

Olive Tree School

363–365 Lewisham High Street, Lewisham, London SE13 6NZ

Inspection dates

8–10 March 2017

| Overall effectiveness | Inadequate |
|--|----------------------|
| Effectiveness of leadership and management | Inadequate |
| Quality of teaching, learning and assessment | Requires improvement |
| Personal development, behaviour and welfare | Inadequate |
| Outcomes for pupils | Requires improvement |
| Early years provision | Inadequate |
| Overall effectiveness at previous inspection | Adequate |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- Leaders, governors and the proprietorial body have failed to ensure that the school meets all of the independent school standards.
- Leadership and management are inadequate. Safeguarding is ineffective. A lack of high-quality record-keeping means that leaders do not know if children are missing from education. The proprietor was told of the need to undertake fire risk checks to the school building in March 2016. However, leaders have failed to tackle these issues, putting all children at greater risk of harm.
- The curriculum is not broad and balanced. The two previous inspections found a lack of depth in the curriculum. Pupils do not receive sufficiently high-quality provision in aesthetic subjects.
- Leaders have not ensured that the school's curriculum promotes respect for people with protected characteristics, particularly those relating to gender reassignment and sexual orientation.
- Leaders and governors do not analyse the progress made by different groups of pupils. The curriculum is not tailored sufficiently to the needs of the most able and those pupils who speak English as an additional language. This has created inconsistent progress in their learning.
- Teaching, learning and assessment require improvement. There is insufficient challenge for the most able and pupils who learn English as an additional language. As a result, pupils make variable progress across reading, mathematics, history, geography and science.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils make good progress in their writing.
- Attendance has improved this academic year so that it is just below the 2016 national average for primary schools.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. Pupils are calm, polite and focus on their learning.
- Children in the early years make good progress regardless of their individual starting points.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school must take action to meet 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 safeguarding procedures so that the school promotes pupils' safety, by:
 - diligently keeping accurate records in relation to risk assessments, fire safety and the school's admissions register
 - ensuring that the school's admissions register details the destinations of each pupil that leaves the school
 - ensuring that checks required to complete premises risk assessments are routinely recorded and that identified issues are rapidly addressed
 - making sure that governors routinely check to ensure that all aspects of the school's safeguarding arrangements comply in practice with statutory guidance
 - reviewing information from the school's internet filtering software, identifying potential patterns of concern and, where necessary, making adaptations to the school's curriculum.
- Improve leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - the school meets all of the independent school standards
 - leaders' checks on the quality of teaching, learning and assessment draw on a wide range of evidence about pupils' learning over time
 - the school's effectiveness is evaluated more accurately so that there is sufficient evidence to support identified strengths and weaknesses
 - governors are provided with all the health, safety and welfare information they need in order to fulfil their duties effectively
 - governors routinely check and challenge leaders regarding the school's compliance against the independent school standards
 - governors ensure that identified weaknesses are tackled with urgency and monitored against tight criteria for success in the school's improvement planning
 - leaders at all levels are aware of how pupils from different groups are progressing, especially those learning English as an additional language, the most able and those from disadvantaged backgrounds
 - the curriculum is developed so that pupils benefit from a broad and balanced curriculum, particularly with regard to their creative education
 - governors make effective use of their recent skills audit to plan and deliver improvements in their own effectiveness.
- Secure good progress for all groups of pupils, by:
 - ensuring that mathematics teaching provides depth in a wide range of skills, enabling pupils to develop their ability to problem solve and explain their mathematical thinking
 - providing greater depth to pupils' experiences of planning, delivering and evaluating practical science activities

- ensuring that the most able pupils are being challenged more consistently in their learning, for example applying their learning in new contexts
- providing pupils with the opportunity to overcome errors and misconceptions in their learning
- enabling pupils to develop their aesthetic skills
- refining the school's information about pupils who speak English as an additional language so they know pupils' stages of language acquisition
- adapting the curriculum to meet the varying needs of pupils who speak English as an additional language
- developing pupils' ability to infer and deduct, providing support so that pupils who speak English as an additional language can better explain their thinking
- ensuring that pupils apply their good writing more consistently across the curriculum.

