

Oak Tree High

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

Inspection dates

9–11 October 2018

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
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Inadequate

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- The proprietor does not ensure that the school consistently meets the independent school standards or that policies are implemented well.
- School leaders do not have clearly defined roles and responsibilities. There is little analysis and evaluation of school information or quality assurance of the school's work.
- The executive committee has been too slow to act to prevent a further decline in standards at the school.
- Pupils' welfare and safeguarding is not a high enough priority. For example, records of fire safety checks are weak and safer recruitment practices are not always followed.
- Leaders do not ensure that teachers use information about pupils' progress to plan future learning. This means that pupils do not always receive work that matches their abilities.
- Pupils' work in books shows that literacy errors remain uncorrected. This means that pupils do not learn quickly from their mistakes.
- Pupils enjoy selecting books from the library; however, leaders are unable to say whether they choose books appropriate to their abilities and whether this improves pupils' reading skills.
- There is no curriculum overview or plan for personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education or for careers education. Consequently, the quality of these aspects of education varies greatly.
- Leaders do not ensure that pupils' progress is measured from their starting points well enough.
- Over time, some pupils have attained highly in GCSE examinations. In the last academic year this was more variable, with some pupils failing to secure grade 4 or above in mathematics.

The school has the following strengths

- The proprietor, who is also the headteacher, is committed to improving the school and the quality of education for the pupils.
- Pupils are very polite, welcoming and want to do well at school. Pupils' attendance and behaviour are good.

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 the school consistently meets the independent school standards
 - further improving the quality of safeguarding in the school, particularly relating to safer recruitment practices and the premises
 - improving clarity of roles and ensuring that there are systems in place for accountability and quality assurance
 - checking carefully that school policies are in place and implemented by all staff.
- Improve the provision for pupils' personal development and welfare by:
 - putting in place an appropriate plan for the teaching of PSHE education, so that all pupils receive high-quality teaching in these subjects
 - ensuring that fire safety checks are carried out and recorded appropriately and that pupils' welfare is a priority.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by:
 - providing training so that teachers are confident in using pupils' information to plan learning that better meets their needs, particularly for pupils who are the most and least able
 - better supporting pupils to improve their literacy skills, particularly spelling
 - ensuring that pupils read books that are appropriate to their age and ability so that they can make better progress in their reading and literacy
 - ensuring that pupils have access to a wide variety of impartial careers advice and guidance.
- Improve pupils' outcomes by:
 - refining the assessment system so that leaders and teachers fully understand the progress pupils are making from their starting points
 - improving pupils' progress in mathematics so that more pupils achieve a pass at GCSE.
- The school must meet the independent school standards, as set out in the annex of this report.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Inadequate

- The proprietor does not ensure that the independent school standards are met consistently.
- Some of the independent school standards which are unmet have an impact on pupils' welfare. For example, during the inspection, pupils told inspectors, and inspection evidence confirmed, that toilet facilities are not good enough. Pupils are not always provided with soap and hand-drying facilities, some toilets are broken, and the toilets are damp due to a previous leak.
- The headteacher works at the school part-time. This limits the time he is available to speak with staff and pupils. Staff say that they feel well supported by the headteacher when they speak to him about issues. They acknowledge, however, that he is not available frequently enough.
- The headteacher has increased teachers' responsibilities in the school and created a senior leadership team. Roles within this new team and lines of accountability are unclear. This means that some tasks, such as implementing policies consistently, do not get done.
- There are no quality assurance procedures in place in the school. This means that no one is checking that things have been carried out to a high enough standard.
- At the time of the inspection, there were a number of policies which were not in place, such as a policy for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities and a policy for pupils who speak English as an additional language. Some policies, such as the health and safety policy, were updated at the time of the inspection.
- Teachers have an 'active file', which contains information about the classes they teach. These files are inconsistent, are not checked and it is not clear how teachers use the information in their planning of pupils' learning.
- The proprietor has not ensured that there is a cohesive plan in place for PSHE education. Consequently, there is inconsistency in what pupils receive. In addition, pupils said that they often have a different lesson instead of covering PSHE.
- Pupils have mixed views on their preparedness for life in modern Britain. Inspection evidence shows that British values are covered across the curriculum and in assemblies; however, pupils would welcome more opportunities to find out about life beyond their own community.
- The headteacher has some good ideas for improving the school, which are realistic. However, there is little leadership capacity in the school to implement the plans to improve the quality of education that the school provides.

Governance

- Since the previous inspection, the executive committee has been too slow to make improvements to the school. Consequently, standards have declined.
- Minutes from executive committee meetings do not show that members have a

strategic view of school improvement. The role of this committee is more operational than strategic.

