

Oak Tree High

Yorkshire Muslim Academy, Gate No 3 Bland Street, Sheffield, South Yorkshire S4 8DG

Inspection dates

15–17 November 2016

Overall effectiveness	Inadequate
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Inadequate
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- Leaders do not ensure that they are consistently meeting all of the independent school standards.
- Leaders and managers do not maintain the single central record or keep records of incidents accurately enough.
- Leaders have not ensured that they carry out essential checks on all staff in a timely manner.
- Leaders have not ensured that all staff access appropriate training for their roles. As a result, staff are not aware of the most up-to-date procedures. Consequently, safeguarding is ineffective.

The school has the following strengths

- Leaders and managers have effectively developed a system of assessment, which all staff use to monitor pupils' progress. This helps them to support pupils who fall behind.
- Teachers have strong subject knowledge that they use to give detailed explanations of difficult concepts, which help pupils learn well.
- Leaders ensure a broad and balanced curriculum, which prepares pupils well for life in modern Britain. Teachers include many opportunities for social, moral, spiritual and cultural development in their teaching.
- Pupils report that they feel safe in school and they know how to report their concerns. They say bullying is rare.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and they are well equipped and ready to learn.
- Pupils make good progress over time in a wide range of subjects. In a few subjects, where rates of progress and attainment are below national average, they are improving.
- The executive committee provides mentoring and support for the school leaders, which is helping them to develop the skills they need for their roles in leadership.
- Behaviour in school is good. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and they are keen to give answers to questions posed by teachers. This helps them to develop their confidence.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school must take action to meet the requirements of the schedule to The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 and associated requirements. The details are listed in the full report.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
 - ensuring that all of the independent school standards are consistently met
 - ensuring that all staff receive the training needed so that they can safeguard pupils effectively
 - strengthening safeguarding procedures so that responses to children not attending are taken quickly, rigorously followed up and accurate records are kept
- Improve personal development and welfare by:
 - making sure all necessary checks on staff are carried out prior to their commencement of teaching.

The school must meet the following independent school standards

■ Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- The proprietor must ensure that leaders make arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school; and such arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State (paragraph 7, 7(a), 7(b)).
- The proprietor must ensure that the written risk assessment policy is fully implemented. This is particularly the case to ensure that suitable risk assessments are in place for any staff member who begins teaching before their enhanced criminal record check is obtained (paragraph 16, 16(a), 16(b)).

■ Part 4. Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors

- The proprietor must ensure that all relevant checks on staff and proprietors are carried out and recorded on the single central record (paragraph 18(2), 18(2)(c), 18(2)(c)(ii), 18(3), 21(3), 21(3)(a)(ii), 21(3)(a)(iii)).

■ Part 6. Provision of information

- The latest inspection report must be published on the school's website (paragraph 32(1), 32(1)(d)).

■ Part 8. Quality of leadership and management in schools

- The proprietor must ensure that the persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school have the knowledge and skills to ensure that the independent school standards are met consistently and pupils' welfare and well-being is promoted (paragraph 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b), 34(1)(c)).

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Inadequate

- Leaders have not ensured that they consistently meet all of the independent school standards. They have failed to ensure that they meet standards associated with safeguarding, therefore safeguarding is ineffective. This is particularly due to the single central record being incomplete and leaders not fully checking the suitability of staff to work with children. As a result of these weaknesses, prior to this inspection, leaders cannot be sure that children were kept safe.
- At the time of the inspection, leaders did not ensure that staff had up-to-date safeguarding training or that the child protection policy was up to date with the latest government guidance around safeguarding, meaning that leaders have missed key messages.
- Leaders have not ensured that all designated safeguarding leads have the right level of training.
- Leaders ensure that where there are issues around children who do not attend school, they take action. However, in some cases this response has not been timely enough. Leaders keep records of their actions but the record-keeping is not sufficiently precise, which means that, in some cases, staff do not record the actions taken or follow-up incidents swiftly enough.
- The curriculum is appropriate and allows pupils to progress to the next stage of education or employment. Leaders ensure that staff attend relevant training on curriculum change and they have set up links with other local schools to standardise their assessments. This helps them to be sure that the work pupils produce is of high quality.
- The leaders of teaching, learning and assessment have ensured that staff training focuses on improving the quality of teaching. Through this, teachers consider how to cater for the different needs of pupils, structuring learning carefully. This contributes to pupils' good progress. Teachers who are new to the profession feel that this helps them to develop their skills in the classroom.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and around school. This is because leaders have had a consistent focus on improving behaviour and rewarding positive behaviour in school. Pupils say that the behaviour is much better than it was previously.

Governance

- The executive committee have not ensured that school leaders have appropriate training to allow them to fulfil their roles and consistently meet the independent school standards.
- School leaders receive mentoring from the executive committee and support to fulfil their roles. The executive committee recognise that there are areas for development within the leadership team.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective. The school has a safeguarding policy available on its website; however, it is not up to date with the latest government guidance. Governors have not ensured that policies and procedures are up to date and shared with all staff. Leaders do not ensure that safeguarding is effective because they do

not carry out the necessary checks on adults working at the school, or ensure that staff have an up-to-date knowledge of safeguarding issues.

