

The Olive School, Bolton

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

Inspection dates

10–11 July 2019

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Outstanding
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Outstanding
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Outstanding
Early years provision	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- The principal, senior staff, governing body and the trust have established an excellent school within a very short period of time.
- The trust's high expectations of the quality of education pupils attending a Star Academies School should receive are being realised. This has been achieved through the relentless drive by the current principal and her predecessor to ensure their pupils get the very best start in school. All staff respond positively to the challenge of delivering excellent standards and fully support the ethos of the school.
- All staff are motivated by a powerful desire to provide children from the local community with the best opportunities to enable them to achieve great things in their future lives. This passion ensures all aspects of the school, including teaching and care, are outstanding.
- Middle leaders also demonstrate determination, expertise and skill, which results in all teachers and learning coaches (teaching assistants) knowing in detail what they have to teach and when. Consequently, pupils follow a coherent curriculum which is sometimes tailored specifically to meet their individual needs.
- Teaching is both expertly and skilfully led by leaders who are very clear about the basics that their pupils need to enable them to make outstanding progress.
- Very strong promotion of pupils' personal development and character are fundamental to the school's vision. These high expectations are fully achieved through an excellent range of enriching experiences in classrooms, around the school and from educational visits.
- The combined effect of excellent leadership, care and teaching results in pupils attaining very high standards, sometimes from very low starting points.
- The rate of pupil attendance is very high because pupils love coming to this school. Pupils are very happy and enthusiastic and feel secure. There is a sense of joy throughout the school. Pupils work hard and play harmoniously.
- Many children join Reception with linguistic skills weaker than those typical for their age. Despite this, and because of excellent leadership, teaching and care, children learn very quickly. Children develop very good social skills and they care for one other.
- Since the school opened, it has been in transition as it has grown quickly. The school's leadership team has always coped effectively with the difficulties that rapidly increasing numbers of pupils and staff have provided. The school has three years until it will have reached its capacity.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that the high quality of education, currently provided by the school, is at least maintained as the school grows to provide for the full range of key stage 2 pupils.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- The trust is very clear about its ambitions for its pupils and for the communities its schools serve. Its mission is 'nurturing today's young people, inspiring tomorrow's leaders'. The trust is also clear that it wants to transform the life prospects of the children from some of the most deprived communities in Britain. The school's ethos is a perfect match for the trust's lofty aspirations. Governors, school leaders and all staff strive to provide the very best education they can for the pupils of this school. Highly effective and passionate leadership has rapidly established an excellent school.
- Both the current and the previous principals have been instrumental in ensuring that teaching is of the highest quality. Their ambition for educational excellence has inspired teaching staff. They have used their knowledge of how to teach very effectively to help all teachers and learning coaches to be highly effective practitioners.
- Leaders are crystal clear about three fundamentals that their pupils need to ensure they become successful learners. These are embedded in the school's curriculum. Firstly, leaders know that many of their pupils do not have a broad range of cultural experiences that can help them understand the wider world and fire their imagination. Secondly, leaders know that learning to read well is essential if pupils are going to be able to learn other things. Thirdly, they know that many of their pupils need help to extend their vocabulary and their mastery of verbal communication so that they can express themselves well and understand the views and opinions of others. All staff are given excellent support and encouragement so that they ensure pupils broaden their experiences, quickly learn to read well and express themselves clearly.
- Pupils' progress is frequently and regularly evaluated. If any pupil is not making the progress expected of them, a bespoke timetable of additional support is planned and provided. These additional sessions usually last about a half-term and are very effective in ensuring that pupils catch up to the standard expected of them.
- The trust, governors and school leaders place considerable importance on promoting pupils' personal development. They believe that for all pupils to fully realise their potential, they must have wide-ranging experiences beyond their communities. Pupils experience a very rich curriculum in classes, around school and through educational visits. Pupils are taught about a wide range of different religions. They understand that different people have different views. Pupils are tolerant and show respect for people who have different beliefs, lifestyles, family backgrounds and cultures. They are very well informed about British institutions, heritage and citizens' rights. Staff carefully plan activities so that pupils can experience unfamiliar ideas and places. These might be in the classroom. For example, Year 1 pupils learn about the concept of 'dilemma' and taking a moral position through considering the views of different characters in a fairy story. By contrast, staff take pupils to unfamiliar places and give them new experiences. This year, all Year 3 pupils took part in a residential visit for two nights at an outdoor education centre. There they learned about responsibility, teamwork and leadership.
- Many of these activities and additional support provided for pupils are funded through the pupil premium, the physical education and sport fund, and the school's additional

