

Mechinoh School

13 Upper Park Road, Salford, Lancashire M7 4HY

Inspection dates

9 October 2018

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

Paragraphs 2, 2(1), 2(1)(a), 2(2), 2(2)(d), 2(2)(d)(ii), 2(2)(i)

- The inspection in March 2017 found that the school's curriculum did not meet the standards which require it to pay particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the national legislation about equality. The opportunities to help pupils understand the wide range of people and cultures which contribute to modern Britain were found to be limited.
- In its action plan, which was evaluated in March 2018, the proprietor and leaders indicated that they intended to review school policies, including those relating to personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education, bullying, and spiritual, moral, social and cultural education.
- The action plans asserted that leaders would seek advice from other, similar schools and update the PSHE policy and curriculum to pay particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010 and the national standard.
- It was noted in the evaluation of the action plan that the plan did not clearly identify the actions that leaders intended to take. Nor did the plan identify measurable expectations by which leaders could evaluate their success.
- In implementing the school's action plan, leaders have reviewed and amended the school's curriculum. Additional academic subjects have been introduced to improve the *Chol* curriculum. Amendments to the daily timetable now give enough time for these subjects, including history, chemistry and physics, to be studied in sufficient depth.
- Leaders' well-considered changes considerably improve the school's PSHE policy and schemes of work so that they have due regard to all the protected characteristics identified in national legislation. Pupils now study of a range of other faiths found in Britain to help them to prepare effectively for life in British society.
- The sensitivity in the way in which these changes are being introduced, using staff who demonstrate secure subject knowledge, ensures that the school's faith-based ethos is not compromised. Leaders' careful choice of topics in other subjects is used appropriately to promote pupils' tolerance and understanding of issues faced by people

who have protected characteristics. For example, pupils will learn about the oppression of different groups through well-chosen history and English literature topics to develop their understanding of the need to show respect and tolerance towards others, including those with protected characteristics.

- The implementation of these planned changes to the curriculum is at an early stage. As a result, there is currently insufficient evidence to demonstrate that they are having the impact that leaders desire.
- Consequently, this standard remains unmet.

Part 2. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

Paragraph 5, 5(a), 5(b), 5(b)(vi)

- As stated above, the inspection in March 2017 judged that the school did not meet the standards relating the curriculum for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) education, or the requirement to pay particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the national legislation about equality.
- In its action plan, which was evaluated in March 2018, the school indicated that it would:
 - seek advice from other *Charedi* schools in England to learn from their practice
 - continue to teach PSHE as a discrete subject
 - review its policies and introduce an enhanced PSHE scheme of work that has regard to promoting respect for and tolerance for all, focusing especially on those with protected characteristics.
- It was noted during the evaluation of the school's action plan that leaders did not give sufficient clarity about the expected outcomes or the time line of their intended actions.
- In implementing the school's action plan, leaders have reviewed the school's policy and schemes of work for PSHE. The school's PSHE policy now makes clear reference to all the protected characteristics identified in the Equality Act 2010.
- Amendments to the school's curriculum ensure it now promotes respect and tolerance of other people, including those with any of the protected characteristics that are defined in national legislation.
- Leaders have begun to implement their well-chosen changes to the content of the PSHE curriculum. However, these changes are relatively new and are not fully enough developed in practice to allow pupils' knowledge and understanding to flourish. As a result, there is insufficient evidence to show they are having the desired, sustained impact on pupils' learning.
- Consequently, this standard remains unmet.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

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

- The school's safeguarding policy is fit for purpose and takes into account the latest government guidance from the Secretary of State. The school does not have a website. However, leaders ensure that the safeguarding policy is available on request.

- All safeguarding records are meticulously maintained, and leaders ensure that practices in school closely adhere to the school's safeguarding policy. Staff and leaders are suitably trained in safeguarding.
- Leaders' arrangements to safeguard pupils are effective. Consequently, this standard is met.