The school must meet the following independent school standards.

- The proprietorial body must ensure that written policies on the curriculum, plans and schemes of work are implemented effectively, specifically to ensure that pupils have sufficient opportunities to explore aesthetic education (paragraphs 2(1), 2(1)(a), 2(2) and 2(2)(a)).
- Ensure that the school's written policy for the curriculum, schemes of work and lesson plans take into account the ages, aptitudes and needs of all pupils, specifically for those learning English as an additional language, the most able and pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds (paragraphs 2(1)(b) and 2(1)(b)(i)).
- Ensure that the teaching of personal, social, health and economic education encourages pupils to respect people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010 (paragraphs 2(2), 2(2)(d) and 2(2)(d)(ii)).
- Ensure that teaching at the school enables pupils to acquire new knowledge and make good progress according to their ability so that they increase their understanding and develop their skills in the subjects taught, and shows a good understanding of the aptitudes, needs and prior attainment of the pupils, and ensures that these are taken into account in the planning of lessons (paragraphs 3, 3(a) and 3(d)).
- The proprietor must encourage pupils to develop respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010 (paragraph 5 and 5(b)(vi)).
- The proprietor must ensure that arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school, by ensuring that the school's admissions register is maintained in line with statutory guidance; and that in practice all safeguarding arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State (paragraph 7, 7(a) and 7(b)).
- Ensure that the proprietor implements effectively the school's health and safety policy and complies with all relevant health and safety legislation (paragraph 11).

- Ensure compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Regulations 2006 by ensuring effective, working emergency lighting in all rooms identified in the fire safety audit, that the Year 6 classroom is located sufficiently close to a fire escape, that checks on fire escapes and gangways are made monthly, that the fire officer is informed of changes to the school premises and that the carbon monoxide alarm is tested monthly (paragraph 12).
- Ensure that the proprietor maintains an accurate admissions register in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (paragraph 15).
- Ensure that the welfare of pupils at the school is safeguarded and promoted by ensuring that premises risk assessments are conducted regularly and that appropriate action is taken to reduce risks that are identified (paragraph 16, 16(a) and 16(b)).
- The proprietor must ensure that the school premises and the accommodation and facilities therein are maintained to a standard such that, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of pupils are ensured (paragraph 25).
- Ensure that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school standards are met, that leaders fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met, and that they actively promote the well-being of pupils by protecting them from harm (paragraph 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b) and 34(1)(c)).

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Inadequate

- The proprietorial body, leaders and governors have failed to ensure that the school meets all of the independent school standards. During the inspection, the headteacher was able to put right a number of unmet independent school standards. This included correctly labelling taps for drinking water and improving the school's complaints policy. Nevertheless, a number of standards remain unmet and show that leaders at all levels have failed over time to ensure the welfare, health and safety of pupils.
- Leaders have failed to demonstrate the capacity to resolve significant areas of the school's work which require improvement. Despite being aware of important fire safety concerns since March 2016, the proprietorial body and headteacher have not addressed these issues. The previous two inspections commented on a lack of depth within the school's curriculum. Leaders only began improving the teaching of art in January 2016. Standards in this area are still too inconsistent and do not ensure that pupils develop their skills progressively or deeply. As the school does not teach music beyond the singing of Nasheeds, the school fails to provide sufficiently for pupils' aesthetic education. Consequently, the school's curriculum is neither broad nor balanced.
- Leaders have carried out isolated observations in lessons and reviews of pupils' progress and work in books. However, the focus of leaders' work has only provided a snapshot of teaching. Checks on teaching have not sufficiently considered the progress made by pupils over time. Other evaluation work does not consider how groups of pupils are progressing; for example, the most able, those who are disadvantaged or those learning English as an additional language. Consequently, leaders have an overgenerous opinion of the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in the school.
- Leaders do not know at what stage individual pupils who speak English as an additional language are in their acquisition of the English language. Consequently, leaders have not ensured that the curriculum is well enough adapted for the many pupils who are in this position. This is regardless of whether they are at an early stage of language acquisition or are speaking English as an advanced bilingual pupil.
- Leaders have introduced a clear system across the school to check on pupils' progress and attainment. However, leaders have placed too much weight on the attainment of pupils when they leave the school in Year 6. Leaders knew that variability existed within the teaching of reading, mathematics, science, history and geography. However, their actions to secure consistently good teaching, learning and assessment have been too slow.
- The school's curriculum does not promote pupils' respect of people with protected characteristics, particularly those relating to gender reassignment and sexual orientation. Despite this aspect of the school's work being underdeveloped, leaders had evaluated that the school met all of the associated independent school standards. This shows that leaders do not fully understand the standards or how to meet them.
- Parents are almost all positive about their children's experiences at the school. Most are delighted with the progress their children make and that they are happy at school. While inspectors agree that pupils are happy at school, the inspection found that pupils do not

