ISI Independent Schools Inspectorate

Regulatory Compliance and Educational Quality Inspection Reports
For Schools with Residential Provision

Abrar Academy

September 2021

Contents

School's Details

School	Abrar Academy
DfE number	888/6109
Address	Abrar Academy 34–36 Garstang Road Preston Lancashire PR1 1NA
Telephone number	01772 828732
Email address	info@abraracademy.com
Acting Headteacher	Mr Anayath Chowdhury
Proprietor	Mr Fazlehaq Wadee
Age range	11 to 21
Number of pupils on roll	101

	Day pupils	26	**Boarders**	75
	Seniors	83	**Sixth Form**	18

Inspection dates	21 to 24 September 2021

1. Background Information

About the school

1.1 Abrar Academy is a Muslim faith day and boarding school. It is registered as a single-sex school for male pupils. Commitment to a programme of Islamic faith education is a requirement for admission to the school. Pupils take GCSE examinations in their final year at the school. The school was founded in 2009 and is owned and governed by the sole proprietor as part of the Al Badr Islamic Trust, supported by an advisory governing board. The boarding facility is situated a short walk away from the main school site. Open areas within the school, a nearby park and other community facilities are used for physical education.

1.2 During the period March to August 2020, the whole school was closed. No boarders remained on-site. During this period of closure, the school provided remote learning materials for all pupils.

1.3 In the interests of infection control during the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic, inspection evidence was gathered partly remotely and partly on-site to reduce contact within the school setting.

1.4 In line with the direction given by the Department for Education (DfE) at the time, no evaluation has been made of the nature or effectiveness of any provision made during the period March to August 2020, including its impact on pupils' learning, achievement or personal development. Any concerns relating to pupils' welfare during this period which directly relate to measures implemented by the school have been considered.

1.5 During the lockdown period of January to March 2021, all pupils received remote learning provision at home.

1.6 In 2020 and 2021, public examinations were not held. For pupils who would have been expected to take these examinations, centre-assessed grades were awarded in 2020, and teacher-assessed grades in 2021.

What the school seeks to do

1.7 The school aims to provide an academic atmosphere that is spiritually enriching and physically nurturing; a curriculum that is balanced and broadly based; and to enable academic excellence. It seeks to combine secular and Islamic faith education so that pupils achieve to the best of their ability in both respects. It aspires to cultivate morality and inspire pupils to become able, confident citizens and outstanding role models for their communities. The school intends that pupils understand and appreciate the diversity of values and beliefs held by different cultures and individuals within the United Kingdom and internationally.

About the pupils

1.8 Day pupils come from the local area. Boarders come from across the United Kingdom and a few are from a range of other countries. Pupils are not selected on the basis of academic ability. The school's own assessment indicates that the ability of pupils ranges from average to above average. The school has identified two pupils as requiring support for special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). No pupil has an education, health and care (EHC) plan. Five pupils speak English as an additional language (EAL), although many come from homes where another language is spoken alongside or instead of English.

2. Regulatory Compliance Inspection

Preface

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is approved by the Secretary of State to inspect schools which are, or whose heads are, in membership of the associations which form the Independent Schools Council (ISC) and report on the extent to which they meet the Independent School Standards ('the standards') in the Schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, including the National Minimum Standards for Boarding ('boarding NMS'), where applicable. Additionally, inspections report on the school's accessibility plan under Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and the ban on corporal punishment under section 548 of the Education Act 1996. Inspections also comment on the progress made to meet any compliance action points set out in the school's most recent statutory inspection.

ISI inspections are also carried out under the arrangements of the ISC Associations for the maintenance and improvement of the quality of their membership.

This is a REGULATORY COMPLIANCE INSPECTION which was combined with an inspection of EDUCATIONAL QUALITY. The COMPLIANCE inspection reports only on the school's compliance with the standards, including the boarding NMS. The standards represent minimum requirements and judgements are given either as **met** or as **not met**. All schools are required to meet all the standards applicable to them. Where the minimum requirements are not met, this is clearly indicated in the relevant section of the report and the school is required to take the actions specified.

