

The Olive School Blackburn

Bicknell Street, Blackburn, Lancashire, BB1 7EY

Inspection dates 2–3 June 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected
	This inspection:	Outstanding 1
Leadership and management	Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils	Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching	Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils	Outstanding	1
Early years provision	Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- From their starting points, all groups of pupils in all key stages make rapid progress to reach high levels of attainment.
- The proportion of pupils reaching a good level of development at the end of their Reception Year is above that seen nationally.
- Pupils who have been in Key Stage 1 for only a short time since the opening of the school have made outstanding progress, particularly in mathematics. In all year groups many pupils produce a standard of work beyond that typical for their age.
- The inclusive nature of the school and pervasive ethos of a 'love of learning' mean that all groups have equal opportunities to achieve academic excellence and develop as well-rounded individuals.
- Teaching is inspirational: consequently, learning is purposeful and full of fun.
- Senior and middle leaders share a passion for educational excellence and have a relentless focus on improving the quality of teaching and raising achievement even further.
- Governance is strong. Governors have a deep understanding of the school. They recognise the need to further develop the links between the governing body and middle leaders as the school continues to grow in size.
- Attendance is extremely high; pupils thoroughly enjoy school and attend regularly.
- The school has a highly positive reputation in the community and has established effective relationships with parents.
- Behaviour is a real strength of the school. Pupils' behaviour is impeccable. They listen with rapt attention and want to meet or exceed the high expectations their teachers set for them.
- Pupils have high levels of respect for themselves and others, which they demonstrate in the way they conduct themselves and the pride they show in the high quality presentation of their work.
- Pupils feel safe and know how to keep safe in school, in the community and online, because of the support and teaching they receive.
- The breadth of the school's curriculum ensures all pupils are prepared well for life in modern Britain and have a good understanding of democracy.
- This school is a progressive and welcoming place where respect for different faiths and cultures is emphasised. Leaders and governors are highly vigilant and proactive in mitigating any potential dangers from extremism.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed parts of lessons, including those in which pupils were taught about how letters in words represent different sounds (phonics). Some of these were undertaken jointly with a senior leader of the school.
- Inspectors visited all key stages jointly with members of the school’s senior leadership team to see the school at work.
- Discussions were held with senior leaders, members of staff, groups of pupils, three representatives of the governing committee and the chief executive officer of the multi-academy trust.
- A range of documentation was examined, particularly that relating to school development planning and self evaluation keeping pupils safe, and their behaviour and attendance.
- The school’s tracking of pupils’ progress was checked and pupils’ work in books was examined.
- Inspectors took note of displays around the school and the work in the outdoor areas.
- Inspectors listened to a number of pupils read.
- Inspectors took note of the 84 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and spoke with parents arriving at the school at the start of the day.
- Inspectors took note of the 33 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

