

Inspection of Harpurhey Alternative Provision School

Parish Hall, Water Street, Harpurhey, Greater Manchester M9 5US

Inspection dates: 29 November to 1 December 2022

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

The quality of education

Inadequate

Behaviour and attitudes

Inadequate

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?

All pupils at Harpurhey Alternative Provision School have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Many of these pupils have additional vulnerabilities as a result of their SEND. Despite this, leaders do not protect pupils from the risk of harm. Pupils are not safe at this school.

Pupils join the school with considerable gaps in their curriculum knowledge. Leaders do not make sure that pupils catch up as quickly as they should. This severely hinders how well pupils learn.

Leaders have low expectations of what pupils can and should achieve. The curriculum lacks ambition. Pupils study a narrow range of subjects. They do not achieve well. Pupils are ill-prepared for the next stages of education, employment and/or training as a result of the considerable weaknesses in the curriculum.

Leaders do not ensure that pupils behave well. Pupils regularly swear. Leaders do not make sure that pupils develop a strong work ethic. In addition, many pupils do not attend school regularly or on time. These pupils fall further behind in their learning.

Pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to enhance their wider personal development. For example, pupils do not take part in regular physical activity. Nor do they have the chance to develop their wider talents or interests.

Most pupils enjoy being at school, but others are disinterested in their education. Pupils told inspectors that staff are willing to listen to their concerns. Staff work well with pupils to deal with any incidents of bullying.

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

The curriculum is inadequate. The limited range of subjects on offer severely restricts pupils' achievement. Furthermore, leaders do not make sure that teachers take into consideration pupils' abilities, interests or aspirations when designing the curriculum that pupils receive. As a result, pupils do not achieve the range of qualifications that they need to succeed well in later life. They have limited options available to them when choosing their next stage of education, employment or training.

In the subjects that pupils do study, leaders do not identify the essential knowledge that pupils need to know or the order in which this learning should occur. This makes it difficult for teachers to design appropriate learning activities that build pupils' knowledge over time. Many pupils have gaps in their knowledge that teachers do not identify or address. This means that they struggle to learn new topics and concepts and/or they develop misconceptions. Pupils frequently lose confidence in lessons and become disengaged in their learning as a result.

Leaders do not place a high enough emphasis on the development of pupils' reading knowledge. This means that many pupils continue to find reading difficult. Across the curriculum, teachers do not provide the support that these pupils need to develop their fluency in reading. Many pupils need help and support to sound out words before they think about what those words actually mean. Furthermore, across the school, pupils do not build up a secure understanding of the vocabulary that they need to access curriculum content. This prevents pupils from learning.

Teachers miss opportunities for identifying any additional SEND that pupils may have. Teachers lack clarity about the support that each pupil with SEND needs. This impedes pupils' learning further. They do not know how to successfully adapt the delivery of the curriculum for the pupils who attend this school.

Leaders do not ensure that staff understand and meet the needs of individual pupils. This is especially true for pupils who are regularly absent from school. Teachers provide learning for pupils to complete at home if they are absent or excluded. However, leaders do not make sure that this learning is appropriate or that pupils complete it. Consequently, most pupils do not receive the support that they need to catch up. The gaps in pupils' knowledge widen as a result.

Leaders do not ensure that pupils attend school when they should. Some pupils rarely attend. Many pupils' attendance has declined since they enrolled at the school. Leaders have not taken sufficient action to remedy this situation. Consequently, pupils do not develop the knowledge or traits that they will need as young citizens. They are not well prepared for adulthood.

Leaders do not ensure that pupils maintain acceptable standards of behaviour. Staff too readily accept discourteous behaviour from pupils. Pupils frequently become disruptive in lessons. For example, some pupils prefer to access their mobile phones in lessons rather than listen to their teachers. Learning is regularly disturbed by poor behaviour.

Many pupils do not develop high aspirations for themselves. They are not aware of the range of post-16 opportunities available to them. Leaders do not provide suitable careers information, education, advice and guidance for pupils. This statutory requirement is not met.