Inspections do not include matters that are outside of the regulatory framework described above, such as: an exhaustive health and safety audit; compliance with data protection requirements; an in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features; contractual arrangements with parents; an investigation of the financial viability of the school or its accounting procedures.

Inspectors may be aware of individual safeguarding concerns, allegations and complaints as part of the inspection process. Such matters will not usually be referred to specifically in published reports in this document but will have been considered by the team in reaching its judgements.

Links to the standards and requirements can be found here: The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools.

COVID-19 Inspection Judgements do not cover the period March to August 2020 inclusive.

Key findings

2.1 **The school does not meet all of the required standards in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools and associated requirements, and should take immediate action to remedy deficiencies as detailed below.**

PART 1 – Quality of education provided

2.2 The teaching encompasses effective behaviour management.

2.3 Pupils receive relationships and sex education, except in so far as they are lawfully excused. The school has consulted parents and published a written statement of its policy which has regard to the relevant statutory guidance.

2.4 The small numbers of GCSE examinations taken prevent reliable comparison with national averages, but inspection evidence confirms that teaching does not enable all pupils, in particular those with SEND and/or EAL, to make good progress in the context of Part 2, paragraph 3(a).

2.5 The academic curriculum, other than that for relationships and sex education, is insufficiently documented in a written curriculum policy, and is not supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work for the pupils. It includes appropriate personal, social and health education, careers guidance and effective preparation for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British society, but otherwise does not cover the required breadth of material, including with regard to physical, technological and creative education. In particular, it does not address the requirements of those pupils with SEND and/or those with EAL and those of above compulsory school age.

2.6 The teaching utilises effective strategies for managing behaviour and encouraging pupils to act responsibly; it does not undermine the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. However, it is inadequately supported by the resources provided, including for pupils with SEND and/or EAL. It does not sufficiently encourage self-motivation; lacks effective planning and methodology, and, in some areas, suitable subject knowledge, and suitable understanding of pupils' needs. It does not include effective assessment of pupils' progress.

2.7 There is no suitable framework for the assessment of pupils' performance in place.

2.8 **The standard relating to the quality of education in paragraph 2A [relationships and sex education] and NMS 10 are met, but those in paragraphs 2 [curriculum], 3 [teaching] and 4 [framework for pupils' performance] are not met.**

Action point 1

> **The school must ensure that the curriculum implemented is based upon a written curriculum policy supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work, and takes into account the ages, aptitudes and needs of all pupils, including those with SEND and/or EAL, and has sufficient breadth to meet the relevant requirements, thus ensuring all pupils have an opportunity to make progress [Part 1, paragraph 2(1)(a), 2(1)(b)(i) and 2(2)(a), (g) and (h)].**

Action point 2

> **The school must ensure that teaching enables all pupils to make good progress through effective planning and teaching strategies: encouragement of self-motivation; suitable understanding of pupils' needs; effective assessment of their progress; and suitable subject knowledge; and that teaching is adequately supported by suitable resources, including for those with pupils with SEND or EAL [Part 1, paragraph 3(a) – (g).**

Action point 3

> **The school must ensure that a suitable framework for pupils' performance is in place, so that effective assessment and tracking supports the progress of all pupils, including for those with SEND or EAL [Part 1, paragraph 4].**

PART 2 – Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

2.9 Principles and values are actively promoted which facilitate the personal development of pupils as responsible, tolerant, law-abiding citizens. Boarders' views are actively encouraged, and their opinions and concerns are appropriately considered by staff. Any prefect system operating in the school is suitably managed.

2.10 **The standards relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development [paragraph 5] and NMS 17 and 19 are met.**

PART 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils

2.11 Arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils by means that pay due regard to current statutory guidance; good behaviour is promoted; bullying is prevented so far as reasonably practicable; health and safety requirements are met, including those relating to fire safety; provision is made for first aid. Pupils are properly supervised; admission and attendance registers are maintained, as required, and there is a strategic approach to risk assessment.

