

Maranatha Christian School

Queenlaines Farm, Sevenhampton, Highworth, Swindon, Wiltshire SN6 7SQ

Inspection dates

12 July 2017

Overall outcome

The school does not meet all of the independent school standards that were checked during this inspection

Main inspection findings

Part 1. Quality of education provided

Paragraph 2(1), 2(1)(a), 2(1)(b) and 2(1)(b)(i)

- At the time of the previous standard inspection, the school did not have an effective written policy on the curriculum, and the curriculum was not supported by appropriate plans or schemes of work. In addition, the plans being used by the school did not take into account the ages, aptitudes and needs of all pupils, including those with an education, health and care plan.
- Since the previous inspection, the newly appointed interim headteacher has drawn up an effective curriculum plan which incorporates both the school's core and expanded curriculum. This ensures that, in all years, pupils acquire new knowledge and skills across a wide range of subjects.
- For the school's core curriculum, pupils follow the Accelerated Christian Education (ACE) curriculum. Diagnostic tests ensure that work is matched accurately to pupils' needs and regular assessments monitor the progress being made. For other subjects, schemes of work are now in place. These set expectations for pupils' progress within individual units of work and across different year groups. Teachers use these schemes of work to plan individual lessons which now take into account the ages, aptitudes and needs of all pupils. Consequently, pupils are making strong progress.
- The standard in this paragraph is now met.

Paragraph 3, 3(a), 3(c) and 3(d)

- At the time of the previous standard inspection, teaching was not effective. The quality of teaching, learning and assessment was not of a sufficiently high standard to enable pupils to acquire new knowledge and make good progress according to their ability. Consequently, pupils did not increase their understanding and develop their skills in the subjects taught sufficiently. In addition, the inspection found that teaching did not take into account pupils' needs or prior attainment.
- The headteacher has put in place a thorough system for monitoring the quality of

teaching across the school, ensuring that staff receive training matched to their requirements. Training has focused on areas identified at the previous inspection and ensured that staff have a better understanding of how to plan, deliver and assess lessons which accurately meet pupils' needs and build on prior learning.

- The headteacher gives teachers regular formal and informal feedback following monitoring of their teaching. The feedback provided is ensuring that individual members of staff have opportunities to improve their practice. The headteacher and trustees have also introduced external assessments of teaching and learning. This provides leaders with external validation of their monitoring and further strengthens the leadership of teaching within the school. Where the quality of teaching does not meet leaders' expectations, individual support plans have been put in place.
- Pupils are now making strong progress because of the improvements in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. This is particularly the case in the expanded curriculum.
- The standard in this paragraph is now met.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraph 7, 7(a) and 7(b)

- At the time of the previous standard inspection, arrangements to safeguard pupils were insufficient and not in line with the most recent statutory guidance.
- As a result of this, the trustees have made a number of improvements designed to keep their pupils safe, most noticeably in securing the school site. Changes made include installing a new perimeter fence, relocating the school office to the front of the school and introducing new systems for checking in visitors.
- Leaders have also rewritten the school's safeguarding and child protection policy so that it now meets statutory requirements. The policy is available to download from the school's website.
- The school's wider arrangements to safeguard pupils are still not in line with statutory guidance. There is a lack of clarity regarding the leadership of safeguarding in the school. The level of training that has been undertaken by safeguarding leaders falls short of legal requirements. Similarly, not all members of staff have up-to-date safeguarding training and this, too, is in breach of statutory guidance.
- In addition, at the time of the progress monitoring inspection, the suitability checks that need to be carried out for staff and trustees had either not been done or had not been recorded in line with government guidance.
- The standard in this paragraph remains unmet.

Paragraph 11

- At the time of the previous standard inspection, the school's health and safety policy was not implemented effectively and, as a result, there were identified risks to the safety of pupils and staff.
- Since the previous inspection, the trustees have developed a new health and safety policy which is in line with the relevant legislation. They have commissioned an external

audit of the school site and effectively rectified any identified issues. Ongoing concerns are included on the school's maintenance plan and dealt with in a timely manner. This ensures that pupils and staff are as safe as is practically possible.

- The standard in this paragraph is now met.

Paragraph 12

- At the time of the previous standard inspection, leaders had not taken swift enough action to rectify the shortcomings identified in the most recent fire risk assessment.
- The trustees quickly addressed the areas of concern in this report before commissioning a new fire risk assessment. This took place in May 2017. Although issues were identified in the new report, these were different to those previously identified and have been addressed.
- Records show that the necessary equipment checks and fire drills are undertaken regularly. Staff have received training and there are named fire wardens on site.
- The standard in this paragraph is now met.

