

Manchester Islamic High School for Girls

Independent school standard inspection report

DfE registration number	352/6040
Unique Reference Number (URN)	130318
Inspection number	364248
Inspection dates	1–2 February 2011
Reporting inspector	Mohammad Ismail

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, 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.^{1, 2}

Information about the school

Manchester Islamic High School for Girls is an independent, Muslim day school for students aged from 11 to 16 years. The school selects its students from those with average and above average levels of ability and students are required to sit an entrance examination. The school is situated in the Chorlton area of Manchester and it was opened in 1991. The proprietor, Manchester Islamic Educational Trust Ltd, also runs two other schools in the area. The school aims 'to create a caring, warm, Islamic atmosphere within which students can develop to their full potential'. At present there are 225 students on roll all of whom are British Muslims from different cultural heritages with the majority having South Asian origins. There are no students with a statement of special educational needs or who are at the early stage of learning to speak English as an additional language. The school was last inspected in July 2005.

Evaluation of the school

The school meets its aims by providing an outstanding quality of education. An outstanding curriculum with good teaching and effective support enables students to make outstanding progress. The provision for students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and their behaviour are outstanding. The provision for the students' welfare, health and safety is good and the school meets all the requirements for safeguarding. The school has improved significantly since its last inspection by enhancing the quality of education. The school meets all the regulations for registration.

Quality of education

The overall quality of education is outstanding. The school's curriculum is outstanding and it enables students to make outstanding progress. It is based on the National Curriculum with additional provision for Islamic studies. There is a detailed curriculum policy in place which is supported by high quality schemes of work for all subjects from the National Curriculum except for music. The school successfully addresses the aesthetic needs of its students by offering them the opportunities of taking part in the school choir, singing *nasheed* (Arabic and Islamic

¹ www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2002/ukpga_20020032_en_14#pt10-ch1-pb4-l1g162

² www.opsi.gov.uk/ACTS/acts2005/ukpga_20050018_en_15#sch8

songs) and by enjoying the Qur'anic recitation. The school's provision for the core subjects of English, mathematics and science is outstanding.

The school offers a broad and balanced curriculum for Islamic studies which includes different subjects such as the Qur'an; *fiqh* (the practical aspects of Islamic life); *tajweed* (Qur'an recitation); and a selection from the traditions of the prophet. It has many outstanding features. The school offers a good quality modern foreign language programme which includes Arabic, Urdu and French. The improvements since the last inspection include enhancements to the curriculum, with more cross-curricular links. The curriculum is effectively implemented through a well-organised structure of subject leaders and departments. The school makes excellent provision for students' personal, social and health education (PSHE) both as a discrete subject and as part of the Islamic studies programme. PSHE is effectively supported by the pastoral care team. The provision for physical education is good and meets the needs of the students. The information and communication technology (ICT) course is of outstanding quality and helps to prepare students for the equally high quality business studies programme.

There is a very well-organised careers advice programme which starts in Year 9. In Year 10, the school organises work experience placements with many different local organisations and businesses such as hospitals, local media organisations and others. The provision has included a work placement with the local Member of Parliament. The students have opportunities to take part in different initiatives and projects related to their education such as 'Enterprise UK' and a business project. Students are very well advised in their progress to the next phase of their education or training.

The school offers a good range of extra-curricular activities which includes educational visits and outings linked to subjects in the curriculum, for example, to the Jewish Museum, Bradford Theatre and Warwick Castle. The school also organises some trips abroad including visits to Saudi Arabia and France. There is outstanding provision for extra-curricular activities which provide students with the opportunity to explore their talents in different clubs such as cookery, debating, textiles, drama and sports clubs. External speakers, including local and national dignitaries, are regularly invited to visit the school to talk to the students.

The quality of teaching and assessment is good overall. Some teaching is outstanding. Where teaching is outstanding, students are encouraged to be independent learners, to think creatively and to solve problems. There is a measure of excitement in those lessons which are planned imaginatively by teachers with expert subject knowledge. The pace is good in most lessons and expectations of students are high; as a result, students become interested and involved in the lesson. Teachers make good use of the school's resources to support teaching and learning. In a small proportion of lessons, planning is not imaginative; students find the learning less enjoyable and productive. Resources are generally good but students are unable to make use of computers in some classrooms to support their

independent learning. Lesson planning is thorough with clear learning outcomes which are shared with students at the start of a lesson. Teachers know their students well and set them challenging targets. Students are very aware of their targets and emphasize that they strive hard to reach them. Teaching assistants are well deployed to help any students who are having difficulties. In addition, those who are considered to need extra support receive additional tuition prior to their examinations. Provision for students of differing abilities is arranged well through the organisation of different teaching groups.

