

Inspection of a school judged outstanding for overall effectiveness before September 2024: The Olive School, Bolton

Ashton House, Waterloo Street, Bolton, Greater Manchester BL1 8HT

Inspection dates:

11 and 12 February 2025

Outcome

The Olive School, Bolton has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

The principal of this school is Sabina Saeed. This school is part of Star Academies multi-academy trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Sir Mufti Hamid Patel CBE, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Kamruddin Kothia OBE DL.

What is it like to attend this school?

The school is a unique and special place where pupils learn and grow. Pupils receive a warm, uplifting welcome from the minute that they arrive. Pupils appreciate how well they are looked after by their teachers. They are happy and are kept safe. Pupils conduct themselves impeccably. They are kind and respectful towards others.

Pupils rise to the very high ambitions that the school has for their learning. They achieve well across the curriculum. Their achievement in subjects such as English and mathematics is particularly strong.

Pupils' learning is enriched well through carefully chosen trips and visitors. These experiences range from trips to theatres, museums and residential stays, to guest speakers who talk about their various careers. Pupils also have an exceptional range of opportunities to engage in charitable work.

Pupils have an excellent range of opportunities to develop their leadership skills. There are many leadership groups that contribute meaningfully to school life. For example, sports ambassadors arrive early to help with breakfast clubs and daily morning exercises. The junior leadership team members enhance the school's extra-curricular offer by organising and operating lunchtime clubs that their classmates request. These clubs

include computing, well-being and games. Pupils also benefit from access to sporting opportunities that the school facilitates.

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

The school has taken effective action to enrich further the opportunities that pupils have for their personal development. As a result, pupils engage in exceptional work to support their community. For example, pupil leadership teams organise a wide range of initiatives, such as the 'help yourself hub', which provides free clothing, toys and books to those who are in need.

The school has developed a well-designed curriculum. It has clearly outlined its expectations for the important knowledge that pupils should learn. The school ensures that the curriculum is delivered effectively. Staff design appropriate activities that help pupils to build their knowledge securely over time. In many subjects, pupils achieve high standards. For example, in national tests, they consistently attain well above the national average.

In many subjects, pupils' understanding of important subject-specific vocabulary is secure. However, in a small number of subjects, their understanding of some key vocabulary is more variable. This sometimes hinders pupils from deepening their understanding in these subjects.

The school carries out routine checks on pupils' understanding to spot when pupils have misunderstood aspects of their learning. Pupils are supported well to correct their misconceptions and errors in their work.

The school ensures that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are identified early. These pupils are supported well. The school adapts the delivery of the curriculum effectively for pupils with SEND so that they can access the same ambitious curriculum as their classmates.

Pupils quickly gain the skills and knowledge that they need to become confident, fluent readers. Staff deliver the school's chosen phonics programme consistently well. Pupils who struggle with the expectations of this programme receive a range of additional support to ensure that they keep up with their learning of phonics. As a result, almost all pupils meet the national standard of the phonics screening check in Year 1.

Pupils develop a sound knowledge of fundamental British values. For example, they understand concepts of democracy such as political parties and elections. They also have a secure understanding of tolerance and mutual respect. Pupils know how to look after their physical health and learn strategies to maintain their emotional well-being. They know how to keep themselves safe, including when online.

Pupils have a thirst for learning. They show exceptional levels of focus during lesson time and do not disrupt the learning of others. The school promotes the importance of regular attendance effectively. It has robust procedures in place and responds quickly if pupils'

attendance starts to decline. Consequently, pupils have consistently high rates of attendance.

Those responsible for governance fulfil their roles well. There are strong systems and procedures in place that help the different layers of the trust's governance to work together effectively. Leaders are considerate of staff workload and welfare. For example, they ensure staff are given dedicated time to carry out additional tasks. Staff are very happy at the school. They feel cared for and inspired by leaders.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of subjects, some pupils have gaps in their knowledge of important vocabulary. This sometimes prevents them from deepening their understanding in these subjects. The school should ensure that these pupils are familiarised with the key subject-specific vocabulary that they need in order to build a rich body of knowledge throughout the curriculum.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024 graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be outstanding for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be outstanding for overall effectiveness in July 2019.

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	142898
Local authority	Bolton
Inspection number	10348333
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy free school
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	425
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Kamruddin Kothia OBE DL
CEO of the trust	Sir Mufti Hamid Patel CBE
Principal	Sabina Saeed
Website	www.olivebolton.com
Dates of previous inspection	10 and 11 July 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of Star Academies multi-academy trust.
- The school has an Islamic ethos and welcomes pupils of all faiths and none.
- The school's last section 48 inspection, for schools of a religious character, took place in February 2020. The school is currently awaiting notification of its next inspection.
- The school currently uses one registered alternative provision.
- The school operates a breakfast club.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into consideration in his evaluation of the school.

- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: 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.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, the SEND coordinator, some subject leaders and other staff during the inspection.
- The inspector spoke with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector spoke with representatives of the local accountability board, including the chair of the board. The inspector also spoke with the CEO.
- The inspector visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspector also considered documents and spoke to some staff about the curriculum, SEND, attendance, safeguarding, personal development and behaviour.
- The inspector considered the responses to the online staff survey and the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. The inspector also spoke to pupils about their experiences of school and considered their responses to the online survey for pupils.

Inspection team

David Spruce, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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