



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

Focused Compliance and Educational Quality Inspection Reports

Kassim Darwish Grammar School for Boys

February 2020



Contents

School's Details		3
1. Background Information		4
About the school		4
What the school seeks to do		4
About the pupils		4
2. Regulatory Compliance Inspection		5
Preface		5
Key findings		6
PART 1 – Quality of education provided		6
PART 2 – Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils		6
PART 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils		6
PART 4 – Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors		6
PART 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools		6
PART 6 – Provision of information		7
PART 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled		7
PART 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools		7
3. Educational Quality Inspection		8
Preface		8
Key findings		9
Recommendation		9
The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements		9
The quality of the pupils' personal development		11
4. Inspection Evidence		14

School's Details

School	Kassim Darwish Grammar School for Boys	
DfE number	352/6049	
Registered charity number	1073862	
Address	Kassim Darwish Grammar School for Boys Hartley Hall Alexandra Road South Chorlton-cum-Hardy Manchester M16 8NH	
Telephone number	0161 8607676	
Email address	admin@kdgrammar.co.uk	
Headmaster	Mr Akhmed Hussain	
Proprietor	Manchester Islamic Trust Ltd	
Age range	11 to 16	
Number of pupils on roll	123	
	Seniors	123
Inspection dates	4 to 6 February 2020	

1. Background Information

About the school

- 1.1 Kassim Darwish Grammar School for Boys is an independent day school for male pupils aged 11 to 16 years. It was founded in 1999 and moved to its current site in 2000. There are two classes per year from Year 7 to Year 11.
- 1.2 The school is owned by Manchester Islamic Educational Trust Ltd. and the work of the school is overseen by the executive head appointed by the trust. The school is a company limited by guarantee and a registered charity. The trustees form the governing body of the school.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.3 The school aims to create a warm, caring, Islamic atmosphere within which pupils feel safe, healthy, happy, and enjoy learning, achieve and succeed. It seeks to enable pupils to contribute effectively to their school and to British society.

About the pupils

- 1.4 Most pupils come from minority ethnic British families living within a 20-mile radius of the school. Data provided by the school indicate that the ability of pupils is broadly average compared to those taking the same tests nationally. The school has identified 43 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), which include dyslexia and dyspraxia, 16 of whom receive additional specialist help. No pupil in the school has an education, health and care (EHC) plan. English is an additional language (EAL) for 84 pupils 29 of whom receive additional support for their English.

2. Regulatory Compliance Inspection

Preface

The registration authority for independent schools is the Department for Education (DfE), which directs inspection according to a specified frequency or at any time where the DfE has particular concerns about a school. The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Secretary of State for the purpose of inspecting schools which are, or whose heads are, in membership of the associations which form the Independent Schools Council (ISC) and reporting on the extent to which they meet the Independent School Standards ('the standards') in the Schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014. Accordingly, inspection records whether the school meets each of these standards, which are arranged in eight Parts, each of which is divided into separate paragraphs. Additionally, the inspection reports 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. It comments on the progress made by the school in meeting the compliance action points set out in the school's most recent statutory inspection.

All association independent schools will have an inspection within three years from April 2016, in accordance with the Framework and DfE requirements. The inspection may be of COMPLIANCE ONLY or a combined inspection of EDUCATIONAL QUALITY AND COMPLIANCE depending on a number of factors, including findings from their most recent inspection. Schools judged not to meet the standards may also be subject to a progress monitoring visit before their next routine inspection. The progress monitoring visit will judge whether the school has taken the necessary action to meet any un-met standards identified at their previous inspection.

The inspection was also carried out under the arrangements of the ISC Associations for the maintenance and improvement of the quality of their membership.

This is a FOCUSED COMPLIANCE INSPECTION which was combined with an inspection of EDUCATIONAL QUALITY, the report of which appears later in this document. The COMPLIANCE inspection reports only on the school's compliance with the standards. 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. In this focused compliance inspection, key regulations and standards have been inspected in detail. These are the regulations on safeguarding; measures to guard against bullying; arrangements for pupils' health and safety, arrangements to check the suitability of staff; the provision of information to parents; the handling of parents' complaints; and other related aspects of leadership and management. The remaining standards and requirements are deemed to continue to be met unless evidence to the contrary has been found.

