

Darul Hadis Latifiah

1 Cornwall Avenue, London, E2 0HW

Inspection dates 9–11 September 2013

Overall effectiveness	Adequate	3
Pupils' achievement	Good	2
Pupils' behaviour and personal development	Good	2
Quality of teaching	Good	2
Quality of curriculum	Adequate	3
Pupils' welfare, health and safety	Adequate	3
Leadership and management	Adequate	3

Summary of key findings

This school is adequate because

- The Islamic programme of study at Key Stage 3 in the girls' school is not as detailed as that in the boys' school.
- The best teaching practices are not sufficiently shared to ensure all lessons are at least good. Teachers do not consistently develop students' independence in their learning and make too little use of information and communication technology (ICT) to support their teaching.
- At both schools, the scheme of work for physical education does not ensure a sufficient breadth of experiences and skill development. The Key Stage 4 curriculum does not include sufficient choice in humanity-based subjects.
- The programme of extra-curricular activities does not fully enrich students' academic, personal and cultural development.
- Systems for monitoring the effectiveness policies and procedures, particularly in relation to welfare, health and safety, are not sufficiently rigorous. The performance management of teaching is still in the early stages of development.
- The governing body and the school's leaders have not ensured the consistency of systems across both the boys' and the girls' schools, such as the assessment of students' progress.

The school has the following strengths

- This is an improving school. Leaders and managers are successfully improving the overall quality of teaching both in secular and Islamic subjects. As a result, students' achievement is good and the students are well prepared for life beyond school.
- At both schools, students feel safe and well supported by their teachers.
- Students' behaviour and personal development are good. In both schools, students are keen to learn and show consideration and respect towards each other.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school requires improvement and must take action to meet schedule 1 of The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, as amended by The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements. The details are listed in the full report.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection took place with no notice. Inspectors visited both the boys' and the girls' schools. They observed 26 lessons taught by 18 different teachers, two tutorial sessions and an assembly. Six lessons were observed jointly with the respective headteachers.
- Meetings took place with the business manager who also represented the governing body, both headteachers, staff, three groups of students and three parents.
- The inspectors examined students' work, examination results, and a range of documentation including policies, risk assessments, schemes of work and staff training records.
- The inspectors considered 16 staff questionnaires, but students were not given the opportunity to complete Ofsted's online Point-in-Time survey and there were no responses to Ofsted's online parental questionnaire, Parent View.
- At the request of the Department for Education inspectors considered concerns raised about the quality of teaching and health and safety at the boys' school and the extension of the age range in the boys' part of the school from 19 to 20 years.

Inspection team

Angela Corbett, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Usman Mapara

Additional Inspector

Rory O'Docherty

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Darul Hadis Latifah is an independent day school for Muslim boys and girls. It opened in 1998 originally as boys' only school with entry extended to girls in 2008 when Latifah Girls School opened on separate site. The boys' school is located in Bethnal Green and the girls' in Shadwell, both in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets. The boys' school moved to its present premises in 2005.
- The age range in the girls' school is 11 to 16 years and 11 to 19 years in the boys' school.
- The school is registered for 300 students. Currently there are 163 on roll, of whom 47 are girls and 121 boys including the 16 students in the sixth form aged up to 20 years.
- Both schools are managed by a single governing body but each is run separately on a day-to-day basis and has its own headteacher and staff. A business manager has financial responsibility for both schools.
- Admission is by interview and entry examination.
- No student has a statement of special educational needs and none are disabled. The students are mostly of Bangladeshi heritage. Some students are from Somali and Pakistani origins. Very few are learning to speak English as an additional language, and none are in the early stages of development in learning English.
- Both schools make use of adjacent parks and the girls' school uses the science facilities of a local secondary school but no other alternative provision is used.
- There have been no significant changes since the last inspection.
- No sixth form students were present during the inspection.
- The school states that it aims to achieve excellence and prepare its students for the rapidly growing world in the 21st century. It aims for the highest level of achievement in religious, cultural and academic performance by providing opportunities for students to reach their full potential and is bound together by the values of faith, truth, fairness, dedication, respect and excellence.
- The school's last full inspection took place in October 2010 when the quality of education was judged to be satisfactory, although three regulations for independent schools were not met. A follow-up monitoring visit took place in October 2011 to check on the school's progress in meeting the regulations and this visit judged them to be met. Both these visits were only to the boys' school. This is the first full inspection of the girls' school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise students' achievement, and that of girls in particular, by further improving teaching so that all is good and much is outstanding by:
 - ensuring teachers encourage all students take greater responsibility for their own learning, developing their independent learning skills and more actively involving them in lessons
 - ensuring teachers make greater use of ICT in their teaching to increase the pace of lessons and enrich students' learning experiences
 - routinely sharing the best teaching practices with all staff across both schools.
- Improve the curriculum by:
 - developing and implementing the scheme of work for physical education in both schools
 - ensuring that the Key Stage 3 Islamic Studies programme of study at the girls' school is of the same high quality as that in the boys' school
 - broaden the choice of humanity-based subjects, such as geography and history at Key

