

THE OLIVE SCHOOL BLACKBURN

Inspection Report

Local authority: Blackburn with Darwen
Inspected under the auspices of: AMS UK
Inspection dates: 8 May 2017
Lead inspector: Hasina Varachia

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Free School
Age range of pupils	4-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	512
Appropriate authority	Academy Trust
Chair	Mr Faruk Dasu
Headteacher	Mrs Julie Bradley (Executive Headteacher)
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Address	Meins Rd Blackburn BB2 6QQ
Telephone number	01254 540 70
Email address	info@oliveblackburn.tetrust.org
School website	www.oliveblackburn.com

Introduction

Inspection team

Lead Inspector: Hasina Varachia

Team Inspectors: Mona Mohamed, Wasim Riaz and Mohammad Asad

This inspection was carried out by four inspectors. They visited lessons or parts of lessons including observing registration, break time, lunch time and assembly. They held meetings with the senior leadership team, staff, lead governor for RE, parents and groups of children. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation, including children's written work, planning of the Religious Education (RE) and Personal, Social, Health, Citizenship Education (PSHCE) curriculum, various school self-evaluation documents, the schools' Faith Ethos Action Plan and parent questionnaires. In accordance with the Section 48 protocol that exists between the Department for Education (DfE) and AMS UK, the lead inspector also reviewed the school's recent Ofsted inspection report.

The inspection team looked in detail at the following:

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

Information about the school

The Olive School Blackburn is Muslim faith school and free school. It is run by the Tauheedul Education Trust. The school is an average-sized primary school with pupils from a range of ethnic minority backgrounds. All pupils are of Muslim faith. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs is below the national average.

Inspection judgments

Overall effectiveness	1
The achievement of pupils in their RE	1
The quality of teaching and learning	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of RE, including the role of the school's Governing Body in RE	1
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs	1
The extent of pupils' SMSC development, including the daily act of collective worship	1

Overall effectiveness: the quality of religious education provided at the Olive School Blackburn is outstanding because:

The school aims to deliver the highest expectations and standards of faith ethos, consistent with its mission statement, *'To promote a culture of educational excellence, from within a caring and secure Islamic environment enriched with the values of discipline, mutual care and respect which extends beyond the school into the wider community'*.

The school believes that the importance of faith ethos to its own future and to its pupils means it must permeate all aspects of school life.

The school is achieving these aims very well indeed. The Muslim-faith ethos is developed strongly through the opportunities in the curriculum and through the vast number of enrichment opportunities on offer.

Pupils achieve very well as a result of imaginative and enthusiastic teaching which ensures that pupils' learning is outstanding.

Pupils' personal development is excellent. They show maturity beyond their years in the way they care for each other and look after their visitors. Relationships within the school are positive and all adults are excellent role models, providing a high standard of pastoral care for the pupils. As a result, pupils feel valued and well cared for and they greatly enjoy being part of the school. The school council is successful in enabling pupils to express their opinions, and their work has made a discernible impact on the work of the school. Safeguarding the welfare of the pupils is of utmost concern and requisite procedures and policies are in place, and staff are trained appropriately.

The Executive Headteacher, other leaders and governors communicate high expectations and ambition. They have a clear vision detailed in their Faith Ethos Action Plan of how they want the school to be and are taking the right steps to achieve it.

An outstanding programme of SMSC provision and a strong Islamic *tarbiyyah* (development) programme results in excellent behaviour and relationships both in lessons and during social time. There have been no exclusions. School displays reinforce these messages further. Their excellent relationships mean there is no bullying in school.

Attendance is given high priority and as a result, attendance in 2016 was a very commendable 98.4% putting the school 13th out of 22,500 schools nationally. Rightly, the school takes great pride in these attendance figures.

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

Pupils demonstrate their respect and learning of Islam through the many practical experiences on offer. Charity work has raised over £41,000 since the school began and supports a number of very worthy causes. These experiences enable them to show initiative and understand how they can contribute positively to the lives of others. They have developed a sense of pride over their own faith and identity whilst learning to be respectful to others. These learning opportunities have prepared pupils for life in a multi faith and multi-cultural Britain.

Fundamental British Values are promoted effectively throughout the curriculum, assemblies and displays. Half-termly, pupils learn about a specific Fundamental British Value during their PSHCE lessons. Pupils demonstrate a deep understanding of these values. One pupil commenting on a recent visit to Blackburn Cathedral said, *'It made me respect other religions which we all have to do.'*

Daily activities and planned super learning days contribute strongly to pupils' spiritual development as does the quality of collective worship; pupils participate with enthusiasm, respect and sincerity. Consequently, pupils are confident when discussing their faith and demonstrate high levels of spiritual maturity.

The behaviour policy for younger pupils has been recently revised and is linked to spiritual and moral reflection and steers pupils to be reflective individuals. Pupils are rightly rewarded for their efforts and a good number of pupils have achieved the Tauheedul Mini Baccalaureate Award. This special award has been created by the Tauheedul Educational Trust as a way of highlighting, recognising and celebrating the contribution pupils make to the school and local communities and this in turn, encourages excellent behaviour.

