

School inspection report

28 to 30 April 2026

Manchester Islamic Grammar School for Girls

141 Barlow Moor Road
West Didsbury
Manchester
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The Independent Schools Inspectorate is appointed by the Department for Education to inspect association independent schools in England. Our inspections report on the extent to which the statutory Independent School Standards and other applicable regulatory requirements are met, collectively referred to in this report as 'the Standards'.

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Summary of inspection findings

1. Leaders and trustees ensure that the requirements of the Standards are consistently met. They take a strategic approach to pupils' wellbeing and make decisions that are rooted in the school's values and ethos. Leaders work collaboratively with staff and parents so that pupils' personal and academic development, and their physical and emotional wellbeing are prioritised. Trustees visit the school regularly to meet with senior leaders, staff, parents and pupils to evaluate the impact of leaders' actions. This enables trustees to provide appropriate support and challenge to leaders.
2. Leaders communicate effectively and regularly with parents. Appropriate policies and procedures are available on the school's website, with consultations held on key areas. Parents receive regular reports on their child's progress, although inconsistencies in the use of terminology mean that in some subjects parents do not have a clear understanding of their child's attainment and progress. Teachers' inconsistent use of reporting terminology also means that leaders are not always able to establish and evaluate pupils' progress with sufficient accuracy.
3. Leaders monitor the school's curriculum and how it is taught. They ensure that curriculum content reflects pupils' interests and aptitudes. Teaching enables pupils to learn new concepts and skills so that pupils achieve well. However, teachers' feedback is not always given as leaders intend so it is not consistently effective. This means that sometimes pupils do not understand what next steps they need to take to learn successfully.
4. Leaders ensure that pupils' physical, mental and emotional health are well supported. Effective anti-bullying and behaviour strategies support a culture of respect and tolerance among pupils, and between staff and pupils. The curriculums for personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) and relationships and sex education (RSE) equip pupils with the skills and knowledge to make informed personal choices. Extra-curricular clubs and a weekly wellbeing programme contribute to pupils' confidence, wellbeing and growing maturity.
5. Leaders implement effective health and safety systems, including for fire safety. Suitable policies and procedures are in place and carefully overseen. The robust culture of risk assessment contributes to pupils' safety and wellbeing when on site and during off-site visits.
6. Pupils are well supported to develop an understanding of values such as respect and tolerance and to distinguish right from wrong. They are given comprehensive guidance to make decisions regarding their future careers. Pupils understand the importance of service to the school community and the wider world. Pupils participate in a wide range of community and global charitable initiatives.
7. Trustees and leaders maintain a culture of vigilance in safeguarding. They work closely with external agencies to ensure timely support for vulnerable pupils. Trustees and leaders ensure that safer recruitment checks are carried out on adults before they begin work at the school. These are recorded on a single central record of appointments (SCR). At the beginning of the inspection there were some minor administrative errors recorded on the SCR, which leaders rectified when inspectors were on site.

The extent to which the school meets the Standards

- Standards relating to leadership and management, and governance are met.
- Standards relating to the quality of education, training and recreation are met.
- Standards relating to pupils' physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing are met.
- Standards relating to pupils' social and economic education and contribution to society are met.
- Standards relating to safeguarding are met.

Recommended next steps

Leaders should:

- ensure that teachers use assessment terminology consistently so that in all subjects parents understand their child's academic attainment and progress and leaders can accurately evaluate pupils' progress to address any concerns
- ensure that the school's feedback policy is followed consistently by all teaching staff so that pupils receive sufficient guidance and explanations to understand how to improve their work
- ensure that the safer recruitment checks on the SCR are always recorded accurately.

Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance

8. Trustees closely monitor the work of senior leaders and the impact of their decisions on pupils' outcomes. Trustees receive comprehensive reports and attend committee meetings and day visits. This ensures that trustees understand the quality of education the school provides. Trustees make sure that leaders are well trained and have the skills and knowledge to lead effectively.
9. Trustees and senior leaders are reflective and work together to evaluate what the school does well and what needs to improve. They ensure that suitable strategic plans are in place to support pupils' welfare, enhance educational provision and enact the school's aims. For example, leaders review the quality of teaching and learning through lesson visits and discussion with pupils. Trustees undertake these activities alongside senior leaders and their combined evaluations help to refine the development strategy for the school.
10. Leaders are visible and approachable within the school. They promote the school's aims and ethos clearly and ensure that the school's Islamic values are understood by pupils, parents and staff.
11. The school provides appropriate information to parents about its policies, ethos and approach, typically through the school's website. Parents receive information regarding the school's curriculum, the RSE programme and careers provision. Parents are invited into school for consultations on the RSE programme so that they understand the content that is covered and taught to their child, alongside the relevance of this content to their child's personal development.
12. There is an appropriate complaints procedure in place which leaders follow closely. Complaints are managed within the published timescales through a formal three-stage process. An appropriate log of complaints is kept. Senior leaders and trustees regularly monitor complaints in order to identify patterns and improve processes as required.
13. Parents receive regular feedback on their child's progress via in-person meetings, interim reports and annual summative reports. However, the lack of consistency between subject departments in the use of reporting terminology reduces the clarity and fullness of information that parents receive about their child's attainment and progress in different subjects.
14. Leaders liaise closely with relevant external agencies to support pupils' wellbeing and safety. They seek guidance from and make referrals to the local authority. Leaders inform the local authority when pupils join or leave at non-standard transition points. They make sure to stay up to date with new guidance so that prompt and effective action is taken at all times. Currently, there are no pupils with an education, health and care plan (EHC plan) or for whom the school is in receipt of any state funding.
15. Leaders maintain effective oversight of risk management and mitigate risk carefully. Risk assessments for activities and trips take account of pupils' different needs. Staff implement the control measures identified in risk assessments. Leaders regularly review risk assessments to ensure they remain suitable for purpose.
16. Leaders ensure that the school site is clean and suitably maintained. Policies and processes are reviewed regularly, and action is taken when needed. Leaders implement a suitable accessibility plan that identifies actions to improve pupils' accessibility to the curriculum and the premises. The school fulfils its duties under the Equality Act 2010.

The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to leadership and management, and governance

17. All the relevant Standards are met.

Section 2: Quality of education, training and recreation

18. The school's broad curriculum develops pupils' intellectual, aesthetic and creative skills across the school. The curriculum is well structured and takes account of the diverse interests and aptitudes of pupils. Alongside English, mathematics and humanities, pupils can opt to study food technology, art and a choice of languages, including Arabic, Urdu and French. Pupils in Year 10 and Year 11 study GCSEs and choose a BTEC qualification to supplement these. Older pupils have the option to study for the iGCSE Islamiyat qualification. The curriculum choices on offer support and equip pupils for the next stage of their education or training, such as studying A Levels at a range of local schools and colleges.
19. Pupils typically make good progress throughout their time at the school. Pupils' GCSE results are often above the national averages across subjects.
20. Pupils benefit from a range of extra-curricular activities, including opportunities to sing, take part in debating, learn to code and explore nature. Pupils engage enthusiastically with these opportunities, which build their knowledge and skills as well as their confidence in their own abilities. Additional opportunities are available within curriculum subjects, such as an annual mathematical challenge and English essay competitions, which deepen pupils' academic engagement.
21. Teachers are knowledgeable in their subject specialisms and deliver well-planned and sequenced lessons that enable pupils to make good progress. Teachers use a range of resources and teaching approaches to engage pupils, including digital technology, carefully adapted questioning, group work and practical tasks. Typically, teaching is well matched to pupils' abilities and offers them suitable challenges to apply their knowledge in more complex ways. For example, during Arabic lessons, pupils move from using simple vocabulary about numbers to being able to solve mathematical problems. In English lessons, pupils are taught to be increasingly precise in their use of language. During mathematics lessons, older pupils apply their algebraic knowledge to solve increasingly complex problems.
22. Generally, teachers provide pupils with timely and helpful feedback that is in line with the school's policy. In these instances, pupils are clear about the steps they need to take in order to progress within the subject and they are given sufficient time and opportunities to practise and secure new skills. However, on occasion, the quality and frequency of feedback is not effective. This limits pupils' understanding of how to specifically improve their work and hinders the progress they make.
23. Leaders track pupils' attainment carefully to check that pupils are learning and achieving well. However, across subject departments, teachers use assessment terminology in different ways. This limits the clarity and precision with which pupils' progress can be evaluated so that any necessary actions can be taken.
24. Leaders identify pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and provide personalised support in lessons to meet pupils' additional needs. Teachers make suitable adaptations when needed, for example by providing digital copies of resources so that pupils who have SEND access the curriculum successfully. Leaders track the progress of pupils who have SEND regularly to make sure they achieve well.

25. Most pupils in the school speak English as an additional language (EAL). No pupils are in an early stage of language acquisition and all are proficient in English in both written and spoken communication.
26. Pupils display positive attitudes to learning in their lessons. They listen attentively to each other's perspectives. They are articulate and work hard. For example, in religious studies (RS), older pupils explain clearly the arguments for and against the existence of God from the perspective of the human experience of suffering. In science, younger pupils apply their knowledge about the types of sound waves in order to understand the workings of the human ear. During information and communication technology (ICT) lessons, pupils collaborate well, sharing ideas and supporting each other to solve problems.

