

# Inspection of Mechinoh School

13 Upper Park Road, Salford, Lancashire M7 4HY

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Inspection dates: 24 to 26 May 2022

## **Overall effectiveness**

**Inadequate**

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The quality of education

**Inadequate**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Good**

Personal development

**Inadequate**

Leadership and management

**Inadequate**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Requires improvement

Does the school meet the independent school standards?

**No**

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils experience a poor educational experience through the curriculum. Leaders' expectations for what pupils should know and be able to do by the time they leave school are low. Pupils do not achieve well.

Pupils do not have experiences that help to develop them socially and culturally. Learning related to some of the protected characteristics is avoided. Educational visits are limited. There are no clubs in place and pupils' talents and interests are not taken into account or developed.

Pupils who spoke with inspectors said that they enjoy school. They attend regularly, behave well and enjoy positive relationships with staff. Pupils are certain that staff would sort out any bullying quickly. Pupils said that they feel safe and that they can talk to staff if they have any worries. However, leaders do not ensure that pupils are kept safe. This is because leaders' approach to safeguarding is lax. Some staff are not suitably trained and leaders pay too little attention to ensuring that risk assessments are completed to safeguard pupils' health, safety and welfare.

Pupils are guided to attend a religious college for their next stage of education. They receive no careers advice to help them consider the range of options available to them in the future.

Some pupils take part in activities that help them to contribute to society. For example, some pupils raise money for local charities. Pupils learn how to keep healthy.

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

Leaders have not established a clear vision for the curriculum. Pupils do not study an appropriate range of academic subjects. For example, Year 10 pupils have had no mathematics lessons since the start of the academic year. Leaders have not ensured that staff are trained or supported to develop or deliver the curriculum effectively. Leaders and teachers have also not considered how pupils will build their knowledge over time. In all subjects, pupils experience a series of disconnected lessons. Pupils work through activities that are decided by individual teachers. This means that pupils' experience of the curriculum varies greatly. As a result of weak curriculum thinking, pupils do not achieve well in a range of subjects.

The development of pupils' reading knowledge is not given enough priority by leaders. There is no clearly defined curriculum for reading. Some teachers do not have the knowledge that they need to support pupils' reading progress. Leaders do not check how well pupils learn to read. They have also not identified that some pupils have gaps in their reading knowledge. There is no support in place to ensure that these pupils catch up.

Leaders have not identified any pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff are not trained to identify any potential additional needs that pupils may have. Pupils who struggle with their learning often study fewer subjects. This means that some pupils do not access a suitably ambitious curriculum.

The curriculums for personal, social and health education (PSHE) and relationships and sex education are poorly designed. Pupils learn about a range of topics in a disorganised way. This does not help pupils to build on their knowledge or to develop their understanding in an age-appropriate way. Leaders have not fully consulted parents and carers about the content of the relationships and sex education that pupils are entitled to study.

Pupils behave well in lessons and around school. There is little disruption to pupils' learning.

The pupils who spoke to inspectors were clear about the importance of respect. However, pupils have limited knowledge about fundamental British values, other cultures and other religions. Protected characteristics, such as sexual orientation, are not considered within the PHSE curriculum. This means that pupils are not as well prepared for life in modern Britain as they should be.

Leaders' checks on the quality of education are ineffective. Their evaluation of the school's strengths and areas for improvement is weak. As a result, senior leaders do not have a well-informed understanding of the quality of education that pupils receive. Plans for improvement are not clear enough. In the absence of a proprietor over the last twelve months, leaders have attempted to improve aspects of the school. However, they have not been successful and their impact has been limited. Leaders do not have the capacity to bring about necessary improvements.

When the school was inspected in 2019, inspectors identified that some of the independent standards (the standards) were not met. Several more of the standards are now unmet because leaders pay insufficient attention to them. For example, leaders have been too slow to rectify identified weaknesses in the curriculum. The checks on fire exits are not effective and repairs were only carried out when inspectors raised concerns. The common room used by older pupils has exposed wiring near the lights and the walls are in disrepair. Routine checks have not identified all of the hazards in relation to the site.

