

# London Islamic School

Independent School

Inspection report

DCSF Registration Number	2116390
Unique Reference Number	132797
Inspection number	320363
Inspection dates	26 - 27 February 2008
Reporting inspector	Declan McCarthy

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).



## 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

The London Islamic School (LIS), which was established in 1999, is situated in Whitechapel and is a self funded independent Islamic secondary school for boys aged between 11- 16. There are currently 118 students on roll, nearly all of whom are of Bangladeshi heritage with a few from other minority ethnic groups. All students have English as an additional language and there are no pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. As a result of increasing student numbers, the school has recently submitted a successful planning application to change the use of the top floor of the building for education purposes. This will enable the school to improve its specialist areas. The school was registered in February 2005. This is its first published inspection report. The school's aims are firmly enshrined within the principles of Islam so that students are encouraged to achieve their full potential and develop their Islamic personalities, enabling them to not only appreciate their own and other cultures but become productive and responsible citizens.

## Evaluation of the school

The London Islamic School is a good school that provides an effective education for its pupils and meets all but one of the regulations. The school fulfils its vision of providing pupils with a broad and balanced education in a caring, safe and well ordered environment. This enables them to develop good academic skills and Islamic values in order to practice Islam with God consciousness and sincerity. Nearly all students and parents are positive about the education the school provides and rightly say students are making good progress.

## Quality of education

The curriculum is good and meets the school's aims of nurturing each student's personal development and developing his academic skills and Islamic values. It is broad and well balanced between the secondary stage of a full *alim* course (Islamic theology) of traditional Islamic sciences and a course of National Curriculum subjects. One of its main strength is the scope and range of curriculum enrichment, designed to motivate students and to enhance their learning. The planning of the curriculum is at least satisfactory in all subjects. The Islamic course includes a two-year foundation programme and a three-year intermediate level course. Students who wish to complete the *alim* course move on to a *Darul Uloom* (Islamic traditional

sciences) school upon completing their secondary education at this school. The Islamic curriculum enables students to deepen and widen their knowledge of their faith and to develop a wide range of skills, making it one of the strengths of the provision. Over the last few years, the school has broadened the range of National Curriculum subjects taught, with the addition of business studies in Key Stage 4 and it has improved its provision for physical education (PE) and information and communication technology (ICT), which is now good. ICT is used effectively in most subjects and students have access to computers for research and homework. Plans are at hand to widen the curriculum further with the introduction of art and design and design technology as soon as the school can occupy the top floor. At present, students experience the creative and aesthetic areas of learning mainly through *tajweed* (melodious style of Qur'anic recitation) and English literature. Provision for personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE) is good and it reflects the Islamic ethos of the school. Resources are generally adequate to teach the curriculum. The school has identified the need to improve facilities for practical science as a priority and a larger laboratory has been planned on the top floor. Students take nine subjects at GCSE level and can take Arabic and Urdu as options. Provision for English is much improved and is now good. Provision for mathematics, science, religious studies and Bengali is good.

Teaching is good and assessment is satisfactory. Teaching is never less than satisfactory and sometimes outstanding. All teachers maintain very good relationships with students and engage them well in learning activities. Teachers use their good subject knowledge to set high expectations for learning by using well conceived and challenging questions. Literacy skills are well promoted through structured question and answer sessions and reading texts aloud. Teaching resources are adequate and improving as new computers have just been purchased. Teachers make good use of available resources in lessons such as text books, DVD, and overhead projectors.

Students make good progress because of the good teaching. Results at GCSE are improving year on year with significant improvement in English where almost 60% of students are predicted to achieve A\* to C grades in GCSE English language and literature. Good opportunities for enrichment through visits, visitors to the school and links with youth organisations and other schools have a positive impact on progress. Students make good progress over time in the Islamic curriculum.

Despite some good systems for tracking students' progress, assessment is satisfactory overall. The school effectively records the full range of SATS and GCSE results over recent years in order to analyse trends in progress and this is used appropriately in planning. However students are not always involved in assessing their own learning, not all students have academic targets and the marking of students' work is inconsistent. Students are not always aware of the potential GCSE grade they might be expected to achieve for any given piece of written work. Consequently, they do not always have a clear enough idea of how well they are doing or how they might improve their grade.