Stage 4

- providing a broader range of extra-curricular activities, both within and beyond the school day to enrich students' academic, cultural and personal development and their involvement in the wider community.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management across both schools by:
 - ensuring that there is consistency of practice in relation to policies, procedures and the monitoring of students' progress
 - rigorously monitoring the effectiveness of welfare, health and safety policies
 - fully implementing the performance management of teaching
 - ensuring governors take a more active approach in checking on the work of the school and in holding leaders to account for all aspects of school performance.
- The school must meet the following independent school standards.
 - Provide suitable changing accommodation and showers provided for pupils aged 11 years or over at the start of the school year who receive physical education (paragraph 23A(1)(c)).
 - Provide accommodation for the medical examination and treatment of pupils (paragraph 23B(1)(a)).
 - Provide accommodation for the short term care of sick and injured pupils, which includes a washing facility and is near to a toilet facility (paragraph 23B(1)(b)).
 - Provide parents of pupils, parents of prospective pupils and, on request, to the Chief Inspector, the Secretary of State or an independent inspectorate, particulars of:
 - policies for promoting pupils' health and safety on educational visits as required under part 3 paragraphs 10 and 11
 - arrangements for tackling bullying, and for promoting pupils' health and safety on the school premises and on educational visits as required under part 3 paragraphs 10 and 11
 - academic performance during the preceding school year, including the results of any public examinations
 - details of the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year
 - the number of staff employed at the school, including temporary staff, and a summary of their qualifications (paragraph 24(1)(b)).

Inspection judgements

Pupils' achievement

Good

The achievement of boys and girls is good as the result of good teaching and an adequate curriculum in most subjects in both schools. Over the past three years the proportion of boys achieving five A* to C grades at GCSE, including English and mathematics, has significantly improved, with well-above national average performance in many subjects including mathematics, science and Bengali. The school has reduced the variation in progress rates across most subjects, with almost all students making, and many exceeding, the expected rates of progress. In 2013 the performance of the small cohort of girls improved significantly from 2012 when GCSE examinations were first taken. Progress rates across and within subjects were more variable than in the boys' school, with achievement in mathematics adequate but good in English and science. Some girls also made good progress in statistics and ICT.

Achievement in Islamic Studies is also good for most students. Boys make better progress than girls because of the well-developed curriculum. Boys and girls achieve above average results in religious studies, reflecting the good theological grounding they receive and the deep knowledge of their faith. Students learn to recite the Qur'an and many make good progress in learning to speak and write in Arabic.

The small number of students in each of the four years of the sixth form make good, and some make outstanding, progress in the Islamic Higher Education (IHE) Alim course. In 2013 the first results for the very few students following AS-level courses were mixed. Most made at least expected progress across the limited range of subjects, with the best progress in mathematics.

Very tight monitoring systems at the boys' school ensure any boy at risk of falling behind is quickly identified and given targeted additional support. Assessment systems at the girls' school are not as well developed. Nonetheless, considerable additional teaching and support have been put in place to ensure the girls made good progress by the end of Key Stage 4 to make up for some past weaker teaching. Students show equal enthusiasm for their Islamic and secular studies, reflecting the equal importance both schools place on each aspect. Boys and girls are keen to learn, concentrate well and work well in pairs when they are given the opportunity to do so. However, at times they lack opportunities to develop independent learning skills and rely too much on the teacher for help or to tell them what to do next. Recent initiatives to improve reading, writing and communication skills are proving successful. For example, some high-quality writing was seen in the boys' school. The high focus in developing employability skills, together with the importance placed gaining academic qualifications and high career aspirations, equips all students well for the future.

Pupils' behaviour and personal development

Good

Students' behaviour and personal development are good. Within each school students get on well together reflecting their good social development. They are polite, courteous and show respect for each other and adults. Students' spiritual and moral development is good and strongly fostered through Islamic teaching and the many opportunities they have for reflection. Students have a clear sense of what is right and wrong and understand that they should be tolerant and live in harmony with others, both within the context of school and within the multicultural community in which they live. The Islamic teaching also ensures that students develop a good understanding of their own faith and culture. However, cultural development is adequate overall, because while students have many opportunities to learn about other cultures and religions, this is not sufficiently well coordinated to ensure that all have a deep and comprehensive understanding.