The majority of policies have not been updated in several years. As a result, many do not reflect the school's context or the latest government guidance. Leaders are not giving due diligence to pupils' safety and well-being. The school has an accessibility plan that complies with schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

Staff feel well supported and appreciate the consideration that leaders give to their workload.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

Leaders have not put effective systems in place to ensure that all potential safeguarding concerns for individual pupils are identified, tracked and monitored.

There is a safeguarding policy in place. This is made available to parents on request. However, not all staff have received up-to-date safeguarding training. Some staff are unsure of how to report the concerns that they may have about pupils' safety and well-being.

The process for assessing risks to pupils is weak. Leaders have not considered the risks associated with different activities within the curriculum or in relation to the school site. Furthermore, leaders have not taken appropriate action to minimise these potential dangers. This leaves pupils at risk of harm.

There is little work completed through the curriculum to help pupils to learn about the risks they may face outside of school.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and proprietor)**

- Leaders checks on the school's performance and compliance with the standards are ineffective. Leaders have not made sure that the standards are consistently met and that the premises are safe. This impacts on the welfare, health and safety of pupils, as well as their learning experience. Leaders must make sure that they fully understand their responsibilities. They must also ensure that the school meets the standards consistently and that all pupils can learn in a safe environment.
- Leaders have not ensured that safeguarding processes are effective. This means that pupils' safety is at risk. Leaders must urgently implement systems for safeguarding to ensure that all staff are trained and know how to act when a pupil might be at risk of harm.
- In all subjects, the curriculum is poorly designed and lacks coherence. Leaders have not set out the key knowledge that pupils should learn, or when this should be taught. As a result, all pupils, including those who struggle with learning, or those with SEND, do not achieve well. Leaders must identify what key concepts and knowledge pupils need to learn and when this will be taught.
- Leaders provide insufficient support to help pupils with SEND achieve well. Staff are ill-equipped to identify and meet pupils' specific needs. At times, pupils with SEND study a narrower range of subjects than others in the school. This limits their achievement. Leaders must ensure that they provide staff with suitable training and support so that they can help pupils with SEND to learn all that they should.

- Teachers have not been supported to design or deliver subject curriculums. As a result, pupils' learning is often based on a series of disconnected lessons that fail to build their subject knowledge over time. Leaders must ensure that staff receive training and support to ensure that they can deliver an ambitious and cohesive curriculum.
- The reading curriculum is poor. Some staff also have poor subject knowledge of reading. This means that pupils do not learn to read well and those who struggle are not supported to catch up. Leaders should introduce a suitable reading curriculum, supported by appropriate staff training.
- Provision for pupils' PSHE and careers advice is poorly designed. This means that pupils' wider personal development is not promoted well. Leaders and governors should put in place a suitable PSHE curriculum that supports the ambitions of pupils and prepares them well for life beyond school in modern Britain.

## 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.

If you are the provider and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	105999
<b>DfE registration number</b>	355/6020
<b>Local authority</b>	Salford
<b>Inspection number</b>	10210322
<b>Type of school</b>	Other Independent School
<b>School category</b>	Independent school
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Boys
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	60
<b>Number of part-time pupils</b>	0
<b>Proprietor</b>	Mechinoh School
<b>Chair</b>	Rabbi Noach Baddiel
<b>Headteacher</b>	Rabbi Noach Baddiel
<b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>	None
<b>Telephone number</b>	0161 795 9275
<b>Website</b>	None
<b>Email address</b>	mechinoh@gmail.com
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	8 to 10 January 2019

## Information about this school

- The previous full inspection took place in January 2019 and was judged to require improvement. The school received an emergency progress monitoring inspection in November 2019 where several of the standards remained unmet. In May 2021, the school's action plan was evaluated as not acceptable.
- There has been no proprietor in place for 12 months. The headteacher took over as proprietor during the inspection.
- Leaders do not make use any alternative provision.
- Pupils follow a Kodesh curriculum in the morning and a Chol curriculum in the afternoon.