make the progress of which they are all capable.

- Pupils benefit from a wide range of academic and reward-based trips into London and beyond. Pupils have a clear understanding of most British values. For example, they show a respect for democracy, free speech and the primacy of British laws. Pupils are clear that they would respect people from other faiths and they demonstrate a good awareness of the beliefs of others. However, leaders have failed to ensure that pupils understand protected characteristics. Consequently, pupils' understanding of British values requires improvement.

Governance

- Governors have not been provided with all the information they require in order to fulfil their roles. For example, the board was unaware that the fire safety audit had identified health and safety issues that required resolution. This information had not been shared with governors by the proprietorial body. Consequently, the governing body has failed to ensure that the school meets its duties for keeping children safe.
- Governors have failed to ensure that leaders meet the independent school standards. Indeed, they were unaware that the school had many unmet standards.
- Governors have focused on ensuring that improvements are made to the school's curriculum, teaching and pupils' outcomes. They are visible around the school and are known by pupils, parents and staff. However, they have not ensured that necessary improvements have been driven with sufficient urgency or drive. As a result, teaching, learning and assessment and pupils' outcomes require improvement.
- Governors have too readily accepted leaders' analysis of the school's performance, which has often been based on incomplete and inaccurate information. They recognise the need for improving their performance, having recently completed a skills audit. However, it is too soon to see impact from this initiative.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective. Leaders have ensured that the school's policy is in line with statutory requirements. However, leaders and governors have failed to ensure that the school applies all aspects of their policies and procedures to promote pupils' safety.
- Leaders have failed to maintain an admissions register in line with statutory guidance and legislation. Their record-keeping alongside this register is haphazard. Consequently, the school has put children at greater risk of becoming a child missing from education.
- Leaders have failed to use risk assessments and the annual fire safety inspection to reduce risks for pupils. Leaders have failed to ensure that the school meets the requirements of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Regulations 2006. Consequently, pupils' welfare, health and safety are not effectively promoted. Teaching staff have a clear understanding of their duties to protect children from harm. They receive regular updates about statutory guidance and are aware of many of the signs that a child may be at risk from harm. Records show that when formal concerns about a pupil's safety exist, there is appropriate interaction with other agencies – for example, social services and the local authority. Records in these cases are detailed and well maintained.

- Leaders maintain a clear record of pre-appointment checks for staff and other adults working in the school. Leaders undertake these checks prior to staff beginning their roles working with children.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Teaching, learning and assessment are variable across the school. Some teaching relies heavily on tasks that do not extend or deepen pupils' thinking, particularly in mathematics, science, history and geography. Consequently, pupils have too few opportunities to develop their thinking or go beyond superficial responses to questions.
- Some teachers allow pupils to correct their work before moving on to new concepts; this is not always the case, especially in mathematics and science. Consequently, pupils do not always learn from their mistakes.
- Pupils have some opportunities to write about and discuss their mathematical thinking. However, leaders have not ensured that this is developed well in all teaching. Pupils are provided with some opportunities to engage in problem-solving, but some teachers place too great an emphasis on arithmetic. Consequently, pupils, particularly the most able, have too few opportunities to engage in more abstract problem-solving.
- Science is taught regularly. The school follows the science national curriculum. However, although pupils make good progress in acquiring scientific knowledge, leaders have not ensured that staff regularly develop pupils' ability to conduct practical science experiments. Consequently, pupils do not make good progress in their ability to plan and conduct scientific tests or consider their findings.
- Reading is encouraged across the school. Children get off to a good start in their reading due to consistent teaching and use of phonics. Many pupils speak English as an additional language. Leaders have until recently not identified individual pupils' stage of language acquisition. Consequently, staff do not always meet the needs of advanced bilingual pupils when teaching reading and progress is not consistently good.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Inadequate