- The executive committee members lack the skills, knowledge and expertise to effectively hold the headteacher and other senior leaders to account for their work.
- The executive committee is unaware of the number of independent school standards that are unmet. Following recent discussions with the headteacher, the executive committee has now agreed to seek external support from a consultant.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.
- The proprietor has ensured that the safeguarding policy is available on the school's website. At the time of the inspection, the policy was up to date with most of the Secretary of State's guidance, but not all.
- The proprietor has not ensured that all safer recruitment practices have been followed. For example, references or full employment histories of staff recently employed have not been checked.
- Since the previous inspection, some improvements have been made to the security of the building; however, the gates to the school site are not always closed and there are a number of ways that the school can be accessed from outside.
- Most pupils who made their views known say that they feel safe in the school, but a substantial minority of pupils say that they do not.
- The risk assessment policy is not implemented effectively. Risk assessments provided at the time of the inspection were weak and did not fully consider risks to pupils. The school's 'Prevent' duty policy states that a risk assessment would be carried out. This had not been done, and so, with help from an external consultant, it was produced during the inspection.
- The admission register was not compliant with legal requirements at the beginning of the inspection. This was rectified during the inspection.
- The proprietor ensures that most of the appropriate checks are carried out on staff's suitability to work with pupils prior to their employment starting. These checks are recorded on the single central register and this aspect meets part 4 of the independent school standards.
- The school is now linking with the local authority and through this is ensuring that staff receive appropriate safeguarding training. Safeguarding records are well ordered and sufficiently detailed. They show that leaders take appropriate action to support pupils when there are safeguarding concerns.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Teachers do not pick up on pupils' spelling errors quickly enough. As a result, pupils make a number of repeated errors in their workbooks because they do not learn from their mistakes.
- Teachers frequently miss opportunities for assessing pupils' learning. Sometimes, teachers move on quickly before checking whether pupils understand the work. This leads to gaps in pupils' knowledge.
- Teachers do not challenge pupils, particularly those who are the most and the least able, according to their ability. This is because teachers do not effectively use information about what pupils can and cannot do to inform their teaching.
- In some lessons and books, pupils do little work because the pace of the lesson is too slow. In a PSHE lesson, pupils said that they record their work on paper but it then gets lost. This means they have no record of their learning or anything to look back on.
- Some teachers do not give clear instructions. This means that time is wasted in lessons as pupils ask questions to seek clarity about what they need to do, rather than being able to focus on the learning tasks.
- Pupils are confident and keen to learn. Relationships between teachers and pupils are good. Most pupils feel able to ask for help when they need it.
- Some pupils' workbooks are presented well but this is inconsistent across the curriculum.
- Teachers set homework that links to the learning pupils have undertaken in lessons. Pupils say that they value their homework to strengthen their learning.
- Most teachers have a good knowledge of the subject they are teaching. During the inspection, leaders expressed some concerns about pupils receiving sufficient challenge to reach the highest grades in mathematics.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Inadequate

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is inadequate.
- Due to there being no cohesive plan for PSHE education, not all pupils receive appropriate education on key topics that helps them to prepare for their futures. Pupils are, however, knowledgeable about fundamental British values.
- Pupils' welfare is not always the highest priority, for example the site is not fully secure, fire safety checks are not carried out and recorded appropriately, safeguarding is not effective, and the toilet and handwashing facilities are not suitable.
- Careers information is weak. Pupils sometimes talk about careers with their teachers and they have had some visits from external speakers within the community. There is, however, no clear plan for teaching careers and the majority of careers education takes place in Year 11. There is little evidence that pupils are receiving impartial advice

covering a broad range of careers.

- Beyond being a member of the school council, there is little opportunity for pupils to take on responsibility or to develop emotionally in a variety of circumstances. During the inspection, in an assembly led by an external speaker, pupils struggled to manage their emotions effectively.
- Pupils who made their views known said that issues are dealt with quickly and rarely lead to bullying. If they do, staff are quick to take action and resolve them.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are positive and they want to do well. Pupils are prepared to learn. Where teachers' expectations are high, pupils rise to these.
- Pupils say that they enjoy coming to school. Attendance reflects this, with pupils attending well.
- Conduct throughout the day is good. Pupils move swiftly back to lessons following breaktime and lunchtime.
- Staff supervise pupils appropriately during the day and are available should there be an issue.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Leaders do not measure pupils' progress from their starting points effectively. Consequently, leaders are unable to say whether the GCSE results achieved by Year 11 pupils represent good progress over time.
- Previously, pupils have attained highly at GCSE level. For the most recent Year 11 pupils, attainment was lower than previously in mathematics and science. Leaders say that, in mathematics, teachers lack the subject knowledge to stretch and challenge the most able pupils.
- Current pupils' progress is mixed. School attainment information demonstrates this, as does work in pupils' books.
- Leaders do not monitor pupils' reading. While pupils have open access to the library, leaders cannot say whether the material they select is age-appropriate or whether it challenges pupils.
- Most pupils progress to sixth-form college for further study, and the school is proud that some previous pupils are now attending university in Sheffield. However, leaders do not record destinations data well and so are unable to say for sure where all pupils have progressed to.

