

**Section 48 Inspection Report
Statutory Inspection of Muslim Schools
Preston Muslim Girls High School**

Preston Muslim Girls High School

Quwwatul Education Centre

Peel Hall St, Preston

PR1 6QQ

Local authority: Lancashire

Dates of inspection: 24 January 2013.

Date of last inspection: This is the school's first S48 inspection.

Headteacher: Mufti Javid Pathan

Inspector's name: Mohammad Ismail

School context

Preston Muslim Girls High School (PMGHS) is a school of Islamic character; a comparatively small high school in an area of higher than average social deprivation. After 20 years as an independent school during which time the number of pupils on roll slowly grew, the school entered the state sector as a voluntary aided school in September 2011. The school is a small school compared to local and national data with 235 students in 2011/2012 and 272 in 2012/13. The school is likely to increase in size over the next three years as smaller year groups in years 9, 10 and 11 comprising 56, 38 and 28 pupils respectively leave the school to be replaced by 75 per year group, which is the school's PAN (Published Admission Number). This would lead to a total pupil number of 375 students. There are currently consultations taking place about the opening of a post- 16 provision for the school from September 2014 and a nearby property has been purchased for that purpose. The school aims 'to nurture and develop pupils to achieve their full spiritual, moral, intellectual, social, emotional and physical potential in a safe, secure faith based environment; to become confident and active citizens of the community and the wider society'.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of PMGHS as a Muslim school is good

PMGHS is a good Muslim school with some outstanding features. The leadership team, with full support from the governing body, ensures the effectiveness of the Islamic ethos. The school benefits from the leadership of the headteacher whose specialism in theology enables him to be highly effective in developing the Islamic life of the school. This new school has made an excellent start as an effective Muslim school and is heading towards becoming an outstanding Muslim school in the near future. This is due to its leadership's effective strategy of maintaining the RE provision and sustaining good relationships with local mosques and the community. Most students are making outstanding progress in their social, moral and spiritual development and their behaviour is outstanding. The school will be appointing a new assistant headteacher for pastoral care and spirituality which will enhance the provision. The school is developing a robust system to identify and track the progress of all learners with a vision of spiritual and academic progress. Students enjoy the

collective worship and learning different supplications. The spiritual journal is an effective reminder of Islamic practice for students. The school's teaching and curriculum are good and students' progress is outstanding. All adults are excellent role models. Students and teachers express their love for the school and take pride in its Islamic identity. Almost all parents express their support for the school. Some would like more extra after school Islamic activities and events. The school is working on extending this provision. The classrooms and corridors are appropriately decorated with some beautiful Islamic displays.

Established strengths

- Outstanding behaviour
- Outstanding progress and achievement in RE
- Outstanding impact of collective worship
- Good leadership and management
- Good Islamic teaching and curriculum
- All adults in the school community are excellent role models for their students.

Focus for development

- Maintain the schools' academic achievements and standards.
- Ensure that the provision for prayers (school's *masjid*) is included in any plans for a new building project.
- Develop and enhance the Islamic curriculum of the school by offering more Islamic subjects.
- Extend the provision for spirituality by offering a variety of after school optional Islamic extra-curricular activities.
- Ensure active involvement of all parents in the school's Islamic life by organising Islamic events for parents.
- Extend Islamic spirituality to all areas of the curriculum.

The school, through its distinctive Islamic character, is good at meeting the needs of all learners

The school has effectively established its Islamic character by offering a good quality programme of spirituality that develops and nurtures learners into practising and caring Muslims who have a clear vision for the future. One of the distinctive features of the school is its present site. The school mainly occupies the top two floors of the Quwwatul-Islam Mosque's *madrasah* (Islamic supplementary school). The school's environment has been designed for the purpose of promoting the teachings of Islam. There are some beautiful Islamic displays in the building. On entry to the building the students read the *hadith* (the tradition of the Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) of the day displayed on the screen. Each day a *hadith* is carefully selected from the moral and ethical teaching of Islam, for example 'smiling is a charity'. In addition verses from the holy Qur'an are displayed. All this has created a spiritually reflective environment. The site is equipped with special pre-prayer washing (*wudoo*) facility. All staff are provided with appropriate training about the Islamic ethos. The school's personal, social and health education provision is in line with Islamic guidance. The curriculum, the quality of teaching and marking at the school are all good, and this enables its students to make outstanding progress and achievement in Religious Education (RE). Students learn about different cultures and civic institutions. This was observed in a Year 8 lesson. Because of its distinctive

Muslim character, community support for the school is strong and the school is growing. There are plans in place that will see the school almost double in number over the next two years.!

