

PRESTON MUSLIM GIRLS HIGH SCHOOL

Inspection Report

Local authority: Lancashire
Inspected under the auspices of: AMS UK
Inspection dates: 22 January 2018
Lead inspector: Hasina Varachia

This inspection of the school was carried out under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils	11-19
Gender of pupils	Girls
Number on roll	479
Appropriate authority	The Governing Body
Chair	Mr Arif Isap
Headteacher	Mufti Javid Pathan
Date of previous school inspection	24 January 2013
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Introduction

Inspection team

Lead Inspector: Hasina Varachia
Team Inspectors: Mona Mohamed and Wasim Riaz

This inspection was carried out by a team of three inspectors who visited lessons, or parts of lessons, including observing form time, *salah*, break time and lunch time. They held meetings with the senior leadership team, staff, parents, two experienced governors and groups of pupils. Inspectors also observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation, including pupil's written work, planning of the RE (Religious Education) and PSHCE (Personal, Social, Health, Citizenship Education) curriculum, various school self-evaluation documents, the school's RE Development Plan and parent questionnaires. In accordance with the protocol which exists between the Department for Education (DfE) and AMS UK (Section 48), the lead inspector reviewed the school's last Ofsted inspection report.

The inspection team looked at the following in detail:

- The religious education (RE) curriculum
- The progress pupils make in RE
- The quality of teaching in RE
- Leadership and management of RE
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (SMSC), including collective worship.

Information about the school

Established in 1989 as an independent Muslim girls' school, Preston Muslim Girls High School (PMGHS) became voluntary aided in 2011. The school has expanded in recent years, and although registered as an education provider for girls aged 11-19, as yet has no pupils on roll post-16. Governors, staff, parents and carers work together to educate girls in the context of the Islamic faith as a way of life. The school is supported by the Preston Teaching Alliance.

Almost all students are from ethnic minority backgrounds. The proportion of students for whom the school receives pupil premium funding is below average.

Inspection judgments

Overall effectiveness	1
The achievement of pupils in their religious education.	1
The quality of teaching and learning.	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of religious Education, including the role of the school's governing body in RE.	1
The extent to which the religious education curriculum meets pupils' needs.	1
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development including the daily act of collective worship.	1

Overall effectiveness: the quality of religious education provided at Preston Muslim Girls High School is outstanding because:

Preston Muslim Girls High School aims *'to provide an excellent educational experience that will develop each and every pupil to achieve her full spiritual, moral, social, and educational potential through a deep appreciation of her faith.'* The school meets this aim very well.

Teaching is delivered with pace and enjoyment so pupils are fully engaged and progress is brisk. Teachers demonstrate very good subject knowledge and a clear enthusiasm which inspires pupils to learn. Much of the teaching provides opportunities for pupils to work together and support each other, and this is a strength of the school.

Pupils have a very positive attitude to learning, are attentive, interested in what they do, curious and diligent. Pupils take pride in their work and are eager to do their best.

Pupils' personal development is excellent. They are articulate, confident and high achieving pupils yet have a genuine concern and respect for others. They are socially aware as a result of the diverse range of activities that pupils experience which promotes deep-rooted understanding of other cultures. The quality of care provided by the school is excellent resulting in happy girls who reflect high standards of behaviour. Relationships between staff and pupils and among the pupils themselves are relaxed and friendly, and teachers are committed and enthusiastic about their pastoral responsibilities, serving as excellent role models. Thorough communication between home and the school demonstrates the excellent care and interest shown by the staff. Pupils views are routinely sought through both the School and Shura Councils and in meetings with governors.

The pupils' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is outstanding. Pupils develop self-confidence and resilience within a culture of care and consideration for others. They are reflective, self-aware and responsive to spiritual experiences. Pupils show respect and sensitivity towards the diverse cultural and religious backgrounds present in British society. Pupils are extremely proud of their school.

Safeguarding arrangements are secure demonstrating that safeguarding the welfare of the pupils is of utmost concern.

Leaders and governors have ensured that RE, collective worship and the curriculum are deeply informed by Islamic values which contribute strongly to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils report that they feel very safe in school and incidences of bullying are extremely rare.

Attendance is given high priority and as a result, attendance in 2016 was 97%.