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

Provision for students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Students respond positively to the improvement in their education, as indicated by their good behaviour and improving attendance. Nearly all students say they like their school and appreciate its curriculum, its Islamic environment and its caring and supportive teachers. The managers have worked hard to provide well for students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, both through the Islamic curriculum and through curriculum enrichment. As a result of the school's efforts to eradicate unacceptable behaviour, students feel safe from bullying and enjoy friendly and social relationships with their peers. They show marked respect for their teachers and they are polite and considerate to visitors and others. However, a small core of students has not yet developed the expected level of self-discipline and poise.

Students speak enthusiastically of the rising standards they are achieving and have a wide range of aspirations for their future. They develop good basic, academic skills as well as skills in team work and problem solving. They have a wide range of opportunities to contribute to school life. For example, through the students' council, they have made a positive contribution to their community by initiating the widening of the curriculum and fund raising to develop indoor games. Students also stay fit and healthy by playing in numerous football competitions. The PSHCE programme gives them a good insight into British and international institutions and into how they can make positive contributions to the wider community. It also enables them to appreciate diversity as they learn about the major world religions. Students feel the careers guidance they receive prepares them well for the next step of their education

## Welfare, health and safety of the pupils

This aspect of the provision is good. Students develop a good understanding and commitment to healthy lifestyles through the curriculum and through the student council's work. Following consultation with students, the tuck shop now sells healthy options. Students' physical development is promoted very well through PE and extra-curricular activities.

All the essential policies aimed at safeguarding students and minimising risks are in place and most are implemented rigorously. Consequently, students feel safe. However, the nominated person for child protection has not yet received the required level of training. The school has taken steps to remedy the situation. It has improved its strategies to promote good behaviour and, as a result, it has been successful in reducing the need for serious sanctions. Accidents are recorded conscientiously. Registers are maintained satisfactorily and reveal a high level of unauthorised absence. The school is pursuing the lack of punctuality and poor attendance of a small minority of students with vigour. However, some parents and students are failing to respond to these efforts.

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

## Suitability of the proprietor and staff

Effective procedures are in place for the recruitment of staff, including checks through the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) The school maintains a central register with the required information about staff, proprietors and regular visitors to the school.

## School's premises and accommodation

The school is housed in two adjacent terraced buildings which also include a Mosque and a private studio business on the top floor. These areas have separate access. A suite of adequately decorated classrooms, which are maintained in reasonably good order are separated securely from the other users of the accommodation. There have been improvements to the accommodation since it was registered with the addition of a medical room and an ICT suite which is currently undergoing further refurbishment. An internal staircase has also been constructed between two adjacent floors to enable secure access to classrooms. Further improvements are planned when the upper floor space becomes available. Although there is no dedicated outdoor space within the school site, good use is made of the recreational park opposite for PE and recreation at break times under close supervision of staff.

## Provision of information for parents, carers and others

The school provides a wide range of information to parents in a detailed school prospectus and additional information booklets providing further information on essential school policies. Half yearly and end of year reports on progress are also given to parents at the parents' evening. The vast majority of parents say they are kept well informed and are very supportive of the school and its work. One parent wrote, 'This school is getting better and better'.

## Procedures for handling complaints

The school's policy and procedures for complaints meet all the regulations. There have been no formal complaints from parents in the past twelve months

## 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 provision for pupils' 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)).

## 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:

- involve students in their own assessment by consistently setting targets and reviewing progress against these with them
- ensure greater consistency in marking so pupils always have a clear idea of how well they are achieving and how to improve their work
- extend aesthetic and creative learning opportunities by ensuring that art and design are taught as a discrete area of learning as soon as teaching space becomes available
- strengthen partnerships with parents to reduce the amount of unauthorised absence.

## School details

Name of school	London Islamic School
DCSF number	2116390
Unique reference number	132797
Type of school	Muslim Day School
Status	Independent
Date school opened	1999
Age range of students	11-16
Gender of pupils	Boys
Number on roll (full-time students)	Boys: 118
Annual fees (day pupils)	£ 1,700
Address of school	18-22 Damien Street London E1 2HX
Telephone number	0207 265 9667
Fax number	0207 790 5536
Email address	lismadrasah@yahoo.com
Headteacher	Mr Abdul Hadi
Proprietor	Mr Moulana Thohur Uddin
Reporting inspector	Declan McCarthy
Dates of inspection	26 - 27 February 2008