertise of one or two members of the board. Although trustees want the best for the school and its pupils, they are not systematic enough in the way they carry out their work. As a result, the impact of governance on the quality of education remains limited.
- Trustees ensure that the necessary recruitment checks are carried out for new staff.

Safeguarding

- Arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- There is a detailed safeguarding policy, which is understood and consistently followed by staff. All staff, including boarding staff and trustees, are vetted to ensure that they are of good character and suitable to work with children. Records of pupils starting and leaving the school meet requirements. Recruitment records do not always show that the school has seen proof of the most recent address for new recruits. Overall, however, the school's checks are appropriate and recorded clearly.
- Boarders can identify a trusted adult to confide in about any concerns. Staff understand how to respond to child protection concerns, and the school's designated safeguarding lead works effectively in partnership with the relevant child protection agencies.
- The school has clear procedures to ensure that concerns are investigated and that staff take prompt and appropriate action. Lessons learned from incidents are used well to improve safeguarding practice.

- Leaders are suitably trained and knowledgeable in matters of safeguarding and child protection. Staff training is effective. For example, staff understand the risks in relation to radicalisation, and provide appropriate guidance and support to help young people stay safe.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Teaching, learning and assessment have improved but require improvement. While some teaching is effective, and pupils learn well, this is not typical across the school. For example, some work in books shows that pupils receive helpful feedback about how to improve. This has a noticeable impact on boosting outcomes. However, this is not routine, and in some lessons pupils' progress is not as strong.
- Teachers have appropriately high expectations of pupils' work. Pupils' books are neat, tidy and show that they always complete their work. Teachers' subject knowledge is strong in both the secular and Islamic curriculum. Work in books also shows that pupils cover GCSE syllabuses well and make strong progress in some subjects, notably in mathematics and Arabic.
- A particular strength of pupils' learning is their ability to take notes. This helps them to revise effectively for public examinations. Strong relationships between teachers and pupils create a positive climate for learning that is evident in all lessons. For example, inspectors did not see any poor behaviour or distraction from learning; pupils listen attentively to their teachers.
- Some teachers are skilled in asking questions that check pupils' understanding and stretch their thinking. For example, in mathematics, pupils are often challenged by questions and have to explain their reasoning. This does much to test whether pupils have a secure grasp of the topic or calculation. However, this is not routinely strong in all subjects, and some pupils rarely contribute to 'question and answer' sessions. Sometimes, questions require a one-word answer. This does not stretch pupils' thinking. Where this happens, pupils' learning is not strong enough, and pupils can recall facts, but cannot explain their relevance, or how they fit together.
- In English, pupils are given good opportunities to develop their understanding of poetry, such as the war poems studied for GCSE. Many of their responses show considerable empathy and sensitivity. Reading and extended writing is less good. Leaders prioritise the importance of strong reading skills, but this has not resulted in pupils reading more widely. The range of books available in the library is limited, and there are few that meet the interests of boys.
- The teaching of mathematics is mostly good, and numeracy is evident in science. Work in mathematics lessons is sequenced well so that pupils can master the basics before moving on to more complex work. This explains the strong GCSE results in mathematics. However, in other subjects work is not always planned as effectively, and this results in some disjointed learning.
- The small classes mean that pupils get effective support from their teachers. This includes the most able pupils, as well as those that struggle more with their learning. This work is supported by detailed assessments of pupils' attainment that show where there are gaps in their learning.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils attitudes to school and learning are mature. They are highly motivated and engaged, and keen to do well. These positive attitudes have a strong impact on pupils' learning and outcomes.
- Leaders have taken strong steps towards involving the local community and key professionals in ensuring the safety and welfare of pupils. The local police have visited to provide advice to staff and pupils on the risks in the community. These include knife crime, criminal exploitation and internet safety. The school and boarding provision have developed effective partnerships with external organisations. For example, the designated police officer reports improved communication, and the local authority notes that the school works more closely with its social care team.
- Pupils know about British values. They show respect and tolerance for others, and talked confidently about the protected characteristics. Pupils have a strong understanding of their own beliefs and culture through the Islamic curriculum. They are also study other religions such as Christianity, Buddhism, Hinduism and Judaism.
- Pupils said they feel safe in school at all times. They know how to keep themselves online, including from cyber bullying, and understand about safety outside of school.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- In lessons and around the school during the day, pupils' conduct is first-rate. They are polite, welcoming and respectful of others. Pupils said that there is no bullying because everyone gets on well. They said this is because they are with each other every day and all the time, and develop strong friendships. Pupils said the school 'is like a family'.
- Boarders are also well behaved. They get on well with each other, and report no concerns in relation to bullying. Boarding staff know the boarders well, are vigilant and treat boarders with kindness and care.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Pupils' outcomes require improvement. They are strong in mathematics and science, but not in English. This is reflected in the GCSE results, where more pupils reach the higher grades in mathematics than they do in English. Outcomes in Arabic are also strong, but vary in other subjects.
- The work in pupils' books and assessment information confirm this pattern of achievement. Books show that pupils cover the range of work needed to reach their GCSE examination targets. While most pupils make appropriate progress in their learning over time, some do not achieve their full potential. This is particularly the case in English, where pupils are not routinely encouraged to extend their skills in reading and writing.