The RE curriculum is well planned reflecting rich, exciting and invaluable opportunities for pupils to develop as British citizens. Relationships with other schools, local faith groups and the wider community are strong.

Pupils demonstrate their respect and learning of Islam through the many practical experiences the school provides. Annually, charity work supports those in need and pupils learn exceptionally well from these opportunities with one pupil sharing with inspectors, *'When I receive spending money I always donate to charity.'*

Fundamental British values are promoted effectively throughout the curriculum, assemblies and displays. Pupils demonstrate an excellent understanding of these values.

Daily activities and collapsed timetable events contribute strongly to pupils' spiritual development as does the quality of collective worship. Collective worship is an essential part school life and engages the whole school community whilst numerous other opportunities allow pupils to reflect on Islamic values and how these relate to their own lives. As a result, these make an outstanding contribution to the spiritual development of the whole school community.

The achievement of pupils at the school in their religious education is outstanding because:

Pupils are focused in lessons and listen attentively. They work exceptionally well individually and in collaboration with each other. Pupils are enthusiastic learners and they show a great sense of enjoyment in meeting creative challenges such as when working with the art department to produce a flag reflecting SMSC values. The school proudly displays pupils' efforts in the school hall.

GCSE RE results show that pupils are achieving exceptionally well and annually exceed national figures. An exceptional 99% achieved A*- C grades in 2017.

Teaching is strongly supported by excellent assessment systems which ensures that all pupils' progress is very carefully monitored and swift action is taken when it is identified that extra support is needed. As a result, pupils make outstanding progress.

The main library is well established and has a number of Islamic reading and RE books for use.

Parents are fully informed of their daughter's progress through a number of reports throughout the year as well as through parents' evenings. They are provided with timely information on how well their daughter is progressing in relation to expected standards, although more subject focused comments in end of year reports would provide pupils and parents with clearer information about the areas in which pupils are doing well and where they need to improve.

What needs improvement?

- Provide subject focused comments in end of year reports so that pupils and parents can be clear on areas of strength and areas for development.

The quality of teaching and assessment in the school is outstanding because:

Teaching supports the school's aims of providing a high standard of education and allows the identification and development of individual girls' intellectual and creative talents. Lessons are carefully planned so teachers have a sharp insight into pupil's needs and abilities, and give them effective guidance as a result. Pupils with SEND are given individual support, are taught well and consequently make very good progress.

A particular strong feature of teaching in the school is the mutual respect and strong rapport among pupils and between pupils and their teachers. This gives the girls the confidence to ask questions and produces an atmosphere highly conducive to study, which fosters high achievement. The teachers' strong subject knowledge allows interesting and focused lessons. Teaching in the best lessons uses varied resources and strategies to challenge pupils and allows them to develop and articulate their own ideas. Lessons are conducted at a brisk pace.

ICT is used effectively in lessons. Teachers are enthusiastic and committed, with girls' learning also supported by the teaching of additional lessons which either resolve any areas of difficulty or provide the opportunity for pupils to further deepen and extend their knowledge and understanding. Teaching of examination groups focus closely on the syllabus and the skills needed to achieve the high grades. In a number of lessons observed, any errors in pupils' literacy skills were swiftly addressed. Sensitive and targeted questioning allows teachers to identify difficulties and provide opportunities for pupils to develop their reasoning and to reward progress.

Parents and pupils also praise the quality of teaching. One pupil said of the quality of teaching, *'Lessons are well planned and there is always a consistent link to the school ethos'*, a sentiment with which inspectors agreed. In all lessons observed, excellent links were made throughout deepening pupils' spirituality and ensuring a strong Islamic ethos within the school. For example, in a year 9 Arabic lesson, the teacher superbly linked the topic of weather to the power of Allah in creating and changing weather. She further illustrated to pupils how animals such as camels have been created to adapt to severe weather conditions, again developing pupils' spirituality through reflection and awe. In another example, a lesson on the Last Supper made excellent links to the Prophet's (peace be upon him) Last Sermon and how Muslims are reminded through his words to remember him just as Christians are reminded to remember Jesus through Holy Communion.

In most cases, the marking of written work is regular and contains constructive, evaluative and encouraging comments. Most pupils respond well to these comments ensuring they move on in their learning. At times, opportunities to inform pupils about the progress they have made or where further work is needed, is missed.

