

Inspection of The Olive School, Small Heath

Waverley Road, Birmingham B10 0EG

Inspection dates: 23 and 24 January 2024

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
The quality of education	Outstanding
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Outstanding
Early years provision	Outstanding
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The principal of this school is Shawkat Chowdhury. This school is part of Star Academies, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Sir Mufti Hamid Patel CBE, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Kamruddin Kothia OBE DL. There is also a regional director and executive principal, Asiyah Ravat, who is responsible for this school and five others.

What is it like to attend this school?

There is a wonderfully friendly welcome for all at this school. Staff, pupils and their parents and carers feel a strong sense of belonging. They praise the school for how much like a family it is and for how well it helps pupils to learn and develop.

Pupils display exemplary behaviours, exceptionally positive attitudes to learning and kind actions. They embody the school's STAR values of service, teamwork, ambition and respect. Pupils enjoy warm relationships with staff, who they trust to help and support them at all times. Pupils simply love coming to school, playing with their friends and being successful learners. They become confident, articulate and resilient learners.

The school has extremely high expectations for what pupils can achieve. This is true for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). There is a culture that aims for excellence across the curriculum, and pupils share this impressive ambition. They try their best, work diligently, take pride in their work and listen well to guidance. This results in pupils reaching high standards and being very well prepared for learning at secondary school.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

The trust and school have worked together to create a highly ambitious curriculum. They have decided what should be taught in all subjects and the precise order in which to do so. This means that pupils make connections and build on prior learning extremely well. As a result, they understand and remember more of what they are taught.

The school has ensured that staff receive effective and timely training on how the curriculum should be taught. Teachers and support staff become skilled in how they present information and guide pupils. They ensure pupils understand the vocabulary they need in each subject. This helps pupils to understand lessons and talk about their learning in ways that deepen their understanding further.

There is an impressive consistency in how lessons are organised. Teachers revisit previous learning at the start of each lesson, which helps pupils to understand new learning better. Teachers keep a close eye on how well pupils are doing. In mathematics, for example, they check understanding throughout the lesson. This allows teachers to correct pupils' misconceptions as they arise, which in turn helps pupils to build their knowledge and skills 'in the moment' and to become competent, confident mathematicians.

Children in the early years get off to a flying start. The environment and the curriculum are highly engaging, and children quickly become confident learners and explorers. They are calm and happy. Children show high levels of independence and concentration.

Staff are skilled at identifying children with SEND or children at risk of falling behind. For these children, the school responds quickly to put in place the extra help and support they need. There is an inclusive culture in the early years and throughout the school. All pupils have full access to the valuable curriculum that the school provides.

Staff are adept in helping children to learn to read with accuracy and fluency. Children experience success in their daily phonics lessons. As they move through school, pupils develop a passion and love for reading and literature. This is because the school provides multiple, meaningful opportunities to enjoy reading. Pupils told inspectors about how the 'STAR Readers' inspire them to read more often and more widely.

Pupils benefit from a wealth of experiences to support their wider development. These include a vast range of visits, visitors and after-school clubs. The school has a variety of carefully chosen leadership roles that pupils can undertake. They can become anti-bullying ambassadors and junior police community support officers, or work at the school's community foodbank. The school motto, 'nurturing today's young people, inspiring tomorrow's leaders', shines through.

As a result of the highly effective personal, social and health education curriculum, pupils know how to keep themselves healthy, both physically and mentally. They recognise the risks when playing or working online and what constitutes a healthy relationship. A particular strength is how well pupils understand equality. Pupils at The Olive School are very well prepared for their lives in a modern, diverse Britain.

The vision and values of the school underpin everything that happens here. The trust has been effective in supporting the school to improve. Together, the trust and the school have developed a collaborative culture in which staff feel valued and to which they are proud to belong.

The school and trust have been successful in engaging with staff, parents and the community. There is a shared ambition that pupils will all receive the education they need to thrive.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	147452
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	10294681
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	421
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Kamruddin Kothia OBE DL
Principal	Shawkat Chowdhury
Website	www.olivesmallheath.com
Dates of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school joined Star Academies on 1 September 2019. Star Academies is a multi-academy trust that runs 33 schools nationally.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.
- This school has an Islamic ethos and welcomes pupils of all faiths and none. The school is subject to inspection under section 48 of the Education Act 2005 but has not yet been inspected.
- The school operates a breakfast club.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since it became an academy.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the principal, executive principal and other senior leaders within the school. An inspector met with the CEO of the trust and the vice-chair of the local accountability board.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, English, geography, and art and design. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons at different times of the day and at breaktimes and lunchtimes. They spoke formally with groups of pupils, as well as talking to pupils in lessons and around school.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted Parent View, including parents' free-text responses. Inspectors also took account of responses to Ofsted's staff and pupil surveys.
- The lead inspector reviewed a range of documents and the school's website.
- Inspectors spoke to parents at the school gate.

Inspection team

Gareth Morgan, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Pete Hines OBE

Ofsted Inspector

Justine Lomas

Ofsted Inspector

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