2.12 An appropriate induction process for pupils new to boarding is implemented, and suitable provision is made for boarders' medical and health care, their food and drink and for managing boarders' laundry and possessions. Boarders have suitable contact with friends and family and access to a programme of activities. Boarding staff are appropriately trained and deployed.

2.13 The school does not have a suitable disability action plan.

2.14 **The standards relating to welfare, health and safety in paragraphs 7–16, the ban on corporal punishment under section 548 of the Education Act 1996 and NMS 2–4 and 6–15 are met, but the requirement of Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 (accessibility plan) and NMS 16 are not met.**

Action point 4

> **The school must ensure that a suitable, written disability plan is put in place, that makes appropriate provision for improvements for pupils with disabilities, including SEND, in terms of access to the curriculum and other aspects of school life over a prescribed period, and that this is implemented within a reasonable time and with adequate resources, and its implementation monitored effectively by the proprietor [Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 (accessibility plan); NMS 16.1].**

PART 4 – Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

2.15 The school makes appropriate checks to ensure the suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors, and a register is kept as required. Visitors to boarding accommodation are appropriately supervised and the school's arrangements for guardianship are suitably managed.

2.16 **The standards relating to the suitability of those in contact with pupils at the school [paragraphs 17–21] and NMS 14 are met.**

PART 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools

2.17   Suitable toilet and changing facilities, and showering facilities where required by the standard, and appropriate accommodation for pupils' medical and therapy needs are provided. The premises are maintained to a standard commensurate with health and safety; acoustics and lighting are appropriate; water provision is adequate. Suitable outdoor space is provided for physical education and outdoor play. Boarding accommodation is adequate for the needs of all boarders, and safeguards and promotes their welfare.

2.18   The standards relating to the premises and accommodation [paragraphs 22–31] and NMS 5 are met.

PART 6 – Provision of information

2.19   A range of information is published, provided or made available to parents, inspectors and the Department for Education. This includes details about the proprietor, the ethos of the school and the curriculum, and of the school's arrangements for admission, behaviour and exclusions, bullying, health and safety, first aid, details of the complaints procedure, and the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year. It also includes particulars of the school's academic performance during the preceding school year, inspection reports and (for parents only) a report at least annually of their own child's progress. The safeguarding policy is posted on the school's website. A suitable statement of boarding principles and practice is published by the school.

2.20   The school does not make available details about the provision for any pupils with education, health and care plans or English as an additional language.

2.21   The standard relating to the provision of information in paragraph 32 is not met, but NMS1 is met.

Action point 5

> **The school must ensure that it makes available details of the provision for any pupils with education, health and care plans, or English as an additional language [Part 6, paragraph 32(3)(b)].**

PART 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled

2.22   Parental complaints, if any, are handled effectively through a three-stage process, (informal, formal and a hearing before a panel of three, one of whom is independent of the school). Each stage has clear time scales, and at the third stage the panel can make findings and recommendations which are communicated to the complainant. Records are kept appropriately, including of any action taken, whether or not a complaint is successful, and identifying those relating to the boarding provision.

2.23   The standard relating to the handling of complaints [paragraph 33] and NMS 18 are met.

PART 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools

2.24   Leadership and management of boarding ensure that the required policies and records are maintained and effectively monitored.

2.25   The proprietor does not ensure that the leadership and management demonstrate good skills and knowledge, and fulfil their responsibilities effectively, so that the other standards are consistently met, and they actively promote the well-being of the pupils, including boarders.

2.26   The standard relating to leadership and management of the school in paragraph 34 and NMS 13 are not met.

Action point 6

> **The proprietor must ensure that the leadership and management demonstrate good skills and knowledge, and fulfil their responsibilities effectively, so that the other standards are consistently met, and they actively promote the well-being of the pupils, including boarders [Part 8, paragraphs 34(1)(a), (b) and (c); NMS 13.1 and 13.3 – 13.5].**

3. Educational Quality Inspection

Preface

The EDUCATIONAL QUALITY inspection reports on the quality of the school's work. It focuses on the two key outcomes:

- The achievement of the pupils, including their academic development, and

- The personal development of the pupils.