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 full regulations and requirements can be found here: [The Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014](#).

Key findings

- 2.1 The school meets the standards in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, and associated requirements and no further action is required as a result of this inspection.**

PART 1 – Quality of education provided

- 2.2 At GCSE in the years 2016 to 2018, performance has been above the national average for maintained schools.
- 2.3 The curriculum is documented, supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work for the pupils and covers the required breadth of material. The teaching enables pupils to make good progress, encompasses effective behaviour management and is supported by suitable resources. A suitable framework for the assessment of pupils' performance is in place.
- 2.4 The standards relating to the quality of education [paragraphs 1–4] are met.**

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

- 2.5 Principles and values are actively promoted which facilitate the personal development of pupils as responsible, tolerant, law-abiding citizens.
- 2.6 The standard relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development [paragraph 5] is met.**

PART 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 2.7 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. A disability access plan is in place.
- 2.8 The standards relating to welfare, health and safety [paragraphs 6–16], the requirement of Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010, and the ban on corporal punishment under section 548 of the Education Act 1996 are met.**

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

- 2.9 The school makes appropriate checks to ensure the suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors, and a register is kept as required.
- 2.10 The standards relating to the suitability of those in contact with pupils at the school [paragraphs 17–21] are met.**

PART 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools

- 2.11 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.
- 2.12 The standards relating to the premises and accommodation [paragraphs 22–31] are met.**

PART 6 – Provision of information

2.13 A range of information is variously 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, and the provision for any with education, health and care plans or English as an additional language. 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.

2.14 The standard relating to the provision of information [paragraph 32] is met.

PART 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled

2.15 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.

2.16 The standard relating to the handling of complaints [paragraph 33] is met.

PART 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools

2.17 The proprietor ensures 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.

2.18 The standard relating to leadership and management of the school [paragraph 34] is met.

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.

Since the school was last inspected, the framework for inspection has changed. The current inspection framework uses different criteria and arrangements for grading from those used in previous inspection frameworks. The judgements made on this inspection are, therefore, not directly comparable to judgements made on previous inspections.

All independent schools are required to meet the requirements of the Independent School Standards. However, different inspectorates apply different frameworks that are suited to the different types of schools they inspect. The ISI terminology reflects quality judgements that are at least equivalent to those used by the national inspectorate, Ofsted. ISI reports do not provide a single overarching judgement for the school but instead give a clear judgement about key outcomes for pupils and information on the quality of the school's work.

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

Where necessary, National Curriculum nomenclature is used to refer to year groups in the school.

Key findings

- 3.1 The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements is good.
- Pupils demonstrate good levels of knowledge, skills and understanding across the curriculum.
 - Pupils have strong communication skills, and can articulate their ideas well.
 - Pupils exhibit highly positive attitudes to learning and work collaboratively and co-operatively.
 - Pupils display good study skills and develop their learning techniques well for examinations.
 - Pupils' progress slows when they are not given time to engage actively in their learning with appropriately challenging tasks.
- 3.2 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- Pupils spiritual understanding and appreciation of the non-material aspects of life are excellent.
 - Pupils are highly self-aware, resilient and well prepared for the next stage of their education.
 - Pupils display a strong individual moral stance on social and environmental issues.
 - Pupils' support for others to achieve common goals is excellent.
 - Pupils' understanding of diversity, respect and tolerance for those from different faiths and traditions is excellent.

Recommendation

- 3.3 The school is advised to make the following improvements:
- Ensure pupils are consistently enabled to progress well by engaging them actively in their learning with appropriately challenging tasks in all lessons.