- Pupils' numeracy skills are strong. They achieve well in mathematics, and are encouraged to use their skills in other subjects, especially science. This is the result of a well organised curriculum and a teaching programme that builds pupils' knowledge and skills systematically.
- Pupils' literacy skills are generally secure, but are less good than in numeracy. Pupils have a good understanding of the literature texts required for the GCSE examination, and are able to analyse themes well. However, the range of work in their books indicates that there is little emphasis on personal writing. Leaders have begun to tackle this by placing a stronger focus on extended writing, but it is too early to see whether this is having an impact.
- In science, pupils have secure knowledge and understand important concepts. Pupils' work shows considerable improvement in speaking and writing Arabic. Outcomes in other subjects, such as history and art, are more variable, especially in the accuracy of writing. In some books, pupils make simple grammatical and spelling errors.

Sixth form provision

Requires improvement

- The curriculum in the sixth form is narrow. Although it has recently been broadened through offering level 3 and 4 technical qualifications, this has not had time to raise standards. However, students say that these additional courses are a significant improvement from last year.
- The new leadership team has begun to tackle the weaknesses of a small sixth form. They have a better understanding of the needs of students. Links with outside providers enable the school to provide a wider range of courses. These are studied in school. Leaders recognise that there is more to do to ensure that all students achieve well.
- Students have positive attitudes to their education. Many spoke of the opportunities to learn, and the support they receive from their teachers. Students are keen to do well. They are extremely polite and talk maturely about becoming British Muslims who are able to take their place in modern Britain.
- Students' personal development and welfare are promoted effectively. The positive relationships between students and staff contribute effectively to their overall achievement. Although the careers education programme is developing, students have clear plans for the future. All students move on to education, training or employment when they leave the school.

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people in the boarding

Requires improvement

- There is a limited range of activities for boarders, inside and outside of school. Managers do not access resources within the local community, such as leisure facilities. This limits the scope of activities available to boarders.
- Despite concerns, boarders reported they appreciate the boarding experience and enjoy spending time with their friends and 'having fun'. They have a strong sense of community, and are proud of the boarding house. Boarders learn new skills, including tolerance and patience. Parents said that boarders' behaviour is improved at home.

- Boarders said that behaviour management is more effective and more consistent than in the past. They are motivated by the opportunity of 'making up' for poor behaviour and earning privileges. The system was devised following their feedback.
- Boarders said they are well prepared for the boarding experience, and staff are supportive.
- Arrangements for contact with parents are improved. Boarders benefit from a new room for contact, and parents referred to the management as more open and 'approachable'.

School details

Unique reference number	101695
Social care unique reference number	SC006927
DfE registration number	305/6077
Inspection number	10092441

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.

The inspection of boarding provision was carried out under the Children Act 1989, as amended by the Care Standards Act 2000, having regard to the national minimum standards for boarding schools.

Type of school	Other independent school
School category	Independent boarding school
Age range of pupils	11 to 19
Gender of pupils	Boys
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Boys
Number of pupils on the school roll	112
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	22
Number of boarders on roll	112
Proprietor	Darul Uloom Trust
Chair	Abdullah Patel
Headteacher	Mufti Mohammed Kamil Sheikh
Annual fees (boarders)	£3,000
Telephone number	0208 295 0637
Website	www.darululoomlondon.co.uk
Email address	info@darululoomlondon.com
Date of previous inspection	9–11 May 2017

Information about this school

- Darul Uloom London is an independent boarding school for boys. It is registered for 155 pupils aged 11 to 19. There are currently 122 pupils on roll. All pupils are of Muslim faith.
- All pupils board in accommodation that is located on the school premises. Most pupils return home every other weekend.
- There are no pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities who have an education, health and care plan.
- There are no pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- Pupils follow a religious curriculum in the morning and a secular curriculum in the afternoon.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school's last inspection was an additional inspection in March 2018. The overall outcome was that the school did not meet all of independent school standards checked during the inspection. The school did not meet all of the national minimum standards that were checked during the inspection.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in lessons across all year groups and subjects. Some of these were jointly observed with school leaders.
- Inspectors looked at arrangements at break, lunchtime, after school and in the evenings.
- Samples of pupils' work were scrutinised from all classes.
- Discussions were held with senior leaders, trustees, teachers, boarding staff and pupils.
- A range of documentation and policies were scrutinised including the school's self-evaluation, records of pupils' behaviour and attendance, schemes of work, assessment information and the complaints policy.
- Inspectors scrutinised records relating to the quality of teaching. They looked at the school's website, including information about extra-curricular activities, trips and visits.
- Inspectors reviewed records, policies and procedures relating to safeguarding.
- There was only one response to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey.

Inspection team

Brian Oppenheim, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Jo Jones	Ofsted Inspector
Barnaby Dowel	Social Care Regulatory Inspector
Lee Kirwin	Social Care Regulatory Inspector

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