The headline judgements apply one of the ISI descriptors 'excellent', 'good', 'sound' or 'unsatisfactory'.

Key findings

3.1 The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements is unsatisfactory.

- Many pupils achieve well within the school's faith education programme, but pupils' achievement in the secular curriculum is unsatisfactory.

- Pupils' achievement outside their faith education in the secular curriculum is limited.

- Pupils with SEND do not make suitable progress because their needs are not identified effectively and insufficient adjustments to the curriculum are made for them.

- Pupils are often passive when learning, displaying insufficient independence.

- Pupils' application of information and communication technology (ICT) skills in their work is minimal.

3.2 The quality of the pupils' personal development is good.

- Pupils develop excellent spiritual understanding within the faith curriculum.

- Pupils embrace high moral and ethical standards.

- Pupils respect and appreciate cultural diversity and that of individuals.

- Pupils are over-reliant on adult direction.

- Pupils make valuable contributions to the community within a narrow range of opportunities.

Recommendations

3.3 The school is advised to make the following improvements:

- Enable all pupils, including those with SEND, to achieve to the best of their ability and make good progress through effective teaching in both faith education and the secular curriculum.

- Review the secular curriculum to ensure a wider range of opportunities which allow all pupils a wider breadth of achievement in all aspects of their school life.

- Enable all pupils to apply their ICT skills more fully and consistently in their learning.

- Enable all pupils to develop increased independence in their learning, relying less on adult direction.

The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements

3.4   The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements is unsatisfactory.

3.5   Recent GCSE results, indicate that most pupils' academic achievement as reflected in the small number of examinations taken is in line with national averages, although the small number means that comparison is not exact. The most recent results indicate a full range of grades achieved across the cohort, the majority of which are in the middle of the scale of grading. Pupils who continue at school beyond age sixteen up to age twenty-one study an advanced faith programme intended to enable them to become religious leaders, teachers or to enter other faith related roles. These pupils are of higher ability, and achieve well in their chosen vocational endeavour, as indicated by the success of previous pupils who have moved on to take up their preferred roles in the community, for example as religious leaders. At present, none of these pupils study other courses such as A levels, and there is no secular provision available. Other pupils of all abilities who leave school at the end of Year 11 transfer to local colleges to pursue A levels or vocational studies, dependent on their outcomes in GCSE examinations. A large majority of pupils board from Year 7 until they leave the school, and boarders were unanimous in saying that this contributes to their individual successes in learning because of the support they receive pastorally and academically; the inspection agreed that pupils are well supported in this regard, benefitting from boarding staff who encourage them to do their best and provide constructive informal advice.

3.6   Pupils' progress in relation to their starting points on admission to the school is difficult to evaluate because the school's procedures for assessing and tracking how well they are doing do not provide clear, accurate or evaluative information on an individual pupil or whole school level. It is therefore not possible for teaching staff and senior leaders to know accurately whether pupils are achieving their potential in either the secular or faith provision. Arrangements for identifying pupils who may have additional learning needs are inadequate and the school was unable to provide information in this regard. Inspectors observed that some pupils did not receive the help they required during lessons and made less progress in relation to their potential than others. In their questionnaire responses, most parents expressed satisfaction with the education provided by the school, but a few said they were concerned that their child had additional needs, was struggling and that they wished to have more advice from the school. Parents receive reports regarding their child's progress within the faith and secular education programmes but these do not take sufficient account of pupils' learning characteristics or possible learning difficulties.

3.7   Pupils' work demonstrates that assessment of their learning by staff is inadequate and pupils have limited capacity to assess their own progress. There is little adjustment in tasks and questions set in order to match individual pupils' different abilities, learning styles and additional needs. Marking and feedback to pupils is sometimes good but is inconsistent in quality overall; some pupils reflected this during interviews, saying that although teaching is helpful they would welcome more individual support. Inspection evidence supports this view. Those pupils with EAL who require extra help do not receive the targeted support they require in order to engage in lessons, although they say that their experience of sharing spoken English in boarding enables them to acquire a working knowledge quickly.