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

The session for collective worship at and after midday prayer (*zuhur salat*) is appropriately offered in each group-designated area. Students benefit from the *wudoo* area in the building. The weekly whole school assemblies are organised and orderly and take place in the mosque. The whole school assembly will move into the school's hall when the renovation work is completed. The 50-minute long outstanding weekly assembly includes collective prayers, *nasheeds* (Islamic songs), *hadith* and recitation of the holy Qur'an. This effective assembly programme includes important lectures on students' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development. These collective worship opportunities are always student-led, under the guidance of the Islamic coordinator, and are always characterised by high levels of students' contribution. All staff encourage and support students during each session. All lessons start and end with a collective prayer. Students express their spiritual reflection during prayer time. They love to take part in reading *nasheed*. They are encouraged to learn *duaas* (supplications). Each student has a 'Spiritual Journal' which contains some beautiful quotes and a chart for students to record their *salah*.. One parent, in his letter to the inspector said about *salah*, 'Daily *salah* at the school is very good for the students, it brings out the very best in the person, collective worship brings peace to the community.'

The effectiveness of the religious education is good

The school offers a good quality curriculum in order to address the needs of all students. The leadership team provides guidance and support. The curriculum is broad and balanced which is in line with the National Curriculum guidelines for RE. Students learn about six major religions of the world to successfully widen the learning horizon for all learners. This is enhanced further through some events and extra-curricular activities. The curriculum includes Urdu and Arabic provision which helps students with a deeper understanding of their culture and faith. There are good quality schemes of work for all subjects with long-term, mid-term and short-term plans in place. The students have the opportunity of learning some aspects of the Qur'an, a selection from *hadith* which are the traditions of the Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him), some aspects of *fiqh* (theology), *seerah* (the life of the Prophet), manners and *nasheed* (Islamic songs). The teaching is good with some outstanding aspects. All teachers in the RE department are subject specialist Islamic scholars (*alimahs*). All teachers are excellent role models for their students. Student-teacher relationships are outstanding. Teachers plan and deliver their lessons carefully and they apply different teaching methods to ensure that teaching and learning are enjoyable and achieve their aims. Students ask questions openly, assert their views and take active part in group discussions. They enjoy their lessons and their behaviour is outstanding. They are respectful, caring students. There is a good quality marking and assessment system in place. Students' work is marked regularly and their work shows that most of them achieve well and are making outstanding progress.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the school as an Islamic school is good

The school RE provision benefits immensely from its enthusiastic senior leadership team which is headed by a leading theologian who is strongly committed to the school's Islamic ethos. The team is fully supported by the governing body. There is an effective monitoring, review and evaluation system in place. The senior leadership team, in a short period of time, has successfully developed the school's Islamic identity as a Muslim school. Plans are in place to develop the school's RE curriculum further by adding a variety of different Islamic subjects such as the Qur'an with *tajweed* (correct pronunciation) and further developing the Islamic ethos into all areas of the curriculum. The teaching of RE is regularly monitored and staff are offered support and development. The school allocates a sufficient amount of funding for the RE provision. Two governors are assigned with specific responsibilities for the development of RE and the religious aspects of school life. The school enjoys excellent support from the local mosque. The local community and parents support the school. Relationships with community institutions and other schools are good. All staff are committed to the school's Islamic ethos which is appropriately reflected in the school's documentation and its website. A system for regular staff meetings, regular team meetings, lesson observations and staff training sessions is in place. Parents are regularly informed about their children's education. Parents' events are planned to enhance parents' involvement in their children's education. Some parents would like an increase in the extra after school Islamic events and activities.

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