## Information about this inspection

Inspectors carried out this inspection under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008. The purpose of the inspection is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

The school has failed to meet the independent school standards. These are the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspection team met with the headteacher and the deputy headteacher throughout the inspection.
- The lead inspector met with safeguarding leaders to examine safeguarding records, the school's system for recruiting staff and the single central record. Inspectors also spoke with staff and pupils about safeguarding.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives into English, mathematics, history, geography and science. They spoke to staff, evaluated the curriculum, visited lessons, considered pupils' work and spoke with pupils about their learning.
- Inspectors observed the behaviour of pupils during social times and spoke with some pupils. Inspectors met with groups of pupils to discuss their learning, safety, personal development and behaviour. In line with school leaders' request, inspectors did not ask pupils any questions about specified topics, including sex and relationships or protected characteristics such as sexual orientation.
- There were no responses to Ofsted Parent View, the staff or pupil surveys.
- The inspection team reviewed a range of documentation, including a variety of school policies, risk assessments and a range of evidence to check compliance with the standards.

## **Inspection team**

Simon Hunter, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Tim Sherriff

Ofsted Inspector



## Annex. Compliance with regulatory requirements

### The school failed to meet the following independent school standards

#### 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(1)(b) the written policy, plans and schemes of work-
    - 2(1)(b)(i) take into account the ages, aptitudes and needs of all pupils, including those pupils with an EHC plan; and
- 2(2) For the purposes of paragraph (2)(1)(a), the matters are-
  - 2(2)(a) full-time supervised education for pupils of compulsory school age (construed in accordance with section 8 of the Education Act 1996), which gives pupils experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical and aesthetic and creative education;
  - 2(2)(d) personal, social, health and economic education which-
    - 2(2)(d)(i) reflects the school's aim and ethos; and
    - 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)(e) for pupils receiving secondary education, access to accurate, up-to-date careers guidance that-
    - 2(2)(e)(i) is presented in an impartial manner;
    - 2(2)(e)(ii) enables them to make informed choices about a broad range of career options; and
    - 2(2)(e)(iii) helps to encourage them to fulfil their potential;
  - 2(2)(i) effective preparation of pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British society.
- 2A(1) The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor-
  - 2A(1)(b) ensures that every registered pupil who is provided with secondary education at the school is provided with relationships and sex education, except in so far as the pupil is excused as mentioned in sub-paragraph (2),
  - 2A(1)(d) in making arrangements for the purposes of paragraphs (a), (b) or (c), has regard to any guidance under section 80A of the Education Act 2002 that applies in relation to the provision of education by maintained schools,
  - 2A(1)(e) makes and keeps up to date a separate written statement of its policy with regard to the provision of education as required by each of paragraphs (a) and (b),
  - 2A(1)(f) consults parents of registered pupils at the school before making or revising a statement under sub-paragraph (e), and
- 2A(1)(g) publishes a copy of the statement on a website and provides a copy of the statement free of charge to anyone who asks for one.
- 2A(2) Arrangements made by the proprietor for the purposes of sub-paragraph (1)(b) must ensure that where a pupil's parent requests that the pupil is wholly or partly excused from sex education provided as part of relationships and sex

education, the pupil is so excused until the request is withdrawn, unless or to the extent that the head teacher considers that the pupil should not be so excused.

- 3 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that the teaching at the school-
  - 3(a) 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;
  - 3(b) fosters in pupils self-motivation, the application of intellectual, physical and creative effort, interest in their work and the ability to think and learn for themselves;
  - 3(c) involves well planned lessons and effective teaching methods, activities and management of class time;
  - 3(d) 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;
  - 3(e) demonstrates good knowledge and understanding of the subject matter being taught;
  - 3(f) utilises effectively classroom resources of a good quality, quantity and range;
  - 3(g) demonstrates that a framework is in place to assess pupils' work regularly and thoroughly and use information from that assessment to plan teaching so that pupils can progress;
- 4 The standard in this paragraph is met where the proprietor ensures that a framework for pupil performance to be evaluated, by reference to the school's own aims as provided to parents or national norms, or to both, is in place.

## **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(b)(vi) encourage respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Act; and

## **Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils**

- 7 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that-
  - 7(a) arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school; and
  - 7(b) such arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State.
- 11 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that relevant health and safety laws are complied with by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written health and safety policy.
- 12 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005[12].
- 16 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that-
  - 16(a) 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
  - 16(b) appropriate action is taken to reduce risks that are identified.

## **Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools**

- 25 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures 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.

## **Part 6. Provision of information**

- 32(3)(c) particulars of the policy referred to in paragraph 2;

## **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.

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