Paragraph 16, 16(a) and 16(b)

- At the time of the previous standard inspection, there were deficiencies in the school's written risk assessment policy. Assessments did not accurately assess risks and appropriate action was not taken to reduce risks that were identified.
- Trustees have introduced a risk register which provides trustees with an oversight of the policy and procedures for identifying and managing risk. Assessments are in place for the school site as well as activities that take place internally and externally, for example school visits. Where risks are identified, assessments contain precautionary actions as well as any additional actions required to minimise risks.
- The standard in this paragraph is now met.

Part 4. Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

Paragraph 18(2) and 18(2)(b)

- At the time of the previous standard inspection, school leaders had not checked whether members of staff have been the subject of a direction under section 142 of the Education Act 2002, prohibiting them from being employed in a school. These checks are now in place.
- The standard in this paragraph is now met.

Paragraph 20(6), 20(6)(a) and 20(6)(a)(ii)

- At the time of the progress monitoring inspection, school leaders had not checked whether newly appointed trustees have been the subject of a direction under section 128 of the Education Act 2008, prohibiting them from taking part in the management of an independent school.
- The standard in this paragraph is now unmet.

Paragraph 21(1), 21(3), 21(3)(a), 21(3)(a)(iii) and 21(3)(b)

- At the time of the previous standard inspection, checks on the suitability of staff working

at the school had not been correctly recorded in the single central register, in line with statutory guidance.

- The majority of checks on staff have now been recorded correctly. However, at the time of the progress monitoring inspection, prohibition checks for the headteacher, although carried out, had not been recorded in line with statutory guidance.
- The standard in this paragraph remains unmet.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Paragraph 23(1) and 23(1)(c)

- At the time of the previous standard inspection, the changing and showering facilities provided were insufficient for the older pupils receiving physical education.
- Trustees have developed plans to provide suitable changing and showering facilities on the school site. However, these are not yet in place. In the meantime, the school has made arrangements for older pupils to receive their physical education at the local recreation centre. Leaders have also ensured that pupils have sole use of the changing and showering facilities while on site.
- The standard in this paragraph is now met.

Paragraph 24(1), 24(1)(a) and 24(1)(b)

- At the time of the previous standard inspection, the school was not providing suitable accommodation to cater for pupils' medical needs.
- The school has since rectified this. There is now accommodation provided for the short-term care of sick and/or injured pupils. This includes a washing facility and there is a toilet nearby.
- The standard in this paragraph is now met.

Paragraph 25

- At the time of the previous standard inspection, the school premises were not maintained to a standard which ensured the health, safety and welfare of pupils.
- Trustees now ensure that the school environment is well maintained. A named trustee has oversight of this and has developed an ongoing maintenance plan. Any issues arising are logged and rectified by appropriately skilled persons.
- During the monitoring inspection, the inspector had no concerns about the quality of the school's premises.
- The standard in this paragraph is now met.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraph 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b) and 34(1)(c)

- At the time of the previous inspection, school leaders had not ensured that all of the independent school standards had been met. This remains the case. While they have successfully resolved a number of the unmet standards, some remain unmet. In addition, one standard that was met at the time of the previous inspection is now unmet.
- The school's arrangements to safeguard its pupils remain inadequate. There are still some persisting issues identified at the previous inspection as not meeting the independent school standards which have not been met.
- The standard in this paragraph remains unmet.

Statutory requirements of the early years foundation stage

- At the time of the previous inspection, the school did not meet the statutory requirements of the early years foundation stage.
- As a result of the deficiencies in the school's arrangements to safeguard its pupils, including children in the early years, the statutory requirements of the early years foundation stage remain unmet.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school does not meet the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements that were checked during this inspection. This included the standards and requirements that the school was judged to not comply with at the previous inspection. Not all of the standards and associated requirements were checked during this inspection.

The school does not meet the following independent school standards

Standards that were not met at the previous inspection and remain unmet at this inspection

- The proprietor must ensure that arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school and such arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State (paragraph 7, 7(a) and 7(b)).
- The proprietor must ensure that each member of staff appointed after 1 May 2007 is subject to any direction made under section 128 of the 2008 Act or section 142 of the 2002 Act or any disqualification, prohibition or restriction which takes effect as if contained in such a direction (paragraph 21(3), 21(3)(a) and 21(3)(a)(iii)).
- The proprietor must ensure that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role, fulfil their responsibilities effectively, consistently meet the independent school standards, and actively promote the well-being of pupils (paragraph 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b) and 34(1)(c)).

Standards that were met at the previous inspection, but are now judged to not be met at this inspection

- No individual, not being the chair of the school, who is a member of a body or persons corporate or unincorporated named as the proprietor of the school should carry out work, or intend to carry out work, at the school in contravention of a prohibition order, an interim prohibition order, or any direction made under section 128 of the 2008 Act or section 142 of the 2002 Act or any disqualification, prohibition or restriction which takes effect as if contained in either such direction (paragraph 20(6), 20(6)(a) and 20(6)(a)(ii)).