What needs improvement?

- Ensure the school assessment and marking policy is consistently applied across the school

The effectiveness of leadership and management of Religious Education is outstanding because:

The strength of pupils' educational experiences and the quality of care provided is testimony to the management and leadership of the school. Practices and policies are well established, with a particular emphasis on the welfare and safeguarding of pupils.

Planning for development is very good. The implementation and regular review of the plan helps to maintain and improve standards. For example, discussions are held on examination performance and issues arising are identified for action. The senior management team are open, accessible and supportive of staff, so creating an atmosphere conducive to the development of the school.

Leaders have worked very hard to ensure there is a clear focus on improving teaching and learning at all levels. A well-established coaching culture within the school has provided excellent professional development opportunities for all staff. There is a robust programme of self-evaluation in place, which is underpinned by key performance measures and these secure outstanding outcomes for all pupils. The Islamic ethos is firmly embedded in school life, supported very well by tailored professional development. This has had a thoroughly positive impact on pupil outcomes, behaviour and personal development.

The curriculum is reviewed by governors and senior leaders to ensure it provides breadth and balance whilst meeting the needs of all pupils. The wider curriculum, including form time and extra-curricular activities, has a thoroughly positive impact on the personal development of pupils, ensuring they are ready to fulfil their future aspirations.

The RE curriculum provides numerous opportunities for high quality learning experiences and pupils are thoroughly engaged in their learning as a result.

The Head Teacher, Spirituality Coordinator, other leaders and staff together support the schools' strong Islamic values which enhance the educational experiences of all pupils resulting in a strong impact upon standards.

The school has excellent relationships with parents and they value the regular communication the school has with them. This includes ParentMail, newsletters, the parent forum and an excellent homework app which ensures a close eye is kept on the completion and progress of all homework tasks. All parents spoken to by inspectors would recommend the school to other parents.

Pupils' awareness of other cultures is strong. There are many opportunities afforded by the curriculum and by visits for pupils to explore cultures different from their own. External speakers further enrich pupils' experiences and relationships with other schools strongly promotes their cultural awareness.

Pupils participate in activities that celebrate key cultural events in the British calendar including Black History Month, Remembrance Day and Holocaust Memorial Day. These experiences have enabled the school to strengthen and develop the fundamental British values taught already to pupils throughout the curriculum.

Governors take their responsibilities very seriously. The safeguarding of pupils is ensured by the effective measures in place. Governors bring a good range of expertise to the school with a number coming from an educational background. They have had appropriate training to aid their work and familiarise themselves with the work of the school by observing lessons, attending social and other functions, and receiving presentations from teaching staff on areas of school life. They are further informed by reports from the Head Teacher on school development. This results in governors having an excellent insight into the workings of the school. They have a useful strategic plan for future developments and are challenging, yet supportive of the Head Teacher and his staff in their pursuit of excellence.

Each term, the SMSC link governors together with the Spirituality Coordinator monitor and evaluate various policies and improvement plans directly linked to SMSC.

An example of excellent practice within the school includes pupils meeting with the governors on a termly basis. This provides an excellent opportunity to discuss any concerns pupils may have and this actively brings about improvement. Examples include, introducing the pupil locker system and improving meal choice.

The extent to which the religious education curriculum meets pupils' needs is outstanding because:

The RE curriculum is broad and balanced and encompasses all the major faiths. The school has adopted the Preston SACRE's scheme of work. It provides pupils with a range of Islamic disciplines including, knowledge and understanding of *Tawheed* (oneness of Allah), *fiqh* (theology) and *Seerah* (life of some prophets and the prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him) as well as learning about religions other than their own.

In order to facilitate accelerated progress, the school has modified their Key Stage three curriculum, which provides a thematic approach to religious studies that is delivered over two years. This ensures that pupils are ready to begin GCSE in year 9. In years 7 and 8, pupils explore the six major world religions. This ensures they are well prepared for the study of RE at GCSE which now requires all pupils to take a comparative approach to philosophical questions and moral and ethical debate. In lessons, Islam is used as the base religion for comparison with other religions and world beliefs.

The detailed curriculum map provides information on how each subject integrates SMSC in all lessons. It is an effective document for staff to gain ideas from their peers and work collaboratively whilst promoting SMSC within each subject.

