

Darul Uloom School

Darul Uloom School

Darul Uloom, Foxbury Avenue, Chislehurst, Kent BR7 6SD

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this boarding school

This is an independent Islamic boarding school for boys in Chislehurst. The school is registered for 155 pupils aged from 11 to 19 years. At the time of the inspection, there were 127 pupils on roll, all of whom board in accommodation on the school premises. Most children return home every other weekend.

The school's new principal was appointed in October 2025. The head of boarding has been in post since October 2024. He is currently completing an appropriate qualification.

The boarding provision was last inspected in January 2023.

The inspectors only inspected the social care provision at this school.

The school had a separate unannounced school progress monitoring inspection on the first day of this inspection by the school's inspectors to monitor the progress the school had made in meeting the independent school standards from a previous standard inspection and there is a separate report for this inspection.

Inspection dates: 26 to 28 November 2025

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	requires improvement to be good
---	--

How well children and young people are helped and protected	requires improvement to be good
---	---------------------------------

The effectiveness of leaders and managers	requires improvement to be good
---	---------------------------------

The boarding school is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Date of last inspection: 25 January 2023

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: requires improvement to be good

Weaknesses in safeguarding practice and leadership have led to a judgement of requires improvement to be good regarding boarders' experiences and progress.

School leaders' oversight of the boarding provision does not ensure that children stay in a safe, high-quality environment. New carpets and bathrooms have been fitted in the boarding accommodation, but there is still considerable work to be completed to ensure that this area reaches an acceptable, good standard. In addition, some communal areas, such as the gym, are closed due to safety concerns. School leaders have a clear plan for improvement, which is focused on the needs of boarders.

Children told inspectors that the best things about school included socialising with their friends. Children's friendships are important to them, and some children miss school during the school holidays.

School staff complete a sensitive induction with new boarders to help them settle in the new environment. Over time, this positive start helps children to feel a sense of belonging at the school. Staff and school leaders model this sense of belonging, and several were previously pupils at the school themselves. These staff can empathise with children who board, and children believe that these staff understand their experience.

Children are supported to develop their independence skills. Some children reported that they have learned new skills, such as maintaining a clean environment. Children have a range of activities that promote healthy lifestyles, such as football, swimming, table tennis and judo. These extra-curricular opportunities help children to develop their knowledge, interests and hobbies.

Children enjoy the food at school. There is a planned menu, and children look forward to certain mealtimes. Parents and children have made suggestions for how to add more variety to the meals offered, which led to changes and developments to the menu. This helps children to experience a wider variety of meals and try new things.

Boarding and academic staff work closely together. This holistic approach supports children's learning and development. Parents receive regular progress reports and are happy with their academic progress, the development of their understanding of their faith and their increasing independence skills.

Children are confident and able to share their views and opinions. The school council has representatives from each year, who raise issues in council meetings on behalf of their peers to discuss with staff. Children told inspectors that they feel they can voice their opinions to staff and are positive about their boarding experience. The student

council is confident that leaders care about what students say and believe they will respond well.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good

Leaders and managers mostly have good procedures in place, and there are no significant concerns regarding safeguarding. While not widespread, shortfalls were identified on this inspection that may compromise children's safety.

Not all staff have sufficient understanding of safeguarding reporting procedures. On one occasion, a parent reported a bullying incident, but this was not quickly escalated to senior leaders. This delayed the leadership team from investigating and taking prompt action to support children. Once leaders were aware, they took appropriate steps to keep children safe and ensured that staff refreshed their safeguarding training.

School leaders and managers respond to allegations promptly. They communicate with safeguarding partners, such as the local authority designated officer and the police, and complete internal investigations as needed. Leaders use the learning from these incidents to improve practice and keep children safe. However, records sometimes lack detail, which hinders understanding of incidents or concerns. Leaders are aware of this shortfall and are working with staff to ensure that records are detailed, including when and how incidents occur and what actions are taken.

Although leaders and managers are aware of day-to-day safeguarding arrangements, one contractor was left unsupervised during this inspection, as staff did not follow the school's procedures of supervising contractors on site. This shows an ongoing vulnerability in staff's understanding of the school's safeguarding procedures.

There have been two incidents where children have been reported missing from the school. Staff report children missing promptly, and leaders and managers work well with relevant agencies and parents to ensure that there is a well-coordinated response. Not all staff have an appropriate understanding of the risks when children are missing. One member of staff's response to a missing child was not child centred and did not demonstrate appropriate knowledge of safeguarding practices. For example, the staff member's attempts to contact the child included the use of insensitive language, which was not appropriate. The child was found with a family member after a short period of time. Staff completed additional safeguarding training so that leaders could be assured that they had the knowledge about how to respond more appropriately.

