

Rawdhatul Ilm Wal Huda

32 Moss Street, Blackburn BB1 5JT

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this boarding school

Rawdhatul Ilm Wal Huda is an Islamic faith boarding school. The boarding facilities are for female students between the ages of 11 and 25. Pupils in the boarding provision are currently in Years 7 to 10. The school is in a new purpose-built building that incorporates both the school and the boarding provision over five floors. The boarding provision is in the top two floors of the building. It is overseen by a head of boarding. The boarding provision accommodates a maximum of 220 students. At the time of inspection, there were 39 boarders in residence.

This is the boarding provision's first inspection since its registration. The visit was an aligned inspection between social care and education. A separate team of inspectors inspected the education part of the school.

Inspection dates: 26 to 28 September 2023

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
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The boarding school provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: not applicable

Overall judgement at last inspection: not applicable

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children enjoy their boarding experiences. They have fun together and they likened it to living with a big family. Children have built trusting relationships with the boarding staff, who they can talk to and who put the children at the centre of their practice. The children also spoke positively about the close friendships that they make with one another because of their boarding experience.

Parents are extremely complimentary about their children's boarding experiences and the positive impact the boarding provision has on the social and emotional well-being of their children. Family time is organised well and supported so that children have regular visits home to spend quality time with their family, no matter the distance.

Children have access to local and appropriate health services when they need them. The boarding staff have a good understanding of children's individual health needs, such as asthma and specific allergies. The school's medical and welfare officers work proactively with the children and the boarding staff to ensure that all children are supported to lead active lifestyles and to promote good health.

Children enjoy their education. They are encouraged to aspire and plan for their future career choices. They have excellent attendance, and they make good progress in line with their individual targets.

Children's views and suggestions are prioritised in the boarding provision. They have opportunities to share their ideas, for example through the boarding council and an anonymous suggestion box. Children also have access to an independent listener, who they feel comfortable talking to and contacting to discuss any concerns.

Children are treated with respect and dignity. They are helped to build emotional resilience and a sense of their own identity. In addition, they are supported to understand and promote British values within their everyday lives.

Children are supported to develop their independence and daily living skills to prepare them for adulthood. As children progress and become older, they are actively involved in helping younger children to develop their skills and confidence and settle into boarding.

Children's interests and hobbies are considered before they arrive. They enjoy a wide range of recreational opportunities and extra-curricular activities in the boarding provision and the community. This teaches them a variety of different skills and promotes their self-esteem. Children have also taken part in fundraising events to benefit local charities, such as homeless shelters and the local hospice.

The boarding provision is homely and comfortable and ensures that children's privacy is respected. The children take pride in their bedrooms and the boarding premises. They take responsibility for keeping the boarding provision clean and tidy and enjoy fun competitions to obtain 'bedroom of the week'.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: good

Children are protected from harm and they said that they feel safe and secure. Parents said that the safety and well-being of their children is of high importance in the boarding provision. Boarding staff know the children well and understand any potential risks or vulnerabilities for children and the action that they should take.

Boarding staff are trained in positive behaviour management. They provide children with clear boundaries, structures and expectations. The boarding staff are good role models and, because of this, there is mutual respect between children and the staff caring for them.

Children do not go missing from the boarding provision or engage in any other significant risk-taking behaviours. They are kept occupied and their whereabouts is monitored effectively by the boarding staff to prevent them from being placed at risk. Furthermore, boarding staff and children have all engaged in a range of training, assemblies and workshops to educate them about emotional well-being, healthy relationships, substance misuse and exploitation.

Children are supported to keep themselves safe online and in the community. The boarding provision works in partnership with the school to educate children about the potential dangers. This is part of the leaders' and governors' vision to support children to take age-appropriate risks and to equip them with the knowledge to promote personal safety.

Children are encouraged to live with one another respectfully. The children pride themselves on supporting each other and sharing their experiences in boarding. Therefore, there is not a bullying culture between children. The school has an effective approach to managing low-level incidents or altercations between children to prevent them from escalating further.

Children rarely complain about their boarding experiences. Leaders and managers take swift and appropriate action to address any concerns. The complaints policy and external agency details are made accessible to children and displayed throughout the boarding provision should they want to raise a concern.

Safer recruitment checks have been undertaken to ensure that safe and suitable staff work with the children. However, individual staff personnel files do not hold copies of staff verification records, including photographic identification. The head of boarding took immediate action to rectify this during the inspection. A good-practice recommendation has been raised in relation to this.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

Leaders, managers and governors work collectively together and have shared an ambitious vision for the boarding provision and for changing children's lives. Together, they have the skills and experience to ensure the effective operation of the boarding provision. They recognise the strengths and weaknesses of the provision.

Their boarding development plan is focused on change and driving improvements in children's experiences of boarding.

Leaders and managers understand the plans for the children. They monitor the progress that individual children make. Alongside the positive feedback received from parents and their children, they can demonstrate the positive impact that living in the boarding provision has on individual children's progress and life chances.

Boarding staff have all undertaken an induction programme to prepare them for their roles. Leaders and managers have taken steps to enrol staff on the relevant workforce diploma to ensure that they are developing a skilled and qualified workforce.

Boarding staff reported that they receive regular support and guidance from leaders and managers. They individually meet with the head of boarding. However, formal supervision for staff is not recorded effectively to evidence the support and guidance they receive or to evidence that their professional development is regularly reviewed. A good-practice recommendation has been raised in relation to this.

Boarding staff are trained in a variety of areas that are bespoke to children's needs. They have been trained in the handling of medication. However, leaders and managers could not provide evidence that staff had undertaken training in the safe administration of medication. Furthermore, inspectors found that the recording of medication records is not robust. The records do not always evidence who has administered the medication to the child. This is because the records are destroyed, rewritten by the medical officer, or not signed by the staff administering the medication.

Since the boarding provision became operational, children have been provided with continuity of care by a consistent and stable staff team. The boarding staff also work closely with the education staff, so they have a sense of shared ownership when supporting the children.

The governing body holds the school to account to ensure that the standard of care is good. A separate boarding governor is in place who visits the boarding provision regularly and works collectively with the head of boarding. This ensures that there is sole focus on the boarders' experiences and an extra layer of scrutiny is provided in relation to the boarding provision.

What does the boarding school need to do to improve?

Compliance with the national minimum standards for boarding schools

The school does not meet the following national minimum standard for boarding schools:

- 7.6. Staff are properly trained to provide the support that pupils need when administering medicines.

Recommendations

- 2.8. The records specified in Appendix B are maintained and monitored by the school and action taken as appropriate. This specifically relates to evidence of formal supervision being recorded and kept on staff personnel files.
- 19.1. Schools operate safer recruitment and adopt recruitment procedures in line with the regulatory requirements and having regard to relevant guidance issued by the Secretary of State. This specifically relates to copies of staff identification, including photo identification, being kept on staff personnel files.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people using the social care common inspection framework. This inspection was carried out under the Children Act 1989 to assess the effectiveness of the service, how it meets the core functions of the service as set out in legislation, and to consider how well it complies with the national minimum standards.

Boarding school details

Social care unique reference number: 2684768

Headteacher/teacher in charge: Aysha Ahmed

Type of school: Boarding school

Telephone number: 01254476731

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Inspectors

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