The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to the quality of education, training and recreation

- 27. All the relevant Standards are met.**

Section 3: Pupils' physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing

28. Leaders promote pupils' social, moral and cultural development through inclusive relationships and shared community experiences. They create a culture of respect which permeates all aspects of school life. Staff model respect for differences and teach pupils to live out the school values in a practical manner. Daily opportunities for pupils to pray and reflect together enhance the school's sense of community that pupils experience and enable pupils to consider wider expressions of the school's values.
29. Pupils' confidence and self-esteem are carefully cultivated by leaders through a range of activities. During 'wellbeing Wednesday', pupil representatives lead others in well-considered activities such as the giving of silent compliments. Opportunities such as the Model United Nations, debating and The Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme (DofE) support pupils' confidence, resilience and personal development.
30. The PSHE curriculum is carefully planned and effectively delivered. Pupils learn about a range of topics, such as the Equality Act 2010, healthy diets and disease prevention. In RSE lessons, pupils explore concepts such as healthy relationships and abusive relationships in age-appropriate ways. This ensures that pupils develop the necessary knowledge and skills to make informed decisions. Leaders use feedback from pupils to continually refine and review lesson content to ensure that it remains relevant and meets pupils' needs.
31. Leaders ensure that the curriculum and school life support pupils' mental and physical health. Pupils benefit from regular opportunities for physical activity, such as playing netball and tennis. Pupils successfully improve their physical skills and confidence, which they apply during inter-form tournaments. Outside of formal physical education (PE) lessons, pupils can choose to participate in karate sessions. At lunchtimes a range of clubs are available that enhance pupils' mental wellbeing, such as crochet, 'quiet minds' and gardening. These are well attended. Effective pastoral systems, anonymous 'concern boxes' and a school counsellor enable pupils to access help that supports their positive mental health.
32. Pupils are well behaved and show a clear understanding of the difference between right and wrong. They understand and demonstrate leaders' high standards and take responsibility for their actions. Occasions of poor behaviour and bullying are rare, but when they do occur leaders take appropriate actions promptly. Suitable support is given to pupils that helps them to reflect on their behaviour and make better choices in the future. Leaders maintain detailed written records to monitor behaviour, look for patterns and take appropriate action.
33. Staff supervise pupils appropriately during the school day and when participating in educational visits off site. The school's premises are maintained in line with health and safety standards, with systematic monitoring and testing of areas including water, electricity, trees on site and gas appliances. Fire safety processes are robust. Pupils and staff practise regular evacuation drills so they know what to do in an emergency. Leaders use expert specialist services to check that the school's systems are effective. They act on any advice in a timely manner.
34. Leaders maintain effective oversight of admission and attendance records. Clear procedures are in place for monitoring attendance trends, and absences are followed up promptly.

35. Pupils access appropriate first aid care if they are unwell or injured during the school day. Medical accommodation is suitable, and effective liaison between the first aid team and pastoral leads ensures that pupils' needs are fully addressed.

The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to pupils' physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing

36. All the relevant Standards are met.

Section 4: Pupils' social and economic education and contribution to society

37. Teachers plan learning experiences that enable pupils to develop a deep understanding of British values and how these link to the school's Islamic ethos. These values are taught in PSHE lessons and are visible in the respectful way in which pupils speak with others. Pupils are given opportunities to learn directly from others who represent a range of faiths and cultures through school projects with local churches, synagogues and gurdwaras, which emphasise respect and tolerance of others.
38. Pupils learn practically about democracy through carefully run mock elections, debates and the school's participation in Citizens UK. Pupils are able to raise questions about issues of their choosing with local leaders such as the Deputy Mayor of Manchester. During their citizenship lessons, older pupils explore the role of the British government and how this compares to other democracies. Leaders are careful that any political information shared with pupils is presented in a balanced and unbiased manner.
39. Leaders provide pupils with opportunities to learn about the importance of contributing to society both locally and globally. Pupils support foodbanks, women's health initiatives and local community organisations. Pupils write letters to refugees and contribute to Islamic Relief. Many initiatives are pupil-led, which develops pupils' leadership and communication skills. Each form has its own charity box, and pupils decide how to donate and to which charity. Pupils demonstrate empathy, moral purpose and a clear understanding of their responsibilities as active citizens.
40. Pupils develop their economic understanding through PSHE, history and 'living Islam' lessons, as well as during assemblies and form times. Pupils learn how to manage budgets both now and for the future. They access Islamic teachings on finance as well as learning about the historical aspects of economic activity. For example, pupils play roles as investors in the USA prior to the Great Depression. Pupils take part in external enterprise competitions, making pitches to judges and developing their business ideas over the longer term.
41. The school's well-planned careers programme provides pupils with information regarding both the next stage of their education or training and their eventual careers beyond this. Pupils benefit from independently led workshops that introduce them to a range of careers and allow them to consider their own aptitudes. Transferable skills, such as communication and leadership, are taught explicitly both during these sessions and throughout the year. Visits to the school by former pupils enrich the careers provision, allowing girls to be inspired by, and ask questions of, those who have left the school in recent years.
42. Leaders ensure that pupils develop their leadership skills through a range of deliberate experiences. These include acting as a form ambassador for topics such as safeguarding or wellbeing through to joining the school council or acting as a mentor for a new pupil. Pupils in Year 9 take part in a formal leadership programme through Citizens UK, delivering assemblies and focusing on community projects of their choosing.
43. Leaders ensure that there are channels in place through which pupils can voice their opinions and views. The school council meets regularly and shares its work with other pupils through the 'you said, we did' displays around the school. Leaders value pupils' ideas and opinions. They maintain respectful dialogue with pupils when suggested changes are more difficult to enact.