Children told inspectors that they feel safe and can talk to boarding staff about any concerns. They know how to make a complaint if needed and have access to external contacts, such as the independent person appointed by the school to be available for children. Children's positive relationships with boarding staff mean that they see them as adults they can trust.

Staff work with parents to ensure that children are appropriately supported with their health. Staff know about children's allergies and their individual health plans and have completed relevant training to meet their needs. Staff also understand the systems for the management and administration of medications. Parents usually take their unwell children home to recover and seek medical attention if needed. However, some first-aid records do not show details of what actions staff take following accidents, including minor head injuries, and some records do not show whether parents have been informed. Leaders addressed this shortfall at the inspection and updated their policy in relation to head injuries so that staff have clear guidance should this be needed.

Children and staff were observed to enjoy each other's company, and interactions were warm. Children talk about a positive sense of community and friendship. There have been no incidents requiring physical intervention. Staff use rewards to encourage positive behaviour.

Leaders' oversight of health and safety is inconsistent. Inspectors noted a broken socket and worn fire doors that pose a risk to children and staff. Leaders addressed these concerns quickly to ensure that the physical environment was safe for children. For example, leaders swiftly arranged a full assessment of risks relating to fire in the school building and put in place plans that prioritised children's safety.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

The head of boarding has been in post since October 2024. He is also the deputy designated safeguarding lead and is enrolled on an appropriate course to manage the boarding provision. The head of boarding is a good role model for children and attended the same school. He is also a qualified teacher and brings a unique insight into understanding the support that boarders need in order to thrive. Despite leaders' insight and understanding, the oversight of boarding, safeguarding and health and safety is inconsistent.

Inspectors were aware during the inspection that there is an ongoing legal dispute between current and former trustees. As a result, information is not consistently and effectively shared between some trustees and the senior leadership team. For example, during the inspection, information regarding suitable checks for new trustees was not easily accessible, and it is not clear who has access to this information or when this is shared. This does not support an open and transparent safeguarding culture, where children and their well-being are prioritised.

School leaders have a clear vision that centres around the Islamic ethos. As well as supporting academic study, staff focus on helping children to develop their individuality and prepare them for leadership roles in the community. Children understand this vision and accept the challenge in this to support their development.

School leaders and staff have good relationships with parents. Parents' feedback to inspectors was positive about the quality of care their children receive. Parents highlight good communication and the variety of children's experiences, alongside their academic progress, as strengths of the school.

Leaders and managers promote a supportive environment for staff to develop their knowledge and skills. They offer boarding staff access to a wide range of relevant training and regular supervision. Staff feel well supported and are extremely positive about working for the school. Many of them are former students. Staff describe the leadership team as 'approachable', 'visible' and 'available'. However, learning from safeguarding incidents is not routinely shared in staff meetings, despite there being a range of incidents where learning could be usefully shared. This limits the opportunities leaders have to inform staff of best practice and reduce the risk of similar incidents occurring in future.

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 standards for boarding schools:

- The school's leadership and management fulfil their responsibilities consistently and effectively so that the standards are met. (Boarding schools: national minimum standards 2.4)
- Good-quality sleeping accommodation is provided for boarders. It is well organised and managed with ongoing assessments of risk (which should be documented) and findings acted on to reduce risk for all boarders. Accommodation gives boarders appropriate privacy, taking into account sex, age and any special requirements. Where children share a bedroom, they are able to express a preference about whom they share with. (Boarding schools: national minimum standards 4.1)
- The school should ensure that arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school and such arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State. (Boarding schools: national minimum standards 8.1)
- The school premises, accommodation and facilities provided therein are maintained to a standard such that, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of pupils are ensured, and they are provided a safe environment in which they can live and learn. (Boarding schools: national minimum standards 9.2)
- All persons visiting boarding accommodation or staff accommodation (e.g. visitors, outside delivery and maintenance personnel) are kept under sufficient staff supervision to prevent them gaining unsupervised access to boarders or their accommodation. (Boarding schools: national minimum standards 19.4)

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: SC006927

Headteacher/teacher in charge: Mr Muhammad Hussain

Type of school: Boarding School

Telephone number: 020 8295 0637

Email address: info@darululoomlondon.com

Inspectors

Dorothy Thompstone, Social Care Inspector

Peter Jackson, Social Care Inspector

Glen Strowbridge, Social Care Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2025