The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements

- 3.4 The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements is good.
- 3.5 Pupils respond well to the school's ethos of academic challenge to succeed in their academic work. They are eager to learn and approach their studies with a sense of purpose, acquiring good levels of knowledge and understanding and effectively applying newly learnt skills in most lessons. For example, in a GCSE English lesson, focusing on examination techniques, pupils carefully explored the appropriate register for written answers, and peer assessed each other's work to hone their writing skills. In a history lesson, younger pupils extended their understanding well of propaganda literature from second world war historical sources and in a geography lesson, similar age pupils were able to apply their mathematical knowledge effectively in reading graphs on reasons for flooding in different areas of the country. In an art lesson, pupils developed their artistic talents with precision as they focused on symmetry and silhouettes in their drawings of insects based on the work of artist Christopher Marley. In the pre-inspection questionnaire, a small minority of pupils said that not all lessons have interesting activities and use the time well. Inspectors observed that in a few lessons, insufficient challenge and a lack of activities that interested and engaged pupils in their learning resulted in slower progress being made.
- 3.6 At GCSE in the years 2016 to 2018, performance has been above the national average for maintained schools. In these years, 25% of pupils gained grades A* to A or 9 to 7 and 75% gained A* to C or 9 to 4. In 2019, 20% of pupils gained grades A* to A and 78% gained A* to C. Pupils with SEND achieve in line with their peers through accurate identification of their learning needs and specific support for pupils. In most lessons, pupils make good progress because teaching tracks pupils' progress and provides regular feedback so that pupils know how to improve their work.

- 3.7 Most pupils become excellent communicators and are articulate in explaining ideas, elucidating facts and expressing their opinions. For example, in an English GCSE lesson, pupils explained complex literary terms and how they are used to enhance ideas in *Macbeth*, and in a personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) lesson, pupils discussed e-safety and internet fraud sensibly, learning more about how to remain safe. Pupils develop typically strong speaking and reading skills as well as fostering active listening skills, respectfully learning from each other. For instance, in a geography lesson, GCSE pupils listened carefully to each other when using complex terminology correctly to explain the management of forests. Similarly, in an art lesson, younger pupils presented their collaborative ideas about Van Gogh's *Starry Night*, highlighting the mood of the painting. However, in a few lessons, teaching does not sufficiently encourage active involvement in learning to enable pupils to develop their communication skills further. Pupils write with increasing depth and fluency, using an appropriate range of technical subject vocabulary. In GCSE work, examples of extended and detailed writing demonstrated effective revision which led to strong improvements in pupils' examination technique.
- 3.8 Pupils demonstrate competent numeracy skills and are able to apply their numerical skills effectively to other areas of their learning such as the sciences, geography and business studies. GCSE mathematicians demonstrated their competence in solving complex equations in response to the teachers' explanations. In a physics lesson, younger pupils worked collaboratively on measuring magnetic forces with enthusiastic responses. Workbook scrutiny demonstrated that most pupils present their mathematical work clearly so that they are able to revise it effectively. In a few lessons, pupils have fewer opportunities to engage actively and put to the test what they are learning to ensure that the subject matter is understood. Some pupils attend additional mathematics sessions at break and lunch times which effectively support their learning. For example, in a revision session on circle theorems and tangents, GCSE pupils improved their understanding, helping each other to make good progress. Leaders have ensured that pupils are well supported in their learning so that they progress further in their understanding and are better prepared for examinations.
- 3.9 Pupils apply their competent information and communication technology (ICT) skills effectively across different areas of their learning in research, revision and preparation for examinations. They confidently access online resources to complete project work. In computer science lessons, they develop and apply newly learnt coding skills. Older pupils adeptly produced a well-structured technical video on environmental issues to be shown in assembly. Younger pupils who enjoy writing, regularly attend the journalism club and use their ICT skills effectively to publish a weekly news sheet including news from the school council to be shared in tutor groups. Pupils from a range of year groups use their ICT skills well to produce and publish the school newspaper, *KD Voice*, to share school successes in competitions, school visits and local and international information of interest to parents, pupils and staff.
- 3.10 Pupils develop strong study skills as they move through the school and are confident in analysing and collating information from a range of sources. They persevere to develop their understanding, as observed in a Spanish lesson where GCSE pupils were learning the imperfect tense, understanding that they need to incorporate this into their speaking and writing examination papers. In a physics lesson, younger pupils assessed their own work on magnetic forces asking questions and correcting answers, making their own notes and taking responsibility for their learning. In their written work, most older pupils demonstrate that they are able to make detailed, well-organised notes to facilitate their learning. Pupils are well motivated to achieve, and those who attend say that they appreciate the sessions teachers organise to help them develop effective study skills.
- 3.11 Pupils enjoy being competitive while showing a warm spirit of unity. They are successful in a range of academic and sporting competitions which enhances their confidence to participate further. Pupils have achieved success in national junior and intermediate mathematics Olympiads and younger pupils were successful in winning a recent chemistry challenge, demonstrating their ability to carry out scientific experiments correctly and independently. Sports teams achieve success in football and

cricket, and interhouse sports competitions challenge pupils to give of their best to raise the most points for their house. Pupils have begun to participate successfully in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme, a recent initiative in the school. Pupils who enjoy persuasive argument or recitation have been successful in house debating and reading competitions increasing their confidence in public speaking. The youngest pupils confirmed that they particularly enjoy lunch time 'balloon debates' as well as debating a range of more serious topics, such as equality of opportunity and equal rights for all.