Assessment procedures are rigorous and the progress of every student is assessed in all subjects each term. Reports are shared with parents. Students are clear about the objectives set for them. Marking is generally good although it does not always help students to understand what they need to do to improve their work.

As a result of the good teaching, the outstanding curriculum and the excellent support they receive, students make outstanding progress in both their personal and academic development. Results in public examinations contribute significantly to students' future economic well-being.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

The school's provision for students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Students' regular attendance, with no unauthorised absence, and their excellent attitudes to learning show that they love their school and enjoy their education. All of them express their strong affiliation to the school in their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire. One student commented: 'I am very pleased with my school because it feels like home and it is a safe place to be in'. Behaviour is outstanding and reflects the school's strong Islamic ethos. It is promoted through an extensive programme of assemblies, regular prayer sessions and the PSHE programme which also helps students to distinguish between right and wrong. All students are extremely polite and they courteously greet their teachers, fellow students and visitors. There is a suitable reward and sanctions policy in place. In case of any inappropriate behaviour, the school's discipline policy is effectively enforced. Students are well informed about their progress and achievements.

Students contribute extremely well to the school and the wider community. There is an active student council which makes a very good contribution to the school's day-to-day running. Students vote to elect fellow students to represent their views on the school council. They have raised money for different charities such as the BBC Children in Need and the Pakistan Flood Appeal. Whole-school assemblies are held and organised by students regularly where they give speeches and make presentations on various topics. In one assembly, Year 11 students gave speeches and presented a play on understanding the importance of respecting each other; they demonstrated high levels of self-confidence. Prefects help during lunch and prayer time. The students clearly demonstrated, during lessons and in meetings with inspectors, that they are confident and responsible young people.

Through its provision for basic skills, careers advice and its provision for work placements, the school prepares students effectively for their future lives. The good links with local schools and with local organisations provide opportunities for students to broaden their horizons. For example, Year 8 students visited a local Church of England primary school to attend an event on inter-faith dialogue.

Students learn about British institutions in English, history and other lessons and are well aware of current events in British politics and of the workings of a democracy. They take a keen interest in current affairs. Students learn about other cultures in their religious studies programme and visit places of worship of different faiths. The school organises an inter-faith week during which people of different traditions attend the school. This event provides students with a good opportunity to interact with the wider community.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The provision for safeguarding students' welfare, health and safety is good. There is a suitable anti-bullying policy which is implemented effectively. The school successfully raises students' awareness about healthy food and healthy lifestyles through a policy which encourages them to eat fruit at break time. All the required safeguarding and safer recruitment policies are in place and all staff, including the designated child protection officer, are trained at the required level. Risk assessments meet the regulations. The school has a first aid policy and there are sufficient trained first aiders. The school has a fire risk assessment, all fire fighting equipment is regularly tested and staff are trained in fire safety. The school has suitable washroom facilities for disabled people and the building is accessible for wheelchair users. The school's attendance and admission registers meet the regulations. The school meets the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, as amended.

Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors

The school has undertaken all the required measures to ensure that its staff and the proprietor are suitable to work with children. The school maintains a single central register of staff checks which meets the regulations.

Premises and accommodation at the school

The school's accommodation enables students to learn safely and effectively. There are sufficient classrooms, an ICT suite, a medical room, three science laboratories, a prayer hall, an assembly hall and a suitable outside space with a playground. The building is appropriately maintained and decorated. There are sufficient washroom facilities for the number of students on roll and for the school staff.

Provision of information

The school meets all requirements by providing the necessary information to parents, carers and others through an up-to-date prospectus and the school's website. The school reports on students' progress annually to parents, carers and others. Almost all of the parents expressed their support for the school in their responses to the questionnaire and in their personal letters to the inspectors.

Manner in which complaints are to be handled

The school has a complaints policy and set of procedures which meet all of the regulations. The school has taken steps to ensure that parents and carers are aware of them.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The proprietor has ensured that the school meets The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, schedule 1 ('the Regulations'),

What the school could do to improve further

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

- improve the access to computers in the classrooms to support students' independent learning
- improve the quality and consistency of marking so that students receive advice on how to improve all their work.

Inspection judgements

outstanding	good	satisfactory	inadequate
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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		√		
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School details

School status	Independent day
Type of school	Muslim secondary school
Date school opened	September 1991
Age range of pupils	11-16 years
Gender of pupils	Girls
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	225
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs	0
Number of pupils who are looked after	0
Annual fees (day pupils)	£ 4,260
Address of school	55 High Lane Chorlton Manchester M21 9FA
Telephone number	0161 881 2127
Email address	pa@mihsg.co.uk
Headteacher	Mrs Mona Mohamed
Proprietor	Manchester Islamic Educational Trust Ltd