3.8   The school's leaders have plans to improve assessment and tracking of pupils, which are stated in the school development plan, and acknowledge that there is considerable improvement required in the secular provision in order to ensure all pupils achieve to the best of their ability. Parents, pupils and staff who responded to the questionnaires, hold the school in high esteem and there is especial pride, held by the school's leaders too, in the school's distinctiveness in providing an opportunity for pupils to enter a traditional, respected, faith education, whilst studying for GCSE qualifications and learning fundamental British values. The inspection found that the faith education is implemented effectively for most pupils, but the school's secular curriculum is insufficiently effective to support its aim of academic excellence in all regards.

3.9 Pupils are attentive when lessons motivate and interest them and their consistently respectful behaviour in class to teachers and to one another means that lessons proceed calmly. However, pupils display an over-reliance on direction from teachers, are predominantly passive and do not readily initiate questions beyond the dialogue facilitated in teaching. Pupils do not develop the skills to work collaboratively, co-operatively or independently, because the prevailing teaching approach is instructive and directive rather than facilitative, and it lacks variety. There were examples of more advanced pupils helping and leading less experienced pupils in their faith studies, but this style of collaboration was not observed elsewhere. Classroom management includes a high level of detailed adult control over pupils' learning; pupils are compliant but are not sufficiently encouraged to take risks in their learning. During a whole-school assembly pupils were unable and reticent to respond to the invitation to participate interactively.

3.10 Pupils' non-academic achievements are limited and there are few extra-curricular activities. In an assembly, pupils reverentially and beautifully sang verses from the Quran, demonstrating particular ability in their use of voice, and they do so similarly at their mosque. Pupils also produce very neat calligraphy and make effective models in subjects such as geography to support their learning, but there is little further extension of such creative activity outside of lessons.

3.11 Pupils exhibit good knowledge, skills and understanding in some situations, as observed when Year 7 pupils, having started at the school only a few days before, made quick progress in learning two phrases in Urdu, a language entirely new to them; the traditional instruction, taking place sitting on the floor with a low desk was effective and included high expectations. In biology, Year 9 pupils demonstrated good knowledge and understanding of cell structure enabled by teaching which, though directive in style, was well planned and executed so that pupils remained attentive throughout and rapidly assimilated new information. In other instances, pupils learning was less secure, as observed during a GCSE revision class when the majority of pupils were unsure about the topics covered, and none asked questions or sought help when struggling with the tasks set. Pupils' application of ICT skills in their learning is minimal and this restricts their access to further sources of knowledge and independence in seeking information.

3.12 Pupils show variable numeracy skills and their application of numeracy skills in other subject areas varies also. There was little evidence apparent of the school's active promotion of this aspect of study. During a mathematics lesson focused on solving quadratic equations, the pace was fast, enabling more able pupils to move on to more complex tasks. However, the teaching did not account for those few pupils who were not able to apply the formula correctly, and they received inadequate support. In a lesson on Islamic geometric art, some pupils understood the connection between art, mathematics and the Quran, but for other pupils their limited responses to related questions reflected their lack of understanding.

3.13 Within the traditionally taught faith education programme, most pupils display tenacious application to their learning, responding positively to the intense whole morning session on a daily basis. In this context, they develop some good study skills, such as self-correcting if mistakes are made, or, when evaluating information by taking notes on spoken dialogue in both Arabic and English, identifying relevant points and drawing together their conclusions. Most pupils communicate very well during faith education, both with one another and in response to their teachers' clear objectives and dynamic questioning. Pupils of all ages, including the youngest new entrants to the school, are keen to progress in their faith studies and avidly wish to accrue the spiritual knowledge and understanding being presented and explored. Pupils do not learn as effectively during the afternoon secular education lessons. Partly, this results from the transfer of a didactic teaching style which works well in the morning faith lessons, but not as effectively within secular subject lessons. There is also noticeable fatigue displayed by some pupils during the afternoon lessons as a result of the intensity of the faith programme from breakfast to lunch and a very short lunch break with little time for any rest or recreation, which creates a very demanding day.

