

# Palm Tree School

58-60 St Silas's Road, Blackburn, Lancashire, BB2 7JX

**Inspection dates** 15-16 October 2014

**Overall outcome** **Unmet independent school standards identified**

## Reason for the inspection

- In September 2014 Ofsted received a report from the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) which raised concerns about safeguarding in the school.
- The Department for Education commissioned Ofsted to undertake an unannounced emergency inspection to examine the school's compliance with the independent school regulations in relation to the matters raised in the report.

## Main findings

- The inspector held discussions with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, staff and pupils. The headteacher provided access to all documents and records that were requested. This included: the school prospectus; access to the website; safeguarding policy and procedures; records of staff safeguarding training; single central register of checks on staff; recruitment procedures; behaviour policy; record of sanctions; anti-bullying policy and lesson plans.
- All the required policies and procedures for the welfare, health and safety of pupils are in place. This includes a comprehensive safeguarding policy where staff are able to follow a clear procedure for making a referral if they have concerns about a child's welfare. The safeguarding policy and procedure were updated in September 2014.
- Two members of the senior management team have designated responsibility for child protection and welfare issues. Staff are fully aware who the designated officers are and all staff training is at the required level and up-to-date.
- Staff report all injuries sustained by pupils to senior management. However, these are not always fully documented or kept as a matter of record. Consequently, the school cannot track the frequency of these incidents.
- Recruitment and vetting is robust and followed up by a thorough induction programme. Volunteers are always supervised
- Pupils' behaviour both in lessons and around the school was observed to be good. Pupils relate well to staff, ask questions with confidence and are caring towards each other. Pupils state that teachers 'give support' and everyone was 'kind'.
- Behaviour sanctions are appropriate. Pupils write their own account of any incident and reflect on how they will improve. Sanctions include missing playtime and detention.
- In 2010 one serious incident had been recorded. However, the school did not follow the safeguarding procedure. Despite a high level of concern, a referral was not made to the local authority safeguarding board. Her Majesty's Inspector requested that, despite the time lapse, a referral still be made. Following the inspection, confirmation was received

that this had been done.

- Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe through assemblies, visitors to school, infant safety role play and topics in the personal, social and health education and citizenship programmes.
- Pupils spoken to said how much they enjoyed school. They felt safe and said there was no bullying and that they would report any concerns to a teacher. They understood issues around cyber-bullying and that that the school did not allow them to bring in mobile phones unless it was 'a party day'. There was a strong commitment to friendship and being 'one community'.

### **Compliance with regulatory requirements**

#### **The school must take action to meet The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, as amended, and associated requirements**

- Ensure that when there are concerns about a child's welfare the policy and procedure for making a referral or notification and for the keeping of records are followed. Paragraph 7(a)

## Inspection team

Kathryn Gethin, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

## Information about this school

- Palm Tree School is an independent Muslim school situated close to the city centre of Blackburn. The school opened in 1999 and provides both primary and Islamic education.
- The school is registered for boys and girls aged 3-11 years. The vast majority of pupils speak English fluently. Pupils are taught in mixed year group classes.
- The school was last inspected in March 2011 by Bridge Schools Inspectorate.
- There are currently 89 pupils on roll. No pupil has a statement of special educational needs.
- The school is currently applying for Free School status and is moving to new premises.
- The motto of the school is 'Believe and you can achieve'.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	131983
<b>Inspection number</b>	453874
<b>DfE registration number</b>	889/6006

This inspection was conducted at the request of the registration authority for independent schools. It was carried out under section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as inserted by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005.

<b>Type of school</b>	Muslim Primary School
<b>School status</b>	Independent school
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	89
<b>Proprietor</b>	Committee of Palm Tree Primary School
<b>Chair</b>	Alex Tritton
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs N Hameed
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	7 March 2011
<b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>	£1,500
<b>Telephone number</b>	01254 696933
<b>Email address</b>	palmtreeschool@yahoo.co.uk

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