Students have good attitudes to learning and staff at both schools help them to develop confidence

and self-esteem within lessons and tutorial time. They speak positively about the school and girls, in particular, are able to maturely identify ways in which the school could do better. Attendance rates are good overall, and for boys are above average. The personal, citizenship, social and health education and assembly programmes ensure students develop a reasonably broad general knowledge of public institutions and services in England, together with balanced viewpoints to prepare them well for life in democratic Britain. To enable students to contribute more to school life, new school councils were being formed at the time of the inspection. However, there are too few opportunities for students to contribute to the life of the school as well as the local and wider communities.

Quality of teaching

Good

The quality of teaching overall is good, but some variation still exists and no outstanding teaching was seen during the inspection. Teachers at both schools are highly committed to the achievement of their students, which they effectively convey to them, fostering a positive ethos for learning in classrooms. As a result, students feel confident to express their views to the whole class and ask questions when they are unsure. Teachers use their good subject knowledge to plan lessons that enable most students to make good progress over time in both secular and Islamic subjects. Teachers make good use of time, provide clear learning objectives and use a variety of styles and approaches to engage students. Training to improve teaching is evident in classrooms, particularly in the boys' school. For example, greater use of group and paired work is enabling all students within a class to be more actively involved and develop their knowledge and understanding.

A reasonable range of resources enhances learning, but insufficient use is made of ICT at either school to support teaching. In the best lessons assessment is a key strength, with teachers using probing questions to promote effective learning. This was seen in a statistics lesson when the teacher skilfully built on students' responses about primary and secondary data sources and in a Qur'an lesson where the teacher used a variety of approaches, including peer assessment, to improve pronunciation. Most lessons are taught in mixed-ability groups; the needs of all students in the class are usually, but not always, met. Good practice was seen in an Arabic writing lesson when the most able were given higher-order work and those working at slower pace were given additional help and time to enable all to achieve well. However, such good practice is not routinely shared within or between the two schools to further improve the quality of teaching and raise student achievement.

Assessment systems have significantly improved since the last inspection, with attainment and progress judged against National Curriculum levels or GCSE or AS grade levels. As a result, teachers, particularly in the boys' school, have an accurate view of how well students are performing in all subjects. Students say books are marked and that they are given advice on how to improve; supported by the school's own scrutiny and analysis of marking. However, there was insufficient student work available during the inspection, which took place at the start of the school year, to verify this.

Quality of curriculum

Adequate

The curriculum is adequate. All the required areas of learning are covered and with an appropriate balance of Islamic and secular studies. At Key Stage 3, almost all National Curriculum subjects, including art, are taught. At Key Stage 4 all students work for a limited range of GCSE subjects which includes English, mathematics and science and, for most, Arabic, but there are no opportunities to study geography and history. A detailed curriculum policy supports students' learning well. Schemes of work for both secular and Islamic studies are in place for all subjects. However, the scheme for physical education is less well developed and does not ensure students receive a full breadth of sporting experiences nor support their skill development overtime. Although schemes to support the teaching of Islamic studies at Key Stage 3 in the girls' school are in place, they are less well developed than those in the boys' school or at Key Stage 4. The

development of students' literacy and other employability skills are integrated into most lessons. Teachers use the schemes of work well to support students' good learning well in most subjects.

Traditionally, teaching in the sixth form has centred on the four year IHE Alim course. Consequently, some students remain in school to the age of 20. Programmes of study are highly developed and it is recommended that the school age range is raised from 19 to 20 years. To improve students' life chances beyond school, the sixth form curriculum is being broadened with the introduction of AS courses in 2012 and a BTEC business qualification in 2013. A limited range of age-appropriate activities, such as help with university choices and applications, is available for the older students

Personal, social and health education (PSHE) is covered well in both schools, although a different approach is taken in each. Both programmes make use of religious and Islamic studies, assemblies and tutorial time. The girls are timetabled for PSHE lessons and for the boys it is taught through subjects and citizenship lessons. After-school clubs at both schools and visits to places of interest, such as London museums, the Law Courts and Houses of Parliament, promote their understanding of public institutions and services in England. However, the overall enrichment programme of speakers, visits and trips lacks breadth and coordination and there are too few opportunities for involvement in the local and wider community to fully enhance students' personal, academic and cultural development. The school has improved students' access to careers education since the last inspection. The students learn about careers in a variety of ways, including through speakers and visits to career days and, as a result, both boys and girls have high aspirations for their futures.