John Nixon, Lead inspector

Her Majesty’s Inspector

Elizabeth Kelly

Additional Inspector

Alastair Younger

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The Olive School opened as a three-form entry, Muslim faith-based primary school in September 2013. It was set up in response to demand from the local community. It is part of the Tauheedul Education Trust (TET) family of schools. TET's vision involves the development of a national model for progressive, mainstream and positive Muslim free schools that provide pupils with outstanding academic foundations to help them become exemplary members of their community.
- The school follows the National Curriculum, which is extended through an enrichment programme. All the teaching staff in the school are qualified teachers. The timing of the school day enables a flexible start in the morning and an early finish on a Fridays to allow for prayers. Currently, the school has four year groups: Reception, Year 1, Year 2 and Year 3 with a total of 330 pupils. The school is oversubscribed: for September 2015; there were 240 applications for 90 places.
- All pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds and over half of them speak English as an additional language; these are well above the proportions seen nationally.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is small and well below the national picture. This is in stark contrast to the school's indicator of deprivation which places it within the 40% of areas of highest deprivation in the country. The pupil premium is additional funding the school receives for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or who are in local authority care.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is below average.
- This was the first full inspection of the school by Ofsted.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure links between middle leaders and the governing body are enhanced so that governors benefit from the evaluative skills of this layer of leadership as the school continues to grow in size.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher is a powerhouse of enthusiasm who has a detailed knowledge of what constitutes high quality teaching. She regularly demonstrates her exemplary skills while teaching across the school; this modelling results in the development of excellent practice among the school's team of highly-motivated teachers and learning coaches.
- Leaders at all levels share, and are fully committed to, a common vision that is dedicated to empowering pupils to reach educational excellence while also developing their love of learning.
- Detailed and rigorous monitoring by leaders, coupled with the effective use of a wide range of external experts to probe and check the quality of provision, mean that leaders have an excellent understanding of the strengths and relative weaknesses of the school.
- School development planning is detailed, highly focused and regularly and rigorously checked by both leaders and governors to ensure actions are having the intended impacts. Leaders identify and plan actions to overcome any barriers to the smooth operation of the school and pupils' learning. Through their tenacious and systematic approach, leaders have quickly established the school as high-performing.
- Middle leaders, many of whom are new to their role, are highly effective. They have strong subject knowledge because they have been provided with the opportunities to train and develop their skills. These include attending external training courses and by working alongside senior leaders in the school. Middle leaders use this knowledge well to empower other colleagues through the provision of regular in-school training and by working alongside them. Middle leaders play an important role in monitoring the quality of their subjects and in planning and implementing new initiatives. For example, the leader of computing has recently been involved in developing the online safety curriculum and holding a workshop for parents to help pupils stay safe while using the internet.
- Links between middle leaders and governors are well defined and the school plans to develop these links further as it continues to grow in size. The school supplements the National Curriculum through an ambitious programme of enrichment activities including astronomy, cookery and sport, to which all pupils have access. The curriculum is broad and balanced and means that all pupils are prepared well for their next stages of education and for life in modern Britain, including having a good understanding of democracy. Rewards are used to encourage learning to good effect. For example, the school's 'mini-baccalaureate' requires pupils to achieve highly, attend regularly and behave appropriately over a sustained period of time.
- Leaders use the small amount of pupil premium they receive to good effect so those pupils who are known to be disadvantaged are given equal opportunities to succeed. Use of the funding has included the provision of after-school enrichment opportunities, the provision of additional learning coaches, access to additional reading books and e-books and attendance at the school's breakfast club. Leaders track the impact of this provision closely, through individual 'provision maps', to ensure the funding is having the desired impact on achievement.
- Sports funding is effectively used by school leaders to both provide expert tuition for pupils and to develop and sustain teachers' skills. Specialist coaches help deliver and support the physical education, (PE), curriculum and to provide high quality equipment for the children to use during lessons. Consequently, pupils' skills in PE have increased and their levels of participation in sport have risen.
- The school's relationships with parents and its community are excellent. Parents are kept well informed about the achievement of their children through detailed and regular reports, while newsletters and the school website provide up-to-date and interesting information. Close links with the community have been fostered, particularly with the school's neighbours, who willingly give up valuable parking spaces for visitors to the school. Additionally, close links with local businesses and other community groups enhance the opportunities and experiences for pupils. For example, many local businesses work with the school to support events such as its fairs, and local clergy from other faiths regularly visit to contribute to assemblies. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school.
- This school is a progressive and welcoming place where pupils' spiritual, moral and social education is excellent. The core values of respect for other faiths, cultures and lifestyles are emphasised and modelled by staff and pupils alike. Leaders take every opportunity to develop pupils' understanding of the variety of cultures in modern Britain while not detracting from their own faith. For example, a link with and a visit to a Church of England Primary school in another local authority allows pupils to learn about the festivals of Christianity such as Easter. A reciprocal visit from that school to The Olive School allows teachers and pupils to celebrate their own Muslim faith and share knowledge of the festival of Ramadan. Leaders and governors are highly vigilant and proactive in mitigating any potential dangers of extremism.
- The Tauheedul Education Trust has very high expectations of its school leaders and staff firmly rooted in

its vision that all pupils, with appropriate support and teaching, can achieve academic excellence. The chief executive officer and other trust officers regularly and rigorously challenge the school to reach and exceed its high expectations whilst also ensuring the staff receive the best support and advice to help them do so. This is achieved through thorough monitoring which means trust leaders have a deep and secure understanding of the school's effectiveness.

■ The governance of the school:

- Governance of the school is outstanding. Governors, many of whom are parents of pupils at the school, see themselves as an intrinsic part of the school family and share, with all staff, the common vision and passion for educational excellence. Governors have a detailed knowledge of the effectiveness of the school because of the probing and challenging questions they ask and the quality of information they receive from their leaders and from external quality assurance professionals. Governors regularly visit the school and draw upon their own professional knowledge to take appropriate actions to address the increasing challenges the school faces as it increases in size, and as it plans to move to a new site.
- Governors are fully involved in developing the school's improvement plan and monitoring the impact of leaders' actions. This includes close monitoring of the school's finances. Governors know about the impact of additional funding for those pupils who are disadvantaged and the funding received to improve pupils' participation in sport and develop healthy lifestyles.
- Governors ensure that the school's excellent performance management systems are rigorous and effectively implemented. This results in all staff, including the headteacher, being set challenging objectives that are clearly linked to achievement. Governors are very aware of the links between teachers' performance management and pay.
- The governing body ensures that the school meets statutory requirements for safeguarding; including ensuring the school has high quality and robust systems to check the credentials of staff who work in the school. They also ensure that leaders check thoroughly on the suitability of visitors.
- Governors have a clear and deep understanding of the freedoms available to them as governors of a free school. They have considered the use of these freedoms and made a conscious decision in respect of each of them to ensure the school meets their vision of academic excellence.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- All pupils behave well in lessons and demonstrate a love of learning that pervades the school. They listen with rapt attention and are eager to reach or exceed the high expectations placed upon them by teachers.
- Pupils' behaviour around school is outstanding. Pupils are impeccably polite and courteous to each other, staff and visitors. They have excellent manners and are genuinely inquisitive. They are keen to engage in conversation and eager to ensure visitors enjoy their visit to the school.
- Pupils' attendance is nearly 100% overall and well above that seen nationally for all groups. Parents comment that children do not want to miss school and hurry to get there in the morning. Similarly, pupils told inspectors they enjoy coming to school to learn and they agree that learning is fun. Their enjoyment stems from the range of activities they experience. Pupils clearly demonstrate pride in their school through the high quality of presentation of their work in books and classroom displays.
- Pupils have a good understanding of what bullying is and the different forms it can take, including online-bullying and that related to race and gender and how this differs from a falling out with friends. They say that bullying is extremely rare and any 'fall outs' are dealt with quickly and effectively by teachers and other staff. School records show that any misbehaviour is closely monitored and effectively followed up with parents as necessary.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding.
- The school has robust and detailed policies in place to ensure the suitability of staff and visitors.
- Rigorous policies are in place to ensure the safety of all pupils, including when they move between buildings.
- Education about safety is well integrated in the school's curriculum. As a result, pupils are confident in how to stay safe from the dangers associated with roads, strangers, modern technology and the internet.
- Pastoral care for pupils is excellent, especially for those pupils who may face challenging circumstances such as a family bereavement. The leadership of pastoral support is insightful and sensitive. As a result,

pupils and their families receive the help they need to enable pupils' continued successful education during difficult times.

The quality of teaching is outstanding

- Teaching is inspirational, commonly outstanding and never less than good; consequently pupils of all groups make outstanding progress from their starting points to reach high levels of attainment.
- Reading, writing and mathematics are taught systematically and with high levels of skill. Teachers use technology well to make activities real and exciting, frequently challenging pupils of all groups to complete difficult problem-solving activities, particularly in mathematics. Consequently, all pupils make outstanding progress; nearly all pupils reach, and many exceed, the levels of attainment expected for their age.
- Teachers demonstrate strong subject knowledge in a wide variety of subjects because of the high quality training they receive from senior and subject leaders and the opportunities afforded them to attend external training. They are confident and authoritative in presenting this knowledge to pupils while also welcoming questions from them and injecting fun into learning. For example in a Reception class phonics lesson children were enthralled by the visit of the 'vomiting phonics monster' that only regurgitated specific letter sounds. Children made excellent progress in their learning because they were completely enthralled; this high quality of learning is reflected in their excellent progress over time. The work set for different groups of pupils is planned in great detail and is adapted carefully to make sure it is hard enough for all groups. Consequently, pupils in all groups are fully engaged in their learning and any loss of concentration is extremely rare.
- All teachers and learning coaches consistently demonstrate high expectations of all pupils. Teachers frequently use technical language and vocabulary to explain concepts to even the youngest children. Consequently, from an early age pupils learn how to explain their understanding using the correct terminology and they develop an impressive breadth of vocabulary. Examples of this include children in the Reception classes who can both define and give examples of adjectives and write over a sustained period of time in well-constructed sentences. Additionally, a pupil in Year 2 in their everyday language and writing sought to use the word 'deceptive' as a synonym for 'tricky'.
- All staff use probing questions linked to their strong subject knowledge to good effect, particularly in mathematics. Pupils are commonly asked to explain their thinking or reasoning, which consolidates their understanding. Teachers have highly effective relationships with pupils, as a result of which pupils feel confident to take risks and make mistakes from which they learn.
- Teachers' marking is of a consistently high standard in all year groups and in all subjects. Homework is frequent, rigorous and used well as a tool to help pupils improve their work and reach high standards of achievement.