The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to pupils' social and economic education and contribution to society

44. All the relevant Standards are met.

Safeguarding

45. The trustees oversee the school's safeguarding procedures. Trustees regularly visit the school, meet with senior leaders, review policies and receive regular detailed reports. They gather comprehensive information to ensure that leaders are supported to undertake their roles effectively and check that the safeguarding policies and procedures are in line with statutory requirements.
46. Staff are well trained in their safeguarding responsibilities. Staff with delegated responsibilities for safeguarding receive additional, regular training through external specialists and the local authority. All staff receive annual update training and benefit from weekly safeguarding scenarios that leaders share with them to consider and exemplify best practice.
47. Leaders are vigilant in their approach to safeguarding and work proactively with a range of external agencies. These include local safeguarding networks and the local authority. Leaders seek advice, understand local procedures and make timely referrals when appropriate to support pupils' safety and wellbeing.
48. Through PSHE and ICT lessons, pupils are taught in an age-appropriate way how to keep themselves safe, including when online. Pupils learn how to report concerns, and the school's pastoral monitoring systems support pupils' wellbeing effectively. Leaders operate a robust internet filtering and monitoring system to track pupils' online activity, which is tested regularly. Staff act quickly when any incidents occur.
49. Trustees and leaders ensure that suitable pre-employment checks are undertaken before adults begin work at the school. These checks are recorded on the SCR, which is monitored by leaders and trustees. However, inspectors discovered some minor administrative errors in the recording of recruitment checks within the SCR that leaders and trustees had not previously identified. These errors were corrected during the inspection.

The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to safeguarding

- 50. All the relevant Standards are met.**

School details

School	Manchester Islamic Grammar School for Girls
Department for Education number	352/6040
Registered charity number	1073862
Address	Manchester Islamic Grammar School for Girls 141 Barlow Moor Road West Didsbury Manchester M20 2PQ
Phone number	0161 881 2127
Email address	info@migsg.miet.uk
Website	https://migsg.miet.uk
Proprietor	Manchester Islamic Educational Trust Ltd
Chair	Mr Farroukh Zaheer
Headteacher	Ms Jamila Kossar
Age range	11 to 16
Number of pupils	260
Date of previous inspection	18 September 2023

Information about the school

51. Manchester Islamic Grammar School for Girls is a single-sex day school catering for female pupils aged 11 to 16 years. It is situated in the Didsbury suburb of Manchester and is one of three schools in the Manchester Islamic Educational Trust. Trustees provide governance of the school. Since the previous inspection, an acting headteacher was appointed in January 2025.
52. The school has identified 21 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities. No pupils in the school have an education, health and care plan.
53. The school has identified 194 pupils who speak English as an additional language.
54. The school states its aims are to provide a nurturing environment where students are encouraged to reach their full potential academically, spiritually and personally.

Inspection details

Inspection dates

28 to 30 April 2026

55. A team of 3 inspectors visited the school for two and a half days.

56. Inspection activities included:

- observation of lessons, some in conjunction with school leaders
- observation of registration periods and assemblies
- observation of a sample of extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection
- discussions with the chair and other governors
- discussions with the headteacher, school leaders, managers and other members of staff
- discussions with pupils
- visits to the learning support area and facilities for physical education
- scrutiny of samples of pupils' work
- scrutiny of a range of policies, documentation and records provided by the school.

57. The inspection team considered the views of pupils, members of staff and parents who responded to ISI's pre-inspection surveys.

How are association independent schools in England inspected?

- The Department for Education is the regulator for independent schools in England.
- ISI is approved by the Secretary of State for Education to inspect independent schools in England, which are members of associations in membership of the Independent Schools Council.
- ISI inspections report to the Department for Education on the extent to which the statutory Independent School Standards, the EYFS statutory framework requirements, the National Minimum Standards for boarding schools and any other relevant standards are met.
- For more information, please visit **www.isi.net**.

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