The quality of the pupils' personal development

3.14   The quality of the pupils' personal development is good.

3.15   Pupils display strong self-discipline and resilience, as observed during their faith studies in particular, when they enthusiastically commit to learn from the Quran, and for some, to undertake further advanced studies which include memorisation of the Quran. They display a good level of confidence and self-awareness through their discussions with each other when reciting the Quran, and in dialogue with their faith teachers. In a personal, social and health (PSHE) lesson, pupils from Year 7 to Year 13, showed good self-discipline when, despite having views which conflicted with others in the group regarding the need to show empathy and understanding to non-Muslims, they waited for others to fully express themselves before responding. Most pupils exhibit good self-understanding as a result of their extensive and detailed consideration of and reflection on Quranic teachings. Pupils have a clear sense of direction in their faith studies and are enabled to improve their own learning and performance in this regard; in their responses to the secular curriculum this is less apparent.

3.16   Pupils' decision-making skills are insufficiently developed. There are few opportunities for pupils to make decisions in their everyday school experience, in part because teaching is so strongly teacher led most of the time. Opportunities to experience decision making in other contexts is restricted by the lack of regular extra-curricular activities. Despite the lack of opportunity to make everyday decisions in school, pupils do however develop a strong sense of the importance of choosing right behaviour, attitudes, personal and spiritual goals, and life choices regarding their educational future. Parents and pupils expressed satisfaction in their questionnaire responses regarding both careers and faith guidance, which they say helps the right longer-term decisions to be made. Pupils over 16 make clear decisions to pursue a faith-centred career, and those who leave at the end of Year 11, whilst remaining committed adherents to their faith, have decided to continue their education on a secular basis.

3.17   Pupils have highly developed spiritual understanding reflecting the whole focus of the school which revolves primarily around the Islamic faith, permeating pupils' daily experience, including Quranic studies, regular prayer and celebration of faith events. Importantly, pupils' spirituality is reflected in their everyday demeanour and attitudes; they are respectful of others, thoughtful and reflective. Through memorising and learning about the Quran, and subsequent explanations from their faith teachers, pupils come to understand the pure spirituality of the writings and how they can become better citizens by maintaining the values of their religion. During a faith lesson, pupils answered challenging questions about spiritual 'cleanliness', formulating their answers in groups before presenting their ideas to the teacher, demonstrating a profound interest in understanding the core values and guidance of their religion. Pupils also have regard for the non-material aspects of life, which have basis in their faith, but which transcend other religions and the secular world, exemplified in a faith lesson on the importance of charity for the universal good of others. Pupils reverence for spiritual matters is facilitated very effectively by their teachers, some of whom have trained in Islamic seminaries, and by the spiritual emphasis provided by the school's leadership and governance. Adults in the school provide consistently positive models of faith-based behaviour, values and attitudes. The impact of the faith education on pupils' personal development is profound and is a strength of the school.

3.18   Pupils demonstrate excellent moral understanding and responsibility for their own behaviour. They draw on their understanding of their faith regarding how they should live their lives, and how they should aspire to show respect for everyone through Islamic etiquette and other teachings. As a result, pupils' behaviour is excellent, as observed throughout the inspection, and endorsed by the overwhelmingly positive comments by parents, pupils and staff in questionnaires and during interviews. Pupils say that behaving well is a natural expectation of their faith and they evidently fulfil this. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of fundamental British values and contemporary societal issues is good, preparing them well for modern pluralistic life, whilst maintaining their identity as British Muslims. Pupils express due regard for required secular relationships and sex education (RSE)

which have been recently introduced and discuss issues, such as same-sex relationships, in a mature, respectful and non-judgemental manner regardless of their own adherence to the values of their religion. Pupils pointed out that, in their view, their faith guidance regarding RSE is compatible with secular principles. They are able to develop appropriate understandings and attitudes about even the potentially most sensitive issues, because the staff who teach RSE are knowledgeable and confident regarding this aspect of the curriculum, and very effectively combine secular requirements with their faith-based guidance, values and principles. All parents surveyed, said that they are happy with the RSE curriculum they helped to shape through the school's consultation with them.