The school strongly believes that the faith and ethos of the school and its people will have a direct and significant impact upon the quality of provision, behaviour of children and academic achievement. In order to ensure the school has the capacity to deliver on such an important agenda, the school has established a Faith Ethos Group consisting of governors and school staff. The group is successful in its aims. As a result, a recent Super Learning Day focussed on the life of the prophet Muhammad (peace be upon

him), the beginning of the Islamic New Year lead to 'New Year - New You' and provision for children's *salah* (prayer) facilities for pupils in Year 5 have been improved.

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

The school is successful in meeting its objective of inspiring and developing all pupils to the highest degree within their capabilities. The pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills are very well developed in curricular and extra curricula activities. From the youngest age, pupils speak eloquently and with confidence, and they all listen carefully to adults and to each other. At all ages, they are active learners, able to work independently, think critically and be creative. Throughout the school, pupils read and write fluently. High levels of creativity are evident, demonstrated in the displays of pupils' work throughout the school and in their musical and dramatic performances.

Pupils have highly positive attitudes to their work, and are notably eager and resourceful. As individuals, they organise their work well and take pride in the presentation of their work. Pupils often work in pairs or small groups, and they openly discuss information in a mature way, listening carefully to the ideas of others. For example, in an outstanding Year 3 PSHCE lesson, learning leaders did an excellent job, guided superbly by the teacher, to ensure their peers were involved in a group task where different emotions were being discussed.

Teaching is well supported by assessment tools which are constantly reviewed to ensure that they measure accurately and enable optimum progress and attainment. This allows teachers to monitor the progress of each individual pupil and to identify where extra support is needed.

The result is that the pupils, throughout the school make excellent progress in their understanding of Islam and its relevance to everyday life.

Although a library has been established within the school, pupils are yet to have access to a wide range of Islamic reading and RE books for use. The school is aware of this and is taking appropriate steps to develop this area.

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

Teachers exhibit thorough subject knowledge and adopt a variety of strategies to foster a love for learning in their pupils which enables them to make significant progress. Teachers know their pupils well and ensure that pupils develop in a supportive learning environment, within which, success is celebrated.

Teachers encourage pupils to think more independently as they move up the school. In most lessons, the most able are offered additional tasks to provide them with suitable challenge. Pupils identified with SEND are well supported by learning coaches who provide helpful additional support for individual pupils. The school maintains close links with the local authority to ensure that the required provision for pupils with an Education Health Care Plan is implemented effectively. The Tarbiyyah mentor appointed to work with pupils with emotional or behavioural difficulties ensures pupils are very well supported during what is for many, a very challenging time. One parent who wrote to inspectors said of this support, '*... already we are seeing a marked change in him which means the world to us.*'

In lessons, pupils receive positive praise, encouragement and recognition for their excellent work. The most successful lessons were characterised by brisk pace, and careful management of time. Teachers expectations in all lessons are high.

Teachers employ a varied, stimulating range of approaches to promote learning. For example, teachers use effective questioning techniques to challenge and extend learning. The use of Islamic terms is frequently used to acknowledge pupils' efforts in lessons.

Teaching is supported by a very good range of resources that are used to engage the pupils and enhance their enjoyment of learning. For example, many rooms are equipped with interactive whiteboards, and these are used effectively.

Marking is thorough, accurate and frequent and gives positive reinforcement to pupils, as well as helpful advice on how to improve. Work is assessed regularly and the data is used to make lesson planning more effective. Teachers give valuable oral feedback while pupils are working on tasks in class.

From the questionnaires received, a small number of parents felt they would welcome more homework for RE.

What needs improvement?

- To set appropriate homework which would allow pupils to build on the learning of RE lessons.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of RE is outstanding because:

Leaders are skilful in identifying the schools' needs and sharing these with colleagues, pupils, parents and the wider community. Teaching is rigorously monitored so that learning and achievement is outstanding. Staff are carefully recruited and trained well to ensure they are clear about the schools' faith ethos. Regular CPD is provided to support staff in developing spirituality and contributing to shaping the Islamic Ethos of the school. Leaders and experienced staff contribute positively to shaping the Islamic life of the school

The school is well supported by the governing body. Governors are secure in their knowledge of the faith and ethos of the school and how this is reflected in the school curriculum. They discharge their statutory duties diligently and they have an exciting vision for the schools' future development. All governors receive a thorough induction covering all aspects of their role on joining the school and a bespoke training and development programme ensures that they continue to carry out their duties effectively.

Reports are provided by the Executive Head Teacher on Faith and Ethos to governors. She also informs the Trust in a monthly report on all development, positive and any negative, in the delivery of the Faith Values and Ethos agenda. Consequently, the Chief Executive of the Tauheedul Education Trust is regularly updated with all news in this area of the school's development. This, along with those from other Trust schools, provides a national picture so that the Trust is able to capture successes and mitigate risks.