funding to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders are meticulous in ensuring that these funds are spent on the pupils for whom they are allocated. They are similarly thorough in evaluating the impact these funds have on pupils' learning and development. In all cases, funds are spent very effectively.

- The excellent promotion of pupils' personal development builds their self-esteem and confidence. Pupils are happy and very sociable. This, together with excellent teaching and curriculum, ensure that pupils' academic progress is outstanding.
- Leaders have taken action to improve the temporary accommodation for pupils. Staff work hard to maximise what is available to create a stimulating learning environment in a building that was not designed as a school. At breaktimes, the playground is transformed from an uninspiring redundant carpark to an exciting hive of activity. Staff set out a large amount of play and games equipment and pupils also contribute to this transformation. For example, they raised a considerable amount of money through enterprise activities to fund the development of their peace garden. Now pupils have a semi-permanent area, away from the excitement of play and games, where they can chat with friends, or just sit quietly.
- This is a school that has expanded rapidly from being half full on opening to being heavily oversubscribed only three years later. Parents and carers are very supportive and appreciative of the quality of education their children receive, and of the support they receive as parents. The school has built an excellent reputation within the communities it serves. Leaders are very well placed to ensure that the further expansion of the school is skilfully managed.

Governance of the school

- The local governing body is very experienced, talented and highly effective. Collectively, members provide extensive expertise of successfully leading large and small organisations, of safeguarding, financial management and education. Parents are represented very well on this group.
- Governors are clear about the values they want to see reflected in the school, which are principally about providing high-quality opportunities for the children of local communities, despite their sometimes impoverished home circumstances.
- Governors are highly effective in supporting and challenging school leaders to provide high-quality and well-rounded education.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The caring ethos that is demonstrated so clearly by staff is infectious and pupils show high levels of care for each other. Pupils have high moral standards and expectations of the way they and other children should be treated. Consequently, pupils are fully prepared to speak out when they perceive an injustice or concern. This culture is one of the key factors that supports strong safeguarding procedures.
- Leaders ensure that the school is a safe environment in which to learn and pupils feel

safe. Key staff have considerable expertise and safeguarding procedures are highly effective. All staff are well trained to respond to concerns that they may have about a pupil and what action to take should a pupil disclose information to them.

- Every opportunity is taken to teach pupils sensitively how to identify and deal with potential dangers. This often takes the form of pupils listening to children's stories and then discussing the quandaries characters find themselves in.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Outstanding