Leaders provide some support for pupils to learn about aspects of keeping themselves safe. For example, leaders provide an adequate relationships and sex education and health education curriculum. Pupils learn about some aspects of how to develop safe and healthy relationships with others. However, leaders do not focus sufficiently well on other aspects of pupils' wider development. For instance, leaders do not provide pupils with adequate opportunities to help them learn about being physically healthy.

The proprietor and other leaders have not addressed many of the concerns that were raised by inspectors in the previous standard inspection. Most of the issues identified in the more recent material change inspection remain unresolved. The

proprietor and other leaders have overseen a decline in the quality of education that pupils receive since the last inspection. The proprietor and leaders have not demonstrated that they have the knowledge and skills to improve the school.

The proprietor and leaders do not have a secure understanding of the requirements of the independent school standards (the standards). The majority of the standards are not met.

The proprietor and leaders do not carry out their statutory duties. Leaders have not ensured that pupils receive a high-quality education that meets their individual needs or their SEND. In addition, leaders do not provide sufficient information to parents and carers about the curriculum that is on offer at the school.

The proprietor and leaders are in breach of their legal responsibility to ensure that pupils and staff are kept safe. They have not carried out the required health and safety checks. All of these required checks are out of date, although leaders did carry out some remedial work during the inspection, after shortcomings had been pointed out by inspectors. The checks that were not in place included the regulatory fire risk assessments, legionella tests, gas safety checks, electrical compliance surveys and the requirements for asbestos management. As such, pupils are put at unnecessary risk.

Leaders do not ensure that there is a safe and suitable outside area for pupils to take exercise or play games. There is no provision for physical activity in the curriculum.

The school has a complaints procedure for parents. However, this procedure does not meet the requirements of the standards. The procedure does not provide the required opportunity for a panel hearing which includes an independent panel member.

The proprietor has ensured that a suitable accessibility plan, which meets schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010, is in place.

Leaders work in close collaboration with staff, parents and carers. Staff and parents feel that the proprietor and other leaders are approachable and listen to them. Leaders protect staff from excessive workload.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

Leaders have a policy for safeguarding pupils. This policy has been updated recently in line with the most recent statutory guidance. Parents are able to access the policy on the school's website or they are provided with a paper copy on request.

Leaders provide suitable training for staff about safeguarding arrangements. Staff know how to identify when pupils may be at risk of abuse or harm. Staff work well

with external agencies to provide additional help to pupils and their families.

Even though these safeguarding processes are in place, leaders do not ensure that there is a strong culture of safeguarding across the school.

The proprietor does not have due regard to health and safety guidance for the school premises. The lack of leaders' action to maintain the school premises and accommodation to an acceptable standard puts pupils' and staff's well-being at risk.

Leaders have not ensured that they are familiar with the most up-to-date guidance about safer recruitment procedures. Leaders do not carry out rigorous enough checks on the suitability of staff before they take up their post. Leaders do not demonstrate the diligence required when checking references for newly appointed staff.

Leaders do not take enough action to ensure that vulnerable pupils receive the support that they need to attend school on a regular basis. These pupils are not adequately protected from the potential risks of harm.

Leaders allow pupils to access unchecked online material throughout the school day. Although pupils know that this is against the school rules, and they have learned about keeping safe while online, many regularly access social media while on the school premises. They told inspectors about how, at times, this has led to unpleasant situations between pupils.

Pupils told inspectors that girls and boys are sometimes not respectful towards each other. Girls said that staff do not intervene quickly enough when boys make comments that make them feel uncomfortable.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and proprietor)

- The proprietor and leaders are not vigilant enough in identifying and addressing potential risks to pupils' safety. They do not consider how the poor state of repair and maintenance of the school's premises and accommodation jeopardise pupils' and staff's welfare and well-being. As a result, pupils and staff are not kept safe. The proprietor and leaders must ensure that the aspects of the standards relating to premises and pupil welfare are consistently met.
- The proprietor and other leaders have overseen a decline in the quality of education that the school provides. Currently, pupils receive an inadequate standard of education. They achieve poorly. The proprietor and other leaders must take swift action to ensure that pupils receive an education that is at least of acceptable quality.
- Leaders and staff do not ensure that all pupils behave well. Pupils' discourtesy to staff, and their lack of engagement in lessons, regularly disturb the learning of others. Leaders must ensure that staff support pupils to maintain high standards

of behaviour and positive attitudes to learning.

