

## **The Olive School Bolton**

### Inspection Report

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**Local authority:** Bolton

**Inspected under the auspices of:** The Association of Muslim Schools UK

**Inspection dates:** 3 February 2020

**Lead inspector:** Mrs Hasina Varachia

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

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<b>Type of school:</b>	Primary
<b>School category:</b>	Academy Free School
<b>Age range of pupils:</b>	4-11
<b>Gender of pupils:</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll:</b>	303
<b>Appropriate authority:</b>	The Board of Trustees
<b>Chair:</b>	Irfan Umarji
<b>Principal:</b>	Sabina Saeed
<b>Date of previous school inspection:</b>	N/a
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## Introduction

### **Inspection team**

Lead Inspector: Mrs. Hasina Varachia  
Team Inspectors: Mrs. Mona Mohamed  
Mr. Wasim Riaz

This inspection was carried out by a team of three inspectors. They visited lessons or parts of lessons including observing registration time, break time and lunch time. They held meetings with governors, the senior leadership team, staff, parents and groups of pupils. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation, including pupil's written work, planning of the RE (Religious Education) and PSHE (Personal Social Health Education) curriculum, various school self-evaluation documents, the schools' RE and PSHE Plan and parent questionnaires. The school received a Section 5 inspection in July.

The inspection team looked in detail at the following:

- The Religious Education (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 Bolton is an Islamic faith school which opened as a new free school in September 2016. It is part of a Multi Academy Trust, Star Academies.

The school currently has pupils from Reception to Year 4. It is a two-form entry school. and over-subscribed.

The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium funding is in line with the national average. Almost all are speakers of English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is also above the national average. No pupils currently on roll attend an alternative provision.

**Inspection judgments**

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

## **Overall effectiveness: the quality of religious education provided at The Olive School Bolton is Outstanding because:**

The Olive School Bolton is a school '*...committed to promoting personal excellence, character development and service to communities from within a caring and secure Islamic environment.*' The school achieves this very well indeed.

Pupils' achievements and attitudes including those in EYFS are outstanding. Pupils are accomplished learners who approach learning with enthusiasm and positivity. Their desire to give their best is exemplary. The school provides an extensive range of opportunities to develop their knowledge, understanding and skills both in the curriculum and through extra-curricular activities. A significant factor in pupils' achievements is the strength of teaching in the school. Pupils with SEND receive excellent support in lessons and where needed, through individual support. During the inspection, one pupil with significant special needs was very much made to feel part of the lesson and his contribution during discussion was warmly praised, leading to a glowing smile.

This excellent teaching is highly effective in supporting the schools' ambitious aims and promoting pupils' progress. Teaching demonstrates thorough subject knowledge, skills in organisation, time management and use of resources, as well as a thorough knowledge of each pupils' needs. The Principal's sheer drive and determination to ensure all pupils have the opportunities they deserve has ensured a school community that strives to give their best at every level. As a result, the school is providing life changing opportunities for the pupils they serve.

Pupils are met by the Principal and her staff each morning and along with the thorough communication between home and the school demonstrates the excellent care and interest shown by the staff. Pupils told inspectors that their views are routinely sought. Attendance is given high priority.

The quality of pupils' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is outstanding and is strongly supported by extremely effective arrangements for pastoral care. From EYFS, pupils are given extensive opportunities to grow as confident and harmonious individuals; they are polite, considerate, confident and articulate. Pupils are given a wide range of opportunities and responsibilities and accept these with enthusiasm. At every age, pupils feel well cared for and there are a range of staff who pupils can turn to should the need arise. Pupils report that they feel safe in school and incidences of bullying are extremely rare.

Pupils develop self-confidence and resilience within a culture of care and consideration for others. They are reflective, self-aware and responsive to the many spiritual experiences on offer and show deep respect and sensitivity towards the diverse cultural and religious backgrounds within their own school and those present in British society. The school has ensured that relationships with other schools, local faith groups and the wider community are strong.

Pupils recognise a moral responsibility to help those in need and in the very short period of time since the school began have raised over £21,000 for a variety of local, national and international

charities. Pupils learn exceptionally well from these opportunities.

The leadership and management of the school, led by an inspirational Principal, are enthusiastic and dynamic. All members of the team are constantly seeking ways to improve. The school's comprehensive development plan is an excellent vehicle for growth and development. The school maintain strong links with its parental body who are overwhelmingly supportive of the school.

Governors are effective in their oversight in all areas of school life. They provide support and challenge which enables the growth and development of the school and ensures that the needs of pupils are met.

RE, collective worship, the curriculum and Super Learning Days are very well planned and are informed by Islamic values which contribute strongly to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils fully embrace the Fundamental British Values and these are effectively promoted throughout many aspects of school life. During the inspection, an inspirational assembly showed clearly the strength of the 'Olive School Family' as pupils put their arms around each other when they sang the words '*you are my brother, my sister*' from the *nasheed* (Islamic song), *One Big Family*. Pupils demonstrate an excellent understanding of these values and as a result, they make an outstanding contribution to the spiritual development of the whole school community.