- Teaching in all phases of the school and across all subjects is of a consistently high quality. Leaders recruit teachers with considerable potential and support them to become highly skilled professionals.
- In this school, teamwork is at the core of teaching. Individual teachers take responsibility for developing a subject. They often do this collaboratively with teachers from other trust schools. These teachers also lead on developing effective strategies and activities that enable pupils to learn quickly and deepen their understanding. Lead teachers distribute this knowledge very effectively throughout the school. Consequently, all teachers have a very clear view of what and how they should teach.
- Learning coaches play a critical role in ensuring that teaching is successful. In partnership with teachers, learning coaches work with individuals or small groups. They help pupils keep up with learning and are well trained to give additional support to those who need it.
- The systematic, coherent and constant approaches to teaching are particularly evident in the teaching of phonics. Teachers provide exciting activities that help pupils to learn and recall new letters and sounds. From often very low starting points, pupils learn very quickly how to read and write.
- Leaders and teachers frequently review how well pupils are learning in different subjects. This enables them to make small modifications which further improve pupils' achievement. For example, teachers are adding more opportunities for pupils to develop their reasoning skills in mathematics.
- Pupils are taught how to evaluate how well they are learning. Pupils also confidently inform their teacher when they think they have not fully grasped some new concept or skill. Teachers have a very detailed knowledge of what their pupils already know and what they should next begin to understand. If a teacher notices a pupil is not grasping even a simple concept, they will take immediate action to ensure that pupils keep up. Teachers are very diligent in preventing pupils from falling behind.
- Teachers plan learning very effectively because they have excellent subject knowledge, detailed knowledge of their pupils and very high expectations of what their pupils can achieve. Teachers make learning fun. All pupils, including the most able and those with SEND, find their work challenging and engaging.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding and a fundamental part of the school's ethos.
- Outstanding care is primarily based on excellent and trusting relationships with parents. Through these, leaders and other staff learn in detail about pupils' emotional, social and educational needs. Staff are also highly sensitised to the little changes in pupils' moods and so quickly notice if a pupil is not happy or if something is troubling them. Excellent care is based on a detailed knowledge of every pupil, a very professional staff and their ability to respond effectively to any concerns or problems a pupil may encounter.
- Staff help pupils to learn about themselves. Pupils know their strengths and when they might need to seek help, guidance or support. Relationships between staff and pupils are exemplary and a powerful aspect of promoting pupils' well-being and physical health.
- Pupils understand how to stay safe in school, in their communities and beyond. They learn about relationships and that, sometimes, they may have to question the motives of someone. They have a secure understanding of the different forms of bullying and the distress it can cause. Bullying is an exceptionally rare occurrence. When it has happened, staff have dealt with it both effectively and efficiently.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils' enjoyment in coming to school is reflected in their very high rates of attendance. They thoroughly enjoy their learning and feel safe and secure. Pupils relish the friendships they make, and they rise to the responsibilities they are given. Parents also play a full role in ensuring that their children attend so well. Parents appreciate the quality of education and experiences their children receive at this school.
- Teachers ensure that all learning is engaging and valuable. Consequently, pupils' behaviour in classes is highly commendable. They participate enthusiastically and maturely. Pupils take great pride in their work.
- Pupils' excellent personal development results in behaviour in and around school that is exemplary. They enjoy themselves, but also take great care of each other because they value and respect one another.

Outcomes for pupils

Outstanding

- Pupils start at The Olive School, Bolton with a range of development needs and prior knowledge. Many pupils enter the school with skills and knowledge that are below those typically expected for their age range. Pupils often lack confidence and have a weak grasp of language. Excellent teaching, support, the curriculum and care ensure that all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged and those who speak English as

an additional language, make excellent progress.

- Outstanding teaching of phonics throughout Reception and Year 1 results in a very large proportion of pupils meeting or exceeding the expected standard in the phonics screening check. This is particularly impressive and is as a result of teaching staff systematically developing pupils' vocabulary and confidence in speaking, listening, reading and writing.
- Pupils continue to make excellent progress in English through Years 2 and 3. The progress pupils make in mathematics is similarly impressive. By the end of key stage 1, much larger proportions than seen nationally achieve and exceed expectations in both English and mathematics.
- Strategies that are used so successfully in teaching pupils English are applied across the whole curriculum and pupils make excellent progress in all subjects.
- Pupils with SEND progress well. This is as a result of the early identification of their additional needs, the strategies they receive which are tailored to meet their specific needs, and the very high expectations all staff have of these pupils.
- The combination of high expectations, high attainment, excellent personal development, care and support, all ensure that pupils are very well prepared for their next stages of education.