- 3.12 Most pupils demonstrate highly positive attitudes to learning. They actively engage in lessons when given the opportunity and are eager to improve in their learning. They collaborate and cooperate effectively to enhance their understanding by sharing views and listening to each other. Pupils support others with SEND well. They demonstrate the ability to take responsibility for their learning in asking focused questions to ensure a clear understanding and peer assess their work in lessons with support from their teachers. Through strategic planning with leaders, governors strive to improve the provision so that teaching consistently supports pupils' achievement.

The quality of the pupils' personal development

- 3.13 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 3.14 Pupils thrive in the school. In all year groups, pupils demonstrate high levels of resilience and increasing self-awareness. Almost all pupils demonstrate an eagerness to improve in their learning and acknowledge that most teachers support them effectively in their endeavours to succeed. Teachers provide strategies to help them persevere in their learning. For example, in a GCSE Spanish lesson, pupils grappled with the use of different past tenses for essay work and in a GCSE mathematics lesson, pupils persisted and overcame their difficulties in solving complex equations, supporting each other effectively to apply the methodology effectively. Pupils build confidence and self-esteem as they respond to the regular feedback that teachers provide. In discussions, younger pupils said, that, on finding something difficult, their first response was to consider giving up, but in persevering they made good progress, aided by the encouragement of their teachers. Older pupils confirmed that they feel well prepared for the next stage in their education because of the guidance they receive. In the questionnaire, almost all parents agreed that the school helps their child to develop skills for the future and most pupils agreed that the school helps them to be confident and independent and teachers help them if they have a problem with their work and encourage them to think and learn for themselves.
- 3.15 Pupils understand the importance of decision making for their future because they have opportunities to make decisions from early on in their time in the school. Younger pupils said that, as soon as they arrived, they made decisions about which activities they should try, with the result that they are now enjoying and learning new skills in debating club, football and chess. In lessons, pupils' decision-making skills are developed further. For example, in an English lesson on persuasive writing, pupils explored the influence of language in advertising and how this may affect decision making and in a PSHE lesson, middle school pupils explored risk and decision making and whether surfing on a car was a wise decision. In discussions, older pupils said to inspectors that they had come to realise the importance of using their free time wisely to complete homework and revision. They confirmed that clear guidance on choosing an appropriate work experience placement in Year 10 and individual careers advice had helped them to decide on a college for sixth form which further focused them on achieving their best.
- 3.16 Pupils' development of spiritual understanding plays an integral part in their daily lives. Regular daily prayer time and Friday sermons contribute to a deepening understanding of faith and promotes a strong sense of the non-material aspects of life. Older pupils regularly lead Friday services and prayers, helping them to reflect and deepen their understanding. Pupils confirmed that learning verses of the Qur'an provides an inner challenge within their mind and enhances an understanding of their faith. In

liaison with staff, pupils contribute to assemblies, enrichment days and seasonal festivals such as Ramadan and Hajj, showing enthusiasm and initiative in their promotion of the celebration of faith days and festivities. GCSE artists, exploring culture through steampunk in their art assignments were positively challenged to create identity disguised through objects, in harmony with their faith. Younger pupils learning about Abrahamic and world religions in a religious studies lesson, said this contributed to their understanding of other faiths. Older pupils' understanding of different forms of spirituality has become clearer as a result of a recent visit to a synagogue and their experience of speakers from a range of religions including Buddhism. Pupils who spoke to the inspectors said that exploring their own and other faiths contributes positively to their respect and appreciation of others.