Pupils' welfare, health and safety

Adequate

Students' welfare, health and safety are adequate. This is because the systems for reviewing the effectiveness of all aspects of welfare, health and safety lack rigour. Nonetheless, the school is attentive to students' well-being, health and safety on both sites, acting with urgency when issues arise and all the standards are met. All the required policies, such as for first aid, are in place and meet requirements. However, in a few instances they require more specific reference to the girls' school, such as the location of the provision for students who are unwell. Risk assessments for each school and for off-site activities are in place, and although adequate, they could be more detailed at the girls' school. Systems to support fire safety are fully in place with external risk assessments, fire drills, testing and checking, servicing of fire safety equipment and fire marshal training for all staff.

The safeguarding arrangements for checking on the safety of staff to work with children are adequate, but in the past lacked rigour. The school has worked to address this issue, undertaking further training and a review to ensure that all the required checks have been undertaken. The single central register is in place. During the inspection the single central register was updated with information from staff files and the details of all the checks for governors added. The school's recruitment policy and procedures have been revised, although the new procedures for checking staff suitability have yet to be tested. All policies in relation to safeguarding have been recently revised and reflect the current guidance, for example in dealing with allegations against staff. The school understands its child protection responsibilities, with staff at both schools trained at the required levels.

The behaviour management policy meets requirements and is implemented effectively, although in a different way at each school. Incidents, rewards and sanctions are recorded adequately, but there is very little analysis of these or other records to look for patterns in order to identify and rectify concerns. The school has clear procedures for dealing with any bullying which students say is not tolerated. Students are aware of how to stay safe when using different forms of technology. Parents spoken to said they felt their children were well looked after and kept safe. The admissions and attendance registers are kept in line with requirements at both schools.

Leadership and management**Adequate**

Leadership and management are adequate. This is because leaders and managers have ensured that students' well-being and safety are adequate, teaching has improved and that schemes of work effectively support students' good overall learning in the boys' and the girls' schools. Governors undertake their management role of the school seriously but they are not sufficiently active in checking the performance of both schools nor have they ensured that all of the regulations for independent schools are met. Staff at both schools are overwhelmingly positive about all aspects of school life. Leaders and managers understand each school's strengths and areas for development, and plans for improvement in provision are well considered. Whilst each school runs as a separate entity under the leadership of a headteacher, some aspects of management are shared and have a common set of policies and procedures. However, systems for monitoring and checking the effectiveness of the implementation of policies and procedures lack rigour and senior leaders have not ensured the consistency of practice across both schools. For example, the very effective system for monitoring boys' progress has not been adopted for the girls. Performance management procedures have been recently put in place. Improvements in teaching are more discernible at the boys' school because professional development is highly targeted to meet the needs of individual teachers. This has significantly improved the quality of teaching in the boys' school. However, this effective practice has yet to be transferred to the girls' school. External consultants have effectively supported the boys' school in particular on their journey of improvement.

Both school buildings are reasonably well maintained and provide for suitable and safe learning environments. Some classrooms in the boys' school have been recently redecorated. Two classrooms at the boys' school and one at the girls' are equipped with projectors and interactive whiteboards to aid teaching. There is no suitable provision at either school for students who are unwell or for showering following physical education, as required in the regulations.

Each school has its own website, prospectus and reporting system. Most of the required information is provided to parents and carers of both schools, but the school does not consistently publish details of any formal complaints over the last 12 months, details of academic results or how the school tackles bullying and ensures students' health and safe on educational visits or a summary of staff qualifications. Parents and carers are kept informed of their children's progress through twice yearly, detailed written reports and formal and informal meetings with staff. The parents spoken to were positive about the work of the school. The complaints policy meets requirements. It is recommended that the school age range is raised from 19 to 20 years to support the learning of those students who remain on the four-year IHE Alim course.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	A school which provides an exceptional quality of education and significantly exceeds minimum requirements.
Grade 2	Good	A school which provides a high quality of education that exceeds minimum requirements.
Grade 3	Adequate	A school which meets minimum requirements but needs to improve the quality of education it provides.
Grade 4	Inadequate	A school where minimum requirements are not met and/or the quality of education has serious weaknesses.

School details

Unique reference number	131745
Inspection number	422732
DfE registration number	211/6389

This inspection was carried out under section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005, 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	Muslim Day School
School status	Independent School
Age range of pupils	11–19 years
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	163
Number of part time pupils	0
Proprietor	Governing body
Chair	Hafiz Maulana Abdul Jalil
Headteacher	Muhammad Hasan Chowdhury Syed Badrul Hussain
Date of previous school inspection	21–22 October 2010
Annual fees (day pupils)	£2,500
Telephone number	020 8980 2673 & 020 8983 3663
Fax number	Not applicable
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