The achievement of pupils is outstanding

- The majority of children enter the school with skills and knowledge below those typical for their age. Their skills in communication, language and literacy and mathematical understanding are often weak when they join the school. By the end of the Reception Year, all groups of children, including those who are most able and those who are disabled or have special educational needs, make outstanding progress. Consequently, by the time they left the Reception Year in 2014, over three-quarters of children from all groups achieved a good level of development. All girls and those children who are disadvantaged achieved a good level of development. Work in children's books and teachers' accurate assessments show that high standards are being maintained.
- At the end of Key Stage 1, nearly all pupils from all groups make progress exceeding that which is typical for their age in reading, writing and mathematics. In 2014, the first year the school undertook Key Stage 1 statutory assessments, pupils from all groups, who had been attending the school for less than one year, made nearly twice the progress expected of them to achieve higher levels of attainment than those seen nationally, particularly in mathematics. Girls performed slightly better than boys at the end of Key Stage 1 in all subjects.
- The proportion of all groups of pupils meeting the national expectations for the Year 1 screening check in phonics (letters and their sounds) is extremely high and well above the national average. This is because pupils make outstanding progress due to teachers systematically teaching letters and sounds and regularly checking pupils' understanding during lessons.
- In Key Stage 2, the progress of all pupils, including those who are the most able, is outstanding. The small gap in attainment between girls and boys in all subjects shown in statutory assessment tests for Key Stage

1 in 2014 has been halved in two terms and is rapidly closing completely because of quality teaching and the focused support implemented by school leaders. The school does not have end of Key Stage 2 statutory assessment data because Year 6 is not yet operational. Work in pupils' books in Year 3, the only Key Stage 2 year group, however, shows them to be making sustained and outstanding progress to reach levels of attainment above their years. Over half of the cohort is current working at least one year ahead of what is expected of them in reading and mathematics, while one third are a year ahead in writing.

- The few pupils who are identified as being disadvantaged (those supported by the pupil premium) make outstanding progress. They reach similar levels of attainment to other pupils in school which exceed the levels of attainment seen nationally, particularly in mathematics.
- The most able pupils in all year groups receive high levels of challenge in the work set for them. Consequently, they work at and reach levels of attainment in excess of those that are expected for their age. One example of this was the skill shown by a Year 3 pupil who clearly articulated the autobiographical links between the experience of a character losing a parent in his reading book *Danny Champion of the World* and the real-life experiences of the author.
- The few pupils who are disabled or with special educational needs make outstanding progress in all subjects because they are well supported in school through highly effective strategies, such as one-to-one coaching from highly skilled members of staff.

The early years provision

is outstanding

- Leadership and the management of the early years is outstanding. The early years leader is an outstanding practitioner who leads from the front and uses her skills to coach and develop her team to provide an excellent start to children's learning at the school. Children grasp the basic school routines quickly and get over any initial anxieties early because of the successful induction week they experience prior to the start of the autumn term.
- The quality of teaching in the early years is outstanding. Teachers plan collaboratively and in detail using their analysis of accurate assessments effectively to meet the needs of children of all abilities. This means additional adults are used well and children are provided with exciting and stimulating activities and experiences that help them learn quickly. Teachers have consistently high expectations of all children and use probing questions effectively to encourage them to explain their thinking.
- Children are provided with a stimulating environment in which to learn. Teachers' innovative use of available space and strong organisation of routines, coupled with their high expectations of children, allows the 'Reception plaza' to host three full classes of 30 children with no distractions to learning. Displays are vibrant, changed regularly and focused on current topics. Different floor coverings, such as bubble wrap rugs, are securely taped to the floor to further expand tactile experiences. This results in children being engrossed in their learning. Consequently, from their low starting points and often with limited initial experience of speaking English, children make outstanding progress and reach high levels of achievement.
- Behaviour and safety in the early years are outstanding. Children show a thirst for learning and sustain high levels of concentration on tasks. Children move sensibly and safely between activities and have impeccable manners. They are keen to engage in conversation with visitors about their learning, for example, explaining how they make fruit cocktails in their model café and ensuring the inspector received a cup of the final product to taste. Children collaborate well with each other in all areas of the Reception classroom to share resources, take turns and to help each other if they become stuck on a task.
- Teachers give children frequent and regular supervised access to a range of outdoor activities. These activities are focused on learning and fun and lead to children developing their physical well-being.

What inspection judgements mean

School	Grade	Judgement	Description
	Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
	Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	139813
Local authority	Blackburn with Darwen
Inspection number	450237

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy free school
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	330
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Faruk Dasu
Headteacher	Julie Bradley (Executive Headteacher), Nusret Ellahi (Headteacher)
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	01254 54070
Fax number	Not applicable
Email address	info@oliveblackburn.tetrust.org

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