- 3.17 The overwhelming majority of pupils who responded to the questionnaire, and all those who spoke to the inspectors, confirmed that they understand the behaviour expected by the school and acknowledge the need for rules in order to maintain a harmonious and convivial community. All parents who responded to the questionnaire agreed that the school actively promotes good behaviour. Pupils also said that they did not always get everything right but were prepared to learn and make amends. Through the *Living Islam* programme, they challenge themselves and recognise that with effort many have improved in their behaviour. Pupils demonstrate a strong moral stance, such as caring for each other and for the planet through reducing waste and looking after their school environment. Pupils acknowledged that they are prepared to take responsibility for their actions, seeing this as faith in action and a positive contribution to the harmony of their community. As a result, time is effectively used for learning, and relationships and communication between pupils are enhanced. Older pupils look after younger pupils when they are new in the school. Pupils take on leadership roles such as head pupil, house, school and library leaders willingly and model exemplary behaviour towards others.
- 3.18 Pupils demonstrate excellent social awareness and ability to work with each other. They thrive within their school community because they realise that supporting each other in lessons has a positive impact on their school community. Pupils volunteer for a range of social projects, which helps to improve the lives of those who may be less fortunate than they are, and develops their social awareness and willingness to give to others. Pupils are proud to be part of their school and are positively involved in a range of social actions, through charity fund raising, spending time with the elderly or collecting food for local food banks. In the questionnaire, a minority of pupils disagreed that the school helps them to develop strong teamwork and social skills, but inspectors found no evidence to support this negative perspective. The school council effectively promotes action on behalf of all pupils to improve the school environment, such as successfully encouraging leaders to provide basketball hoops for the playground and to ban plastic bottles.
- 3.19 Pupils are courteous, polite and welcoming. They celebrate cultural diversity in assemblies and in tutor times and are keen to ensure that all within their community are accepted. They display a sensitive understanding towards those from different cultures and traditions through the opportunities they have to share individual experiences in subject lessons and in tutor times. In discussions, pupils confirmed that they were greatly encouraged by a recent visit from a senior Muslim police officer who spoke to them about being courageous and positive young people. Pupils said that the visit was highly informative and developed their enthusiasm to contribute to their school and to their local community. Pupils demonstrate respect for each other, work together with a shared sense of purpose and positively celebrate each other's achievements, such as when they win a sports fixture or achieve well in revision tests. Pupils gain further insight into cultural differences across subjects within the curriculum including in the humanities, modern languages and art. For example, in an art lesson, older pupils explored Picasso's *Guernica* and the history behind the painting. Through visits abroad as in recent trips to Spain and to Istanbul, pupils extend their cultural horizons further. Similarly, pupils confirmed that, exploring topics such as 'fake news' and historical bias through the cross-curricular programme, and themes of social injustice, redemption and poverty while reading Charles Dickens, have contributed greatly to their understanding of the world they live in. Pupils said that such work had strengthened their recognition of common humanity and the fundamental values of respect and

tolerance. In questionnaire responses, the overwhelming majority of parents agreed that the school actively promotes values of democracy, respect and tolerance of other people and most pupils agreed that they are encouraged to respect and accept other people.

- 3.20 Pupils develop a strong sense of how to stay safe from their PSHE lessons and whole day events on e-safety. Most pupils who responded to the questionnaire agreed that they know how to remain safe when online. The school council has been instrumental in leaders taking steps to ensure a balanced lunch with healthy choices and healthier snacks between meals. Pupils confirmed in discussions that they understand the importance of exercise to be physically and mentally healthy, well supported by the physical education (PE) staff and leaders. They confirmed that they take part weekly in PE lessons and extra-curricular sports and explained the benefits of these to their well-being. Pupils confirmed that they understand the importance of a balanced lifestyle and now more readily plan their time for work, rest and relaxation. In the questionnaire, a majority of pupils disagreed that the school encourages them to follow a healthy lifestyle but this was not confirmed in discussions with pupils, nor evidenced during the days, where pupils ate healthily for lunch and were energetic in their PE lessons. Most parents who responded to the questionnaire agreed that the school encourages their child to adopt a healthy lifestyle and helps prepare their child for their future.

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 a group of governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended form meetings. Inspectors visited the learning support and educational resource areas. 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

Mrs Flora Bean	Reporting inspector
Mr Daniel Wilson	Compliance team inspector (Assistant head, SofH school)
Mr David Williams	Team inspector (Former Head, SofH school)