School displays are of an excellent standard and reflect the imaginative teaching pupils receive throughout the school.

### **The achievement of pupils at the school in their religious education is Outstanding because:**

Pupils develop high levels of knowledge, skills and understanding across all areas. Pupils' high levels of achievement are supported by well-planned teaching which demonstrates a strong awareness of their individual strengths and areas for development. Teachers' diligent and informative marking allows pupils to recognise and address areas for development. Leaders carefully check children's progress and swift action is taken when it is identified that intervention is needed. As a result, pupils make outstanding progress.

In lessons, pupils apply themselves with enthusiasm and a passion for learning. Pupils display a strong ability to assess their own work and constructively critique that of their peers. Teachers provide regular opportunities for this and ensure that pupils are involved their own learning. Pupils are strong readers and have exceptional writing skills. Their work in books show that they can write for a variety of purposes and audiences. They take exceptional pride in the presentation and organisation of their work. They are articulate when answering questions and presenting their ideas and when working in pairs or groups, they do so very maturely.

An excellent range of displays in classrooms, corridors and around the school reflects their creativity and maturity.

Pupils with SEND achieve exceptionally well as a result of effective identification, targeted individual support, and teaching strategies and interventions well-suited to their needs. The most-able pupils have high levels of achievement due to the challenging work that is provided

for them and a strong desire to succeed.

Teaching is strongly supported by excellent assessment systems which ensure that all pupils' progress is carefully monitored, and swift action taken when it is identified that extra support is needed.

As a relatively new school, there is yet no school library. However, the school has ensured that in each classroom there is a well-established number of Islamic reading and RE books for use. Reading and faith corners feature strongly in every classroom throughout the school.

Parents are kept very informed of their child's progress through half-termly reports as well as through termly parents' evenings.

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

Teaching is typically encompassed within a framework of well-timed tasks that lead lessons at a brisk pace. This allows pupils to make significant progress in lessons. Lessons feature varied and stimulating questions which challenges thinking. Teachers have strong subject knowledge and use this well in lessons providing opportunities for a range of independent and cooperative learning.

A particularly strong feature found in all lessons observed is the mutual respect and strong rapport between pupils, and between pupils and their teachers. This is a significant factor in ensuring successful outcomes for pupils. Classroom behaviour is of an excellent standard and is recognised routinely by teachers in lessons. An excellent example of this was seen in a lesson about saints where pupils engaged in a 'conscience alley' activity and showed exceptional maturity. In this lesson, good links were made to Islam, deepening pupils' spirituality.

Teachers are enthusiastic and committed, with pupil's learning also supported by the teaching of additional lessons which address any areas of difficulty or provide the opportunity for pupils to further deepen and extend their knowledge and understanding.

The marking of work is of very high quality. Comments are supportive with areas that need improvement clearly indicated. These next steps motivate pupils and they work hard to improve.

### **The effectiveness of leadership and management of Religious Education is Outstanding because:**

The Principal, leaders and governors have successfully created an ethos and sense of purpose that contributes exceptionally well to the personal development and academic outcomes of pupils. The vision of the school is strongly supported by all and they work extremely hard together in their teams to ensure its' success. Camaraderie and teamwork is clearly evident at every level throughout the school.

Governors are committed to the school and provide regular support and challenge to the Principal and her leadership team. They meet termly, visit the school regularly, attend school

events and receive a detailed report three times a year. This gives them an exceptional view of the school.

Self-evaluation and development planning are thorough and enable staff to identify where the school is strong and where further improvement is necessary. These systems have had significant influence in moving the school forward.

Senior staff regularly undertake both informal and formal monitoring of teaching and learning and this contributes to the rigorous appraisal process, allowing staff to evaluate their practice and develop their professional skills.

Leaders and governors are highly successful in promoting the aims and Islamic ethos of the school. The Islamic ethos is firmly embedded in school life and is supported by tailored professional development. The curriculum is reviewed by senior leaders to ensure it provides breadth and balance whilst meeting the needs of all pupils.

The RE curriculum provides numerous exciting opportunities for high quality learning experiences and pupils are thoroughly engaged in their learning as a result. The strength of these experiences and the quality of care provided is testimony to the leadership and management of the school. Practices and policies are well established, with an emphasis on the welfare and safeguarding of pupils, which is exemplary.

Parents are extremely positive about the work of the school. They commend the open and welcoming atmosphere in the school. Parents say the school addresses parental concerns quickly and effectively. Parents are provided with many opportunities to be involved in the life of the school and their children's work. These provide valuable opportunities for parents/carers and families to learn about the curriculum pupils learn. All parents spoken to by inspectors would recommend the school to other parents.