Paragraph 15

- The inspection in March 2017 judged that the school did not meet the standards which require the proprietor to maintain a register in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006. Registers were not completed using the appropriate codes to record pupils' absences that are outlined in national guidance.
- In its action plan, which was evaluated in March 2018, the school indicated that it would provide additional training and guidance for teachers who are responsible for completing the school's registers at the start of each teaching session in the morning and afternoon. The plan also identified that the school's attendance registers would be regularly checked by leaders to ensure that they are completed in line with the most up-to-date guidance.
- In implementing the school's action plan, leaders have ensured that teachers receive appropriate training and information about how to complete daily attendance registers using the correct codes. Leaders collect registers after the morning and afternoon registration periods have ended. This allows them to check that the correct codes and procedures are completed by teaching staff and to collect any letters and information about the reasons for pupils' absences, for example illness or medical appointments.
- As a result of leaders' actions, registers are now completed in line with national guidance. Consequently, this standard is met.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

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

- The inspection in March 2017 found that this standard was not met. The proprietor had not ensured that leaders and managers fulfilled their responsibilities effectively.
- In its action plan, which was evaluated in March 2018, the school did not make it clear how it was going to improve the quality of leadership and management. The plan contained some assertions that leaders would fulfil their duties and act to meet the unmet standards. However, the actions that leaders proposed to take to achieve this objective were not clearly defined.
- Leaders are committed to developing the school's curriculum to ensure it meets the requirements to promote tolerance for all, including those with the protected characteristics identified in the Equality Act 2010. They have strengthened the leadership of the school through the appointment of a new deputy headteacher.
- The new deputy headteacher has an incisive understanding of the requirements of the Equality Act and how it can be implemented effectively and sensitively in such ways as not to undermine or compromise the school's faith-based ethos. As a result, leaders have improved considerably the school's policy and planning relating to the PSHE curriculum. This includes the requirement to promote tolerance and understanding of

others, including those who have any of the protected characteristics identified in the Equality Act 2010.

- Leaders accept that their actions to improve the quality of the PSHE curriculum are at an early stage of implementation. Although they are confident of their effectiveness, they have not undertaken any evaluation of the impact of their curriculum changes. Consequently, although there has been considerable improvement to the PSHE curriculum, there is insufficient evidence to show that the changes are being implemented effectively.
- As a result of the standards relating to PSHE and the school's curriculum remaining unmet, the standards for leadership and management are also 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, as set out in the annex of this report. 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.

School details

Unique reference number	105999
DfE registration number	355/6020
Inspection number	10054911

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 status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Boys
Number of pupils on the school roll	72
Number of part-time pupils	None
Proprietor	Mechinoh School
Chair	M Kupetz
Headteacher	Rabbi N Baddiel
Annual fees (day pupils)	None
Telephone number	0161 795 9275
Website	The school does not have a website
Email address	mechinoh@gmail.com
Date of previous standard inspection	28–30 March 2017

Information about this school

- Mechinoh School opened in 1982 and is situated in Salford, north Manchester. It offers secondary education for up to 73 Orthodox Jewish boys aged between 11 and 16 years, with provision for both religious and secular studies.
- There are currently 72 pupils on roll. There are no pupils with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan. A small proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The school aims 'to provide a comprehensive religious education for its pupils and to prepare them for entry into yeshivas (Talmudic Colleges) to further their religious

education'. In addition, it aims 'to equip pupils with the basic skills required for adult life, such as literacy, numeracy and general knowledge, whilst placing great emphasis on developing a high standard of ethical behaviour'.

- No pupils attend any alternative, off-site educational provision.

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 school submitted an action plan to show how it would remedy these issues. The plan was evaluated on 8 March 2018 and judged not to be acceptable.
- This is the school's first monitoring inspection since the full inspection in March 2017. The inspection was unannounced.
- During the inspection, the inspector looked at pupils' work. He talked with pupils about their school life and changes to the curriculum. The inspector met with the principal and other leaders and spoke by phone with staff delivering the new *Chol* curriculum. The inspector scrutinised documentation relating to school management, including the arrangements to ensure that pupils are kept safe, the school's curriculum and pupils' attendance.

Inspection team

John Nixon, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex. Compliance with regulatory requirements

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

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(2) For the purposes of paragraph (2)(1)(a), the matters are–
 - 2(2)(d) personal, social, health and economic education which–
 - 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)(i) effective preparation of pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British society.

Part 2. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

- 5 The standard about the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils at the school is met if the proprietor–
 - 5(a) actively promotes the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs;
 - 5(b) ensures that principles are actively promoted which–
 - 5(b)(vi) encourage respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Act.

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.

The school now meets the following requirements of the independent school standards

- 15 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that an admission and attendance register is maintained in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006.

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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