The school now meets the following independent school standards

- The proprietor must ensure that a written policy on the curriculum, supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work, which provides for the matters specified in subparagraph (2), is drawn up and implemented effectively (paragraph 2(1) and 2(1)(a)).
- The proprietor must ensure that the written policy, plans and schemes of work take into account the ages, aptitudes and needs of all pupils, including those pupils with an education, health and care plan (paragraph 2(1)(b) and 2(1)(b)(i)).
- The proprietor must 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 (paragraph 3(a)).
- The proprietor must ensure that the teaching at the school involves well-planned lessons and effective teaching methods, activities and management of class time (paragraph 3(c)).

- The proprietor must ensure that the teaching at the school 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 (paragraph 3(d)).
- The proprietor must ensure that relevant health and safety laws are complied with by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written health and safety policy (paragraph 11).
- The proprietor must ensure compliance with the Regulatory (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (paragraph 12).
- The proprietor must ensure that 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 appropriate action is taken to reduce risks that are identified (paragraph 16, 16(a) and 16(b)).
- The proprietor must ensure that no person carries out work, or intends to carry out work, at the school in contravention of a prohibition order, an interim prohibition order, or any direction made under section 128 of the 2008 Act or section 142 of the 2002 Act, or any disqualification, prohibition or restriction which takes effect as if contained in either such direction (paragraph 18(1) and 18(2)(b)).
- The proprietor must check each member of staff to establish whether the member of staff is subject to a prohibition order or an interim prohibition order, including the date on which the check was completed (paragraph 21(3)(b)).
- The proprietor must ensure that suitable changing accommodation and showers are provided for pupils aged 11 years or over at the start of the school year who receive physical education (paragraph 23(1)(c)).
- The proprietor must ensure that suitable accommodation is provided in order to cater for the medical and therapy needs of pupils (paragraph 24(1)).
- The proprietor must ensure suitable accommodation for the medical examination and treatment of pupils, including the short-term care of sick and injured pupils, which includes a washing facility and is near to a toilet facility (paragraph 24(1)(a) and 24(1)(b)).
- The proprietor must ensure that the school premises and the accommodation and facilities provided 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).

School details

Unique reference number	126536
DfE registration number	866/6001
Inspection number	10034719

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	Christian independent school
School status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	3 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	53
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	0
Number of part-time pupils	11
Proprietor	New Maranatha Christian School Trust
Chair	Tim Abbott
Headteacher	Joy Nurcombe
Annual fees (day pupils)	£1,674 to £4,496
Telephone number	01793 762075
Website	www.maranathaschool.org
Email address	reception@maranathaschool.org
Date of previous standard inspection	18–20 October 2016

Information about this school

- Maranatha Christian School is registered as an independent school for 90 boys and girls aged between three and 19. The school is owned by the New Maranatha Christian School Trust.
- The school is located in its own buildings, on the site of a farm in Sevenhampton, near Swindon.

- A new interim headteacher joined the school in February 2017. There has also been a number of new trustees appointed since the previous standard inspection.
- Pupils are taught in four classes, known as learning centres.
- There are 53 pupils on roll, of whom 11 are part time.
- There were no students in the sixth form at the time of the inspection.
- The school provides education based on 'Biblical foundations and Christian principles'. Pupils use the Accelerated Christian Education (ACE) materials during the morning, which are highly individualised. In the afternoons, pupils work on a range of subjects across the curriculum.
- The school does not use alternative provision.
- The proportion of pupils who have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is below that found nationally.
- The board of trustees has responsibility for the governance of the school.
- The school's previous standard inspection took place on 18–20 October 2016, when it was judged to be inadequate.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out at the request of the registration authority for independent schools. The purpose of the inspection was to monitor the progress the school has made in meeting the independent school standards and other requirements that it was judged to not comply with at its previous inspection.
- The inspection was the first progress monitoring inspection since the previous standard inspection and was carried out with no notice.
- After the previous inspection, which found the school's overall effectiveness to be inadequate, the school was required to produce an action plan explaining how it would meet the independent school standards that were unmet at this inspection. This action plan, evaluated on 10 March 2017, did not meet requirements.
- Prior to the inspection, the lead inspector scrutinised a range of documentation, including that provided by the registration authority for independent schools, the previous inspection report and the subsequent action plan drawn up by the school. In addition, documentation available on the school's website was examined.
- During the inspection, the inspector met with the headteacher and held discussions with staff and pupils. He also met with trustees of the school, including the chair, to discuss the effectiveness of actions taken since the previous standard inspection.

Inspection team

Jonathan Dyer, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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