### **The extent to which the religious education curriculum meets pupils' needs is Outstanding because:**

The school provides a rich and exciting RE curriculum, both through the lessons and through the Super Learning Days and spirituality events including Ramadhan challenges and the five days of Hajj. These experiences are rich and memorable and provide opportunities that as the school rightly shares, *'instil in the children a real thirst for learning.'* Parents and the wider community are also invited to share these experiences alongside their child.

These high-quality learning experiences have an impact on the wider personal development and well-being of pupils. For example, pupils share a deep concern for others and have raised a considerable amount of money for various charities since the school began. During discussion with inspectors, one pupil said, *'The charity days teaches us to be grateful.'*

Pupils learn about and respect, their own faith and other major faiths through assemblies, visits to places of worship, visiting speakers, the RE curriculum and through twinning projects undertaken with pupils from other backgrounds. Pupils lead assemblies in other schools as well

as workshops to explain the faith and practices around for example, celebrations of Eid. Consequently, pupils are very well prepared for life in modern Britain.

The RE lead in school has worked closely with other leaders to ensure an innovative approach to the delivery of the RE scheme of work. The scheme has been reviewed so to put a greater emphasis on Islam so that, when studying other faiths, the pupils have a wealth of opportunities to discover similarities and differences with their own faith. Examples include a lesson seen during the inspection about saints where pupils looked at the role of spiritual leaders including saints, *walis* and gurus in Christianity, Islam and Sikhism.

Daily, most pupils, including the youngest, recite Surah al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an) and Du'a Kaffara al-Majlis (prayer). Throughout the inspection, pupils greeted inspectors enthusiastically with the Islamic greeting of *sallam* (peace) and teachers were all extensively seen to praise pupils with the Islamic term '*MashaAllah.*' These opportunities allow pupils to deepen in faith.

A comprehensive assembly programme means that pupils participate in daily assemblies. An assembly is devoted specifically to teaching the Hadith of the Week. The hadith is displayed in class faith corners and pupils and staff refer to these throughout the week, encouraging pupils to follow the teachings. The Hadith of the Week is also shared with parents, via the school's text messaging service, and so ensuring that parents are part of their child's spiritual journey.

An excellent initiative, the 'Sunnah Shack,' led by pupils provides an opportunity to learn about Sunnah foods. The 'Sunnah' Shack is a playtime tuck shop where children are encouraged to make healthy food choices following the Prophet's (peace be upon him) Sunnah. This initiative not only allow pupils to grow in faith but encourages them to make healthy choices.

The school maintains a good relationship with the local mosques and *madrasahs* (supplementary classes) and as a result the school has raised its' reputation within the community showing it is sensitive to the needs of the community it serves.

Currently there is no formal provision for daily *salah* (prayer) but the school has in place plans for pupils in year 5 and 6 to partake in collective worship from the new academic year.

### **The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is Outstanding because:**

Individuals demonstrate secure interpersonal skills and are kind and considerate to each other. In EYFS, pupils happily share resources, take turns and make independent choices about their play, learning and behaviour. All pupils take great pride in their school community and appreciate the many opportunities they have and all that they have gained from the school. This confidence builds as they move throughout the school.

Pupils gain an excellent understanding of their own and others' faiths through the numerous opportunities the school provides both from within and outside the school. Pupils take advantage that these opportunities offer and as a result grow in self- knowledge, self-esteem and

confidence. For example, pupils enjoy participating in, school productions, being in a team or serving on the pupil *shura* (school council).

Pupils take the many opportunities on offer to reflect for example, during a PSHE lesson seen during the inspection, pupils reflected on how they could use their time to help others.

Pupils display excellent moral understanding. They have a strong sense of right and wrong and demonstrate excellent behaviour. Pupils move about the school maturely and sensibly, listening respectfully to their teachers and their peers. Pupils understand the need for rewards and sanctions and are aware that their choices about behaviour have consequences. Pupils contribute generously to charitable causes, aware of the needs of others beyond their school. Charities supported have included, Children in Need, Macmillan, Red Nose Day and Poppy Appeal.

Measures to guard against bullying are highly effective, supported by procedures to deal appropriately with rare incidents. Pupils believe any bullying is taken seriously and dealt with quickly.

Pupils' social awareness is extremely well-developed. They express confidence that their teachers will support them, with one pupil informing inspectors that, *'If we look upset, the teachers will speak to us straight away.'* The warmth and courtesy they show to visitors is a strong feature of their development. Pupils show care and consideration for each other. Older pupils are excellent role models to younger pupils through their behaviour and attitudes, and through the way in which they discharge more formal responsibilities as through the pupil *shura*, as school monitors, as a school captain or peer mentor.

Pupils' cultural awareness is developed through the schools' programme of *nasheeds*, the annual school play, the Olive's Got Talent production and other public speaking events. External speakers further enrich pupils' experiences and relationships with other schools strongly promotes their cultural awareness.

## Glossary

What inspection judgments mean

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