Early years provision

Outstanding

- The early years provision is a joyous place where children are happy and do not realise they are learning. The environment is vibrant. There is a sense of fun. Children see Reception as a magical place and it is one where their imagination is let loose. Leaders ensure that throughout every day, children make substantial gains in their learning through a combination of well-structured play and activities directed by staff.
- Staff ensure that routines are firmly established, and the levels of care are excellent, so children feel secure and safe. Children participate enthusiastically, confidently and harmoniously. Children, from their earliest weeks in Reception, learn how to behave and integrate with others. Staff plan and organise an extensive range of activities that enable children to build very firm foundations on which they can develop their communication and number skills. Many children start in Reception with stages of linguistic development lower than those considered to be typical for their age. However, excellent teaching and care ensure that children learn very quickly. Staff have high expectations of what every child can achieve. Children make outstanding progress across all aspects of their learning. Almost all children achieve a good level of development by the end of Reception Year.
- Leaders have a clear vision of what excellent provision looks like and they strive to provide the best experience for every child in all aspects of their work. Leaders understand the levels of disadvantage that some children experience. Staff ensure that any barriers that might impede learning through disadvantage are minimised. They also have a full understanding of how to, very effectively, support children who are new to learning English and those who do not commonly speak English at home.
- Leaders know the importance of excellent partnerships with parents. They ensure that communications systems between the school and families are easy to understand and

effective. Parents value this and they say that they have had 'great support' from school staff.

- By the end of Reception, children are both fully prepared and eager to start Year 1.

School details

Unique reference number	142898
Local authority	Bolton
Inspection number	10087793

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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	241
Appropriate authority	The board of trustees
Chair	Irfan Umarji
Principal	Sabina Saeed
Telephone number	01204 867890
Website	www.olivebolton.com
Email address	info@olivebolton.staracademies.org
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The Olive School, Bolton opened as part of the government's free schools programme. It opened in a temporary building in September 2016 and continues to operate from that site. It is part of Star Academies, a large national multi-academy trust.
- It is a two-form entry school and, when it opened, admitted pupils into Reception and Year 1. It currently has pupils from Reception to Year 3. The school is oversubscribed for places to start in the next academic year when the oldest pupils will be in Year 4.
- The Olive School, Bolton is designated as a Muslim faith school. The admission arrangements allow pupils of all faiths and none to attend. The school is expecting to be inspected under section 48 imminently. The purpose of this inspection will be to evaluate the distinctiveness and effectiveness of the school's religious character.
- The trust and school were established to extend the educational opportunities of young people in areas that have been characterised by deprivation and underachievement. The school serves a socio-economically disadvantaged community which includes many

families for whom English is an additional language and new arrivals to the country. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is in line with that seen nationally. This, however, does not reflect the high levels of deprivation that exist within the school's catchment area.

- About two thirds of pupils speak English as an additional language. This is significantly above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is above the national average.
- The school operates a breakfast club.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors held meetings with the principal, other leaders and managers. Inspectors met with teachers and some learning coaches.
- The lead inspector met with seven members of the governing body, one of whom holds the position of chair. Inspectors met with senior members of the trust and the lead inspector met with the trust's chief executive officer.
- Inspectors talked to pupils during their break- and lunchtimes.
- School documents were scrutinised, including safeguarding checks, information about pupils' achievement and records of checks on the quality of teaching.
- Inspectors visited classrooms mainly with senior staff, to speak with pupils, and to look at their work and observe their learning.
- The principal and other senior leaders were party to many of the inspection activities.
- Inspectors took account of 33 comments from parents sent by text and 54 responses to Parent View, the Ofsted survey.
- Inspectors also spoke to parents as they brought their children to school and during pre-planned sessions where parents were working in school with their children.
- Inspectors considered the views of the 28 staff who completed an inspection survey and the 18 responses to the pupil survey.

Inspection team

Neil Mackenzie, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

David Woodhouse

Ofsted Inspector

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