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is inadequate. This is because the school's arrangements to safeguard children are ineffective. Leaders have not ensured that the building complies with fire safety regulations. Leaders have not recorded and tracked the destinations for pupils leaving the school. These welfare and safeguarding issues have therefore put pupils at greater risk of harm.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is enhanced with the school's regular trips beyond the school. For example, Years 3 and 4 visited the Horniman Museum, where pupils learned about animals and their habitats. It is clear that such trips provide pupils with a sense of awe and wonder about London and the world they live in. Trips to other places, such as the public library, also help to promote pupils' use of public services and access an even wider range of books.
- Pupils have a well-developed sense of their own faith and how it is similar and different to

those of other people. The school curriculum helps them to understand and develop an appreciation for a wide range of other world faiths. It also helps them understand that some people do not have a faith. Trips play an important part in this work. For example, Year 5 recently visited the local synagogue. One pupil summed up their learning when they explained, 'The trip really helped me to know more about the Torah, the Jewish holy book and why it is special. We found out about special festivals and what Jewish people ate on holy days.'

- Pupils are taught to keep themselves safe. They have a clear understanding of how to report a concern and why they should do so. Pupils know how to stay safe online and how to 'filter' content to decide if it is real. This skill helps them to be attuned to the issue of extremism, including online content that may pose a risk to their well-being. However, staff do not monitor the school's systems for blocking internet sites. This could result in a pattern of concern being missed and going unaddressed by leaders.
- Pupils are kind, respectful and tolerant of people who are different from themselves, particularly those with different beliefs.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are attentive and well behaved in classrooms and throughout the school. Pupils demonstrate good attitudes and self-discipline when working.
- Pupils conduct themselves well around the school. They are polite and good humoured with their peers, adults and visitors alike. Pupils play well together throughout the school, including in the early years provision. Parents rightly believe their children behave well at school and that there are few issues with bullying. This is in part because staff effectively implement the behaviour policy and use rewards well to promote good behaviour.
- Attendance has risen in the last year and is now just below the 2015/16 national attendance figure for primary schools. There are very few behavioural issues and there have been no fixed-term exclusions since the previous inspection report.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Pupils' progress is inconsistent. Some pupils make good and better progress while others make slower progress. Leaders do not make strong enough use of their assessment information. They do not track the progress and identify patterns within key groups, such as the most able, those who are disadvantaged or pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- Leaders have not ensured that the curriculum is tailored sufficiently to meet the needs of these groups. Work scrutiny shows that pupils from these groups make inconsistent progress in reading, mathematics, science, history and geography. For example, advanced bilingual pupils are not stretched sufficiently in their ability to infer and deduct when completing reading comprehension tasks.
- In 2016, pupils' attainment was above the national average at the end of key stages 1 and 2. However, internal school assessment information shows that this is not always the case in all year groups. Furthermore, leaders were unable to show that the 2016 attainment represented good progress for all pupils from their starting points.

- Outcomes in mathematics require improvement. Too often, the most able are given the same learning activities as their peers. This impedes their progress and often falls short of their capabilities. Pupils are not given regular opportunities to practise their learning in a different context. Consequently, pupils – particularly the most able – do not always make the progress they are capable of in mathematics.
- Pupils read regularly and enjoy reading. They have well developed tastes for what they like to read. Children progress well in their ability to use and apply phonics so that nearly all are reading confidently for their age by the start of Year 1. However, pupils' progress in reading at key stages 1 and 2 is not always good. This is because staff have not used information about the language acquisition of pupils who speak English as an additional language to tailor their teaching. Over time, this leads to variable progress, particularly in pupils' inference and deduction skills.
- Pupils make good progress in their writing. Inspectors found that pupils' workbooks showed a wide range of writing types. They have the opportunity to practise and develop their own writing style. Writing is the most developed and deeply taught aspect of the curriculum. However, leaders do not meticulously consider and use information about groups of pupils. Consequently, leaders do not use all available information to secure greater progress from pupils.