School details

Unique reference number	137568
DfE registration number	373/6003
Inspection number	10053833

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	72
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Irshad Akbar
Chair	Rafiza Amin
Headteacher	Irshad Akbar
Annual fees (day pupils)	£1,600
Telephone number	01142 447 700
Website	www.oaktreehs.org
Email address	headteacher@oaktreehs.org
Date of previous inspection	15–17 November 2016

Information about this school

- Oak Tree High is an independent secondary school for girls aged 11 to 16. The school has an Islamic ethos.
- The building the school operates in is owned by the Yorkshire Muslim Academy. The building is used for a range of community activities in the evenings.
- The school's previous standard inspection took place on 15 to 17 November 2016. The school was judged to be inadequate. Following this, there were two progress monitoring inspections, which took place on 21 November 2017 and 27 March 2018. In both of these, inspectors found that the school did not meet the standards checked during the

inspections.

- Since the previous standard inspection, there has been a change in the chair of the executive committee. In addition, the proprietor is now also the headteacher.
- The headteacher works at the school on a part-time basis, having another full-time position elsewhere. All staff at the school work part-time.
- The school does not have any pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities or pupils who speak English as an additional language currently on roll.
- The school does not use any alternative education provision.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out over two and a half days, with one day's notice.
- Inspectors observed learning in all year groups and across the curriculum. They reviewed documents associated with the independent school standards, including safeguarding documentation. Inspectors held meetings with teachers, pupils, senior leaders, the headteacher and members of the executive committee, including the chair. Inspectors also spoke with the local authority.
- The inspection team toured the school building and its surrounds.
- Inspectors considered responses to six staff questionnaires and four free-text responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents and carers, Parent View. They also had a conversation with a parent.

Inspection team

Debbie Redshaw, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Jo Sharpe

Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex. Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school must meet the following independent school standards

Part 1. Quality of education provided

- 2(1) The standard in this paragraph is met if-
 - 2(1)(a) the proprietor ensures that a written policy on the curriculum, supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work, which provides for the matters specified in sub-paragraph (2) is drawn up and implemented effectively; and
 - 2(1)(b) the written policy, plans and schemes of work-
 - 2(1)(b)(i) take into account the ages, aptitudes and needs of all pupils, including those pupils with an EHC plan; and
 - 2(2)(d) personal, social, health and economic education which-
 - 2(2)(d)(i) reflects the school's aim and ethos; and
 - 2(2)(d)(ii) encourages respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Act[9];
 - 2(2)(e) for pupils receiving secondary education, access to accurate, up-to-date careers guidance that-
 - 2(2)(e)(i) is presented in an impartial manner;
 - 2(2)(e)(ii) enables them to make informed choices about a broad range of career options; and
 - 2(2)(e)(iii) helps to encourage them to fulfil their potential.
- 3 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that the teaching at the school-
 - 3(a) 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;
 - 3(c) involves well planned lessons and effective teaching methods, activities and management of class time;
 - 3(d) shows a good understanding of the aptitudes, needs and prior attainments of the pupils, and ensures that these are taken into account in the planning of lessons;
 - 3(g) demonstrates that a framework is in place to assess pupils' work regularly and

thoroughly and use information from that assessment to plan teaching so that pupils can progress.

- 4 The standard in this paragraph is met where the proprietor ensures that a framework for pupil performance to be evaluated, by reference to the school's own aims as provided to parents or national norms, or to both, is in place.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 7 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that-
 - 7(a) arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school; and
 - 7(b) such arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State.
- 11 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that relevant health and safety laws are complied with by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written health and safety policy.
- 12 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005[12].
- 13 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that first aid is administered in a timely and competent manner by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written first aid policy.
- 16 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that-
 - 16(a) the welfare of pupils at the school is safeguarded and promoted by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written risk assessment policy; and
 - 16(b) appropriate action is taken to reduce risks that are identified.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

- 23(1) Subject to sub-paragraph (2), the standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that-
 - 23(1)(a) suitable toilet and washing facilities are provided for the sole use of pupils.
- 29(1) The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that suitable outdoor space is provided in order to enable-
 - 29(1)(a) physical education to be provided to pupils in accordance with the school curriculum.

Part 6. Provision of information

- 32(1) The standard about the provision of information by the school is met if the proprietor ensures that-
 - 32(1)(b) the information specified in sub-paragraph (3) is made available to parents of pupils and parents of prospective pupils and, on request, to the Chief Inspector, the Secretary of State or an independent inspectorate.
- 32(3) The information specified in this sub-paragraph is-
 - 32(3)(b) particulars of educational and welfare provision for pupils with EHC plans and pupils for whom English is an additional language;
 - 32(3)(e) particulars of the school's academic performance during the preceding school year, including the results of any public examinations.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

- 34(1) The standard about the quality of leadership and management is met if the proprietor ensures that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school-
 - 34(1)(a) demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school standards are met consistently;
 - 34(1)(b) fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently; and
 - 34(1)(c) actively promote the well-being of pupils.

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