The carefully selected and planned *Hadith* (sayings of the prophet Muhammad) and *Sunnah* (practice of the Prophet Muhammad) of the week and weekly *Halaqah* (study circle) effectively promotes universal human values and good character, applicable to all faiths and none. The topics taught aim to have an impact on pupils' comprehension of Islamic values through the school community. The school achieves this aim exceptionally well.

Pupils have many opportunities to participate in a range of enrichment activities as part of the curriculum. This includes; fundraising activities, a number of lunchtime and after school clubs including, *Seerah* (life of the prophet Muhammad), *Nasheed* (choir), Islamic quiz, debate and astronomy.

The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding because:

The quality of the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is integral to the work of the school. It guides the school ethos, systems and policies with numerous opportunities for spiritual development embedded across the whole day and curriculum.

The school succeeds in its aims of educating pupils with regard to the whole person and of providing outstanding spiritual development that fosters respect, courtesy and kindness. Pupils are mature, demonstrate high levels of confidence, self-esteem and have very positive attitudes to learning. They are loyal towards, and very proud of, their school, and are able to articulate its core values. They have knowledge of and respect for the religious beliefs of others.

The nurturing and development of pupils' own faith and culture is a strength in the school. It is promoted well through the faith enrichment activities, such as the collective prayer at the start and end of each lesson, *Hadith* and *Sunnah* of the Week, *Halaqah* of the week, *Iftaar* during Ramadan, where there is an opportunity for staff and pupils to share a meal together at the end of the day, and the recitation of *Surah Al Kahf* (chapter from the Qur'an) every Friday.

During the month of Ramadan, multiple sessions take place where pupils have the opportunity to take part in various carousel activities. Rooms are designated for different activities such as a Qu'ran and Zikr (remembrance of Allah), *Seerah* and an Islamic games room. This enables pupils to develop their spirituality through fun and play. In discussion with inspectors, pupils said these designated rooms gave them the opportunity to learn more about Islam, and also share what they have learnt with their peers.

A dedicated *Salah* (prayer) room has been built for the pupils at the request of the pupils and the Shura Council, which is an improvement from the last inspection. The organisation of *Salah* ensures that it is a peaceful and reflective time for the whole school with all pupils fully engaged during collective worship. During the inspection, pupils were observed performing their prayer with humility and concentration.

Spirituality prefects play an important part in developing the spirituality of their peers. They work effectively with their peers to instil a sense of purpose and commitment to the Islamic ethos of the School under the guidance of the Spirituality Coordinator.

The Student Shura, duly elected by their peers, additionally provide an important role in developing the provision of SMSC. For example, members of the Shura Council have visited community centres and returned to school to share their experiences in whole school assemblies.

Pupils' social development is excellent. They thoroughly enjoy learning about their faith and reflect confidently on their experiences which helps to inform their perspective on life. Pupils have played an active role in fundraising for charities with a recent collection for

the Rohingya refugee crisis. Over £50,000 has been raised for various charities over the last three years demonstrating pupils' clear empathy for those in need. Pupils have also contributed to collections for the Winter Drive, local homeless charities and food-banks.

Pupils moral awareness is excellent. Pupils have a strong understanding of moral issues which are discussed in form time, in lessons, and in extra-curricular activities such as during visits to places of worship including recently, a visit to Blackburn Cathedral.

Relationships between staff and pupils are excellent and characterised by high levels of mutual respect and warmth. Form teachers provide excellent sources of support and are readily accessible. Pupils treat each other with respect and willingly help each other, both in lessons and around the school, with older pupils making a meaningful contribution towards the experience of new ones.

The school fosters exemplary standards of behaviour, with respect for all members of the community emphasised and universally shared. The school rewards pupils for their positive attitudes and consideration for others. Measures to guard against bullying are highly effective; pupils believe any bullying is taken seriously and dealt with quickly.

Pupils' cultural development is excellent. They have many opportunities to develop their social skills in different contexts and with a diverse range of people in and outside the school, as seen with a recent visit which addressed Quaker beliefs and teachings. This results in the girls achieving an excellent standard of personal development by the time they leave school.

Glossary

What inspection judgments mean

Grade	Judgment	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Requires Improvement	A school requiring improvement is not providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. AMSUK inspectors will make further visits until it improves.