3.19   Pupils explain that 'unity', and mutual respect are fundamental values in their faith and that they strive to live by these values each day. Pupils said that their social development is facilitated within the school community because of this, and the inspection found that pupils displayed respectful maturity in their relationships with one another and with adults in the school. In informal situations pupils were observed collaborating, for example when playing recreational football or holding spontaneous group discussions at lunchtime. There were also examples of collaboration during faith education when pupils discussed religious principles, shared their ideas and presented their conclusions to the teacher. However, the lack of pupils' collaboration in secular lessons represents missed opportunities to further develop working effectively with others. Boarding is a main aspect of the majority of pupils' social lives. They say that it provides good opportunities to work and enjoy recreation together, and to understand and overcome any initial personality clashes that may occur and create long term, positive relationships with one another instead.

3.20   Within school, older pupils mentor younger, helping them with their homework and topics and learning successfully to take responsibility for others, including within boarding. Pupils over 16 act as prefects, providing valuable guidance and support to other pupils. Some pupils help run the tuck shop, assisting staff with this service, gaining useful experience in developing reliable work habits. Pupils' contribution to the community beyond school is mainly locally orientated. Some speak at events in local mosques on a regular basis, confidently sharing their spiritual reflections. Pupils also share prayers and supper with others in a multi-faith room at a local hospital and at a local university, selflessly putting their values of care and service into practice. During the pandemic lockdowns, pupils shared time with lonely members of the community and delivered food to those in isolation, developing a strong appreciation of the hardship that others may experience and how to help ameliorate it. Boarders undertake litter-picking and gardening maintenance in a nearby public park, demonstrating good respect for the environment and benefitting people from outside their immediate faith community. When pupils speak about this aspect of their school life, both within and outside of school, they do so with humility and a clear commitment to the guiding principles of their faith and its practical application.

3.21   Respect for all is the cornerstone of the pupils' faith and the school's ethos. The pupils show great respect to different cultures, religions and individuals. In discussion, pupils said that respecting women is central to their faith, the mother being above all, and that this extends to all females. The inspection found that this represented a sincere response by pupils to the tenets of their faith and a positive understanding and attitude, informed also by the secular RSE and PSHE programmes. In faith education lessons, pupils have successfully learned that the principles and values of their faith may conflict with British law, for example regarding homosexuality, and that respect, tolerance and understanding is appropriate whilst they can still hold true to the teachings of their faith. Pupils are enabled to explore these issues through debate in lessons and are encouraged to do so openly by the school's leaders and staff who demonstrate a clear commitment to valuing and respecting diversity. Pupils also develop a deeper appreciation of other faiths through linked activities with Jewish and Christian schools, opportunities which are proactively promoted by the school's proprietor, leaders and staff.

3.22   Pupils know how to keep themselves safe, physically and online, saying that the guidance they receive in PSHE has informed them well regarding risks, how to avoid them and what to do if something

concerning happens. Parents, staff and pupils replying to the questionnaires and during discussion affirmed that the school is a safe place, and that staff are approachable and helpful should any pupil experience an issue about their personal safety, or if they are worried about a schoolmate. Pupils understand that it is important for food to be made with healthy ingredients and the menu provided by the school encourages good diets. Pupils demonstrate a readiness to engage in physical activity whenever it is possible, for example in the football club, knowing that taking exercise is an essential part of maintaining good health.

4. Inspection Evidence

4.1 The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with members of staff and with the proprietor, a group of governors and attended assemblies. Inspectors visited boarding houses. The responses of parents, staff and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined curriculum and other documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Mr Andrew Farren	Reporting inspector
Mr William Ibbetson-Price	Accompanying inspector
Mr Paul Vicars	Compliance team inspector (Head, HMC school)
Mr Martyn Beer	Team inspector for boarding (Deputy head, HMC school)
Mr Justin Spanswick	Team inspector (Executive head, ISA school)