Leaders have worked hard to ensure there is a clear focus on improving teaching and learning and providing focused professional development for all teaching staff. The monitoring of teaching and learning is rigorous and is strengthened by a successful coaching programme. As a result, teaching is outstanding.

Lessons build extremely well on pupils' previous knowledge and individual needs. Teachers have very secure knowledge and their enthusiasm enables pupils to successfully develop their learning skills and a sense of achievement.

The school has very good relationships with parents; various workshops are offered and are well attended. Some parents are also involved in the half-termly Parent *Shura* (Council) meetings in which they organise events to support the school. The 'You said We did' board reflects the school work on suggestions that parents have shared.

The school provides parents with detailed reports each year about their child's progress. An overwhelming majority of parents spoken to by inspectors would recommend the school to other parents.

Work with other schools has provided pupils with the opportunity to meet and collaborate with other children of different socio-economic backgrounds. It has enabled

them to make new friends, empathise with others and discuss a variety of viewpoints, particularly in regards to faith.

Children are developing strong views appreciating cultural diversity. They learn about, and develop respect for, other cultures through the arts, humanities and English lessons. Participation in assemblies and celebrating festivals such as the Chinese New Year also serve to promote understanding of differing cultures and religions.

School leaders and governors firmly challenge all types of extremism. All staff receive regular safeguarding updates and WRAP training takes place annually.

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

The RE curriculum is broad and balanced and encompasses all the major faiths. The school had adopted the locally agreed syllabus for RE and is in the process of adapting it to put more emphasis on the Islamic faith. The statutory requirement for a daily collective act of worship is fully met by pupils beginning every session with *Surah al-Fatihah* (Opening Chapter of the Holy Qur'an) in both Arabic and English and end the day with a special *dua*. *Jummah* (Friday) prayer is held every week and the year 5 pupils have the opportunity to pray both *Zuhr* and *Asr* (two middle prayers of the day) in school during the winter term.

The RE curriculum is appreciated by all parents who responded to the inspection questionnaire. It provides pupils with knowledge and understanding of *'aqaid* (beliefs), *aklaaq* (morals), *fiqh* (theology), history and as well as learning about religions other than their own. The curriculum is enriched through a wide range of exciting and varied experiences that bring pupils' learning to life. For example, the Mini Hajj enabled pupils to experience an important Islamic ritual. It also recognises other key events during the Islamic calendar including the Islamic New Year in order to deepen pupils' understanding and practice of Islam.

The RE curriculum is carefully tailored to meet the need of all pupils. For example, the after school Qur'an club provides extra support to the few pupils who do not attend the *madrassah* (supplementary classes taught in the local mosque).

The carefully selected and planned *Hadith* (thought) of the week promotes universal human values and good character, applicable to all faith and none. They are displayed around the school and in each classroom to raise awareness of their centrality in school life. During discussions, pupils were able to share their thoughts and feeling about the *Hadith* of the week with great passion.

The RE curriculum provides clear evidence that the study of Islam is a priority for the school, whilst, subjects such as art, drama, role play and *nasheeds* (singing) add value to the RE provision by adding strong cross-curricular links.

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

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is a real strength of the school. Pupils' faith and values are fully developed through the daily collective acts of worship, assemblies, RE lessons and a range of interfaith activities. The themed weeks are also part of the school calendar and include *seerah* (life of the Prophet pbuh), *Hajj* (Pilgrimage) and *Ramadhan* (fasting month) These provide excellent opportunities to foster a sense of Islamic identity and ensure all pupils develop pride in their own faith. The links with other schools and with pupils of different faiths provide opportunities for interaction, bringing awareness and understanding of pupils' own and others' beliefs, and respect and tolerance for everyone.

In discussion with inspectors, pupils said that they enjoy and learn a lot from the daily collective act of worship, especially the recitation of Surah Al-Fatihah, various *dua* they learn and the Hadith of the week. A Year 5 pupil said *'we like it when we all pray together, we feel happy and proud that we pray salah at school'*.

The moral development of pupils is well catered for by giving pupils many opportunities through assembly, RE, PSHCE and across the curriculum to explore and develop moral concepts and values, such as right and wrong, justice, personal rights and responsibilities.

The social development of pupils is excellent. Pupils help to raise funds for a number of charities such as, Red Nose Day, Macmillan and Children in Need. Pupils acquire excellent social skills (empathy, emotional literacy and effective participation) through team working in lessons and collaborating with children from other schools.

The cultural development of pupils is outstanding. Each year, pupils participate in activities that celebrate key cultural events in the British calendar including the anniversary of Armistice Day and WW1. Recently, pupils also participated in commemorating the anniversary of the Holocaust, where they learnt about events by studying recounts of people who experienced the Holocaust, and engaged in joint activities with the Tauheedul Girls' High School. Pupils and staff have also participated in a regimental commemorative service and parade to mark the 100th anniversary of the Battle of the Somme.

These experiences have enabled the school to strengthen and develop the Fundamental British Values taught already to pupils throughout the curriculum. During discussion with inspectors, parents were keen to share that their children had developed a secure understanding of other faiths following their visits to the various places of worship.

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.