- Pupils say that they feel safe and staff have an understanding of what to do should they have any concerns.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers make effective use of questioning in lessons. Through this, they challenge pupils to think carefully about their responses and to explain them fully. This helps them to make good progress.
- Pupils are developing good skills in responding to the feedback that teachers provide. Pupils who are the most able do this particularly well. As a result, all pupils who respond make good progress.
- Through their strong subject knowledge and experience in professions other than teaching, teachers make their subject lively and exciting. Pupils want to learn and they want to do well.
- Recent training on structuring lessons and providing challenge to all learners has resulted in teachers setting work to ensure that pupils of all abilities are able to make good progress over time. For example, pupils complete tasks at their working level and the level above. This helps them to improve, aim high and progress well.
- Relationships between teachers and pupils are very positive. Pupils are able to ask for help and support when they need it and teachers are very willing to give it. This results in greater exploration and deeper learning in some topics.
- The school has taken on a volunteer teaching assistant. In Arabic lessons, the teaching assistant supports pupils who do not have as much experience and knowledge in the subject as others. This helps them to build up their knowledge quickly so that they can learn the subject alongside their peers.
- Most-able pupils sometimes make better progress than their peers do. This is because occasionally expectations are higher for them. Pupils who are the most able ensure that they complete work to the highest standards and they seek all opportunities to deepen their learning.
- Leaders have recently changed the assessment system and not all pupils are fully aware of what this means. Consequently, some pupils, particularly in key stage 3, do not know their targets and, even though they are doing well, they are unsure of how they can improve further.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- While staff do not have the most up-to-date safeguarding training, they know how to spot signs that would cause them to be concerned about a child and they know how to report them.

- Leaders take action when safeguarding concerns arise and follow procedures and policies appropriately. However, they do not always keep thorough records of the actions they take. As a result, pupils are safe but leaders do not evaluate or review the actions taken to inform future improvements.
- Pupils enjoy learning and are equipped for their lessons. Most pupils are punctual for school.
- Pupils show respect for each other's views and ideas. They discuss and debate issues, always ensuring that they listen to one another.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school. They are confident that they could approach any member of staff if they had an issue. Pupils say, and records show, that bullying is rare.
- Pupils are prepared well for life in modern Britain. This is because leaders ensure that there are many opportunities across the curriculum for pupils to learn about British society, for example in history, religious studies and English. Through the curriculum and extra-curricular opportunities such as art club, assemblies, visits from external speakers and visits to local museums and the theatre, pupils develop their social, moral, spiritual and cultural experience and skills.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are positive both in the classroom and with homework. Pupils complete their homework conscientiously and this contributes to the good progress they make.
- Pupils are confident and almost all pupils take pride in their work. In lessons, they focus well, and through this they make good progress.
- The school is calm and orderly. At lunchtime, pupils socialise well together. They say that sometimes people do fall out, but that teachers help them to sort problems out quickly.
- Attendance rates in the past have been well above national average. However, in the last academic year, attendance declined. Attendance is beginning to improve again and leaders are monitoring this.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils arrive at school with broadly average attainment and leave with above-average attainment in most subjects.
- GCSE results in 2015 were stronger than in 2016. However, from starting points, progress over time for both groups is good.
- In 2016, the proportion of pupils gaining GCSEs in English and mathematics at grade C and above was close to the national averages.
- Most-able pupils achieve well over time, leaving with high grades and making good progress, which allow them to access appropriate A-level courses at sixth form.
- Leaders offer pupils who struggle with the curriculum the chance to complete functional skills qualifications prior to taking their GCSEs. This ensures that all pupils leave with qualifications. Through these tests, pupils feel better prepared for their GCSEs.

- Pupils read well, widely and often. Pupils are keen to share their knowledge of different genres and to explain who their favourite author is and why. Their access to books, however, is limited due to the relatively small number and disorderly storage of books available in the library. This slows down the progress pupils can make on their own with reading.
- Almost all pupils leaving at the end of Year 11 go on to sixth form or college to study appropriate A-level or vocational courses. This is because throughout Year 11 pupils access detailed careers information. However, younger pupils say that they do not know enough about future careers because they do not have enough time dedicated to this aspect of the curriculum at key stage 3.

School details

Unique reference number	137568
DfE registration number	373/6003
Inspection number	10012834

This inspection was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Type of school	Other independent school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Girls
Number of pupils on the school roll	69
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Yorkshire Muslim Academy
Chair	Tanver Ali
Headteacher	Muserith Bashir
Annual fees (day pupils)	£1,450
Telephone number	01142 447700
Website	http://ymasheffield.co.uk
Email address	admin@oaktreehs.org
Date of previous inspection	3–4 July 2012

Information about this school

- The school was last inspected in July 2012 when it was judged to be good.
- Oak Tree High is an independent secondary school catering for girls aged 11 to 16.
- Since the last inspection a new headteacher has been appointed and a new chair of the executive committee.
- The school aims to ensure that pupils develop their Islamic identity alongside receiving a sound education.
- The school is based in a large section of a building owned by the Yorkshire Muslim Academy and the building is used for a range of community activities in the evenings.

- None of the pupils at the school have an education, health and care plan.
- The school is not in receipt of any additional funding and does not use or provide any alternative provision for pupils.
- The school has had two sets of GCSE results since opening in 2011.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out over two and half days, with one day's notice.
- The inspector observed learning in 10 part-lessons across a range of subjects, in all year groups. The inspector listened to pupils read, including the most able pupils, during lessons.
- The inspector toured the building both inside and out to check that the independent school standards were met.
- Meetings and discussions were held with pupils, teachers, senior leaders, the headteacher and members of the executive committee.
- The inspectors took account of four responses to Parent View and 19 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- The inspector scrutinised a range of documentation, including: the school's self-evaluation and development plans; records relating to pupils' behaviour and attendance; the school's own information and data relating to pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching; and minutes from executive committee meetings.
- The inspector reviewed safeguarding records, and associated policies and procedures, including checks on the suitability of staff. She also looked at the single central record.

Inspection team

Debbie Redshaw, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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