Early years provision

Inadequate

- The early years provision is inadequate because leaders have failed to ensure that the safeguarding of children is effective. The issues identified above for the main school, in relation to fire safety and the pupil admission register, apply equally to the early years.
- Children start in the early years with skills and knowledge which are broadly typical or above those typical for their age. Up to one in three children begin the provision with above typical skill levels across the curriculum. Overall, children make good progress and all attain a good level of development by the end of the Reception Year.
- Teachers have an accurate understanding of the needs, aptitudes and interests of children on entry. They cater well for these differing needs and interests while ensuring that learning is engaging and allows pupils to be well prepared for their next steps. The suitable curriculum provides well for children's learning across the early years, including the development of children's artistic skills.
- There are strong links between home and school. Parents report their high levels of satisfaction, particularly for how well the Reception class links with home and develops their participation in their child's learning.
- The outdoor area is used well to enhance the children's learning across the curriculum areas. However, this is developed better in the Reception class than in the Nursery. The variety of learning activities in the early years is rich and exciting, and pitched well to meet the children's needs. Early years leaders know the children extremely well and form positive relationships.
- There is a happy atmosphere in the early years provision. Children play well together; they socialise well and their behaviour is consistently good. Children politely interact well during their lunchtimes, politely eating and sharing news with their friends.

School details

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| Unique reference number | 134400 |
| DfE registration number | 209/6363 |
| Inspection number | 10033423 |

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.

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| Type of school | Other independent school |
| School category | Independent school |
| Age range of pupils | 3–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 82 |
| Number of part-time pupils | 30 |
| Proprietor | Lewisham Islamic Centre |
| Chair | Amir Razvi |
| Headteacher | Mohammed Barrie |
| Annual fees (day pupils) | £3,050 |
| Telephone number | 020 8314 0169 |
| Website | www.otsprimary.co.uk |
| Email address | admin@otsprimary.co.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | 12–14 November 2013 |

Information about this school

- Olive Tree School is an independent Muslim day school located in the London Borough of Lewisham. The proprietor, Lewisham Islamic Centre, delegates operational control of the school to their appointed governing body. The school is registered for 82 boys and girls aged from four to 11 years. Currently, 82 pupils are on roll.
- The Nursery class is located separately but on the same road as the main school building. It has its own secure entrance.
- All members of the governing body have changed since the previous inspection in November 2013.

- The school has established a Nursery class since the previous inspection in November 2013. At the time of the inspection there were 30 children attending part time across morning and afternoon sessions.
- The school is situated in converted commercial premises. A few pupils are at an early stage of speaking English as an additional language and almost all speak more than one language. None of the pupils are identified as having special educational needs, a statement of special educational needs or an education, health or care (EHC) plan. No pupils are looked after. Pupils are from a range of diverse ethnic minority backgrounds.
- The school states that it aims to 'build a strong moral character together with sound academic performance'.
- The school does not make use of any off-site provision for pupils.
- The school receives no additional funding for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- At the start of the inspection, the school website did not comply with the independent school standards relating to the provision of information (Part 6). The school's exclusions policy was not present on the website. The headteacher rectified this omission during the inspection.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was conducted with no notice. The school was last inspected in November 2013 when it was judged to be adequate.
- Inspectors observed pupils' learning in the Nursery building and across all classes in the main school building (the Reception class to Year 6).
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, four governors, including the vice-chair, and pupils from Year 5. Inspectors also met informally with a number of parents at the end of the school day and took into account the 23 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View.
- Inspectors considered school improvement documents, policies, information on pupils' outcomes, records of the quality of teaching and minutes of meetings of the governing body.
- Inspectors reviewed a wide range of pupils' workbooks from Years 1 to 6, considering their progress and attainment over time. A sample of portfolios was scrutinised from the early years, to review the progress made by children from when they started in the Reception class.

Inspection team

David Storrie, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Geraint Evans

Her Majesty's Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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