- Leaders do not make sure that all pupils attend school when they should. Consequently, many pupils' rates of attendance worsen and they fall further behind in their learning. Leaders must make more effective use of the range of strategies available to them to ensure that all pupils attend school regularly.
- Leaders do not provide sufficient support for pupils to develop healthy lifestyles. Pupils do not take part in regular physical activity at school. As a result, they do not develop talents and interests that could contribute to their well-being. Leaders should ensure that all aspects of pupils' wider personal development are well designed and well developed.
- Leaders do not ensure that pupils are well informed about the next stages of education, employment or training that are available to them. Most pupils at the school are disinterested in learning because they do not appreciate how their achievement at school could enable them to pursue a suitable career. Leaders should ensure that all pupils access a well-organised careers education, information, advice and guidance curriculum that inspires high aspirations.
- The curriculum that leaders provide to pupils is narrow and lacks ambition. Pupils do not develop the wide range of knowledge and skills that they need to achieve well. They do not achieve appropriate qualifications. Leaders must ensure that pupils' learning supports them to be well prepared for their next stages of education, employment or training.
- Leaders do not ensure that teachers provide suitable learning activities that meet the needs of individual pupils. Some pupils become disruptive and uncooperative because they are unable to access the activities that teachers prepare for them. Leaders should make sure that all teachers are well trained to design learning activities that meet pupils' needs.
- Leaders do not ensure that pupils have regular opportunities to practise and develop their reading skills. Pupils who struggle with reading, or have limited knowledge of vocabulary, quickly lose confidence in lessons and become disengaged. They do not achieve well. Leaders must ensure that staff support pupils to develop their ability to use reading to further their learning and broaden their understanding of a wide range of vocabulary.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	141680
DfE registration number	352/6010
Local authority	Manchester
Inspection number	10203838
Type of school	Other independent school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	19
Proprietor	Colin Bell
Headteacher	Michael Hill
Annual fees (day pupils)	£13,000 to £21,000
Telephone number	07432 506703
Website	www.haps.manchester.sch.uk
Email address	admin@haps.manchester.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	13 to 15 November 2018

Information about this school

- The school has moved premises several times in recent years. The address of the school is different to that registered on the website, Get Information about Schools. The school's current address is Parish Hall, Water Street, Harpurhey, M9 5US. Leaders have notified the Department for Education (DfE) about this change.
- The school's last standard inspection was from 13 to 15 November 2018. The school also received a material change inspection in March 2022. This was commissioned by the DfE, following notification by the school that it had moved premises. The DfE issued the school with a warning notice following this inspection.
- All pupils at the school have social, emotional and mental health needs.
- Leaders do not use any alternative provisions for pupils.

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 the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors spoke with the headteacher and other leaders in the school. They also spoke with the proprietor.
- An inspector spoke with a representative of one of the schools that places a number of pupils at this school.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation relating to safeguarding. This included: the school's single central record of staff and visitors, staff training records, safeguarding records and samples of the records kept on individual pupils.
- An inspector conducted a tour of the premises.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in English, including early reading, mathematics and art and design. They spoke with the curriculum leaders of these subject areas. Inspectors considered evidence of work from other subjects. Inspectors also visited lessons, looked at examples of pupils' work, held discussions with teachers and talked with pupils. An inspector also listened to pupils read.

- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at social times. They observed pupils' behaviour as they moved around the school. Inspectors scrutinised leaders' records of pupils' behaviour.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils about their experiences at the school.
- Inspectors spoke with parents and family members on the telephone. Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View. This included the free-text responses.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff. They also considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey for pupils.

Inspection team

Claire Cropper, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Maria McGarry

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.
- 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)(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.
- 3 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that the teaching at the school-
 - 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(f) utilises effectively classroom resources of a good quality, quantity and range.

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.
- 9 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor promotes good behaviour amongst pupils by ensuring that-
 - 9(b) the policy is implemented effectively.
- 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 4. Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

- 18(2) The standard in this paragraph is met if-
 - 18(2)(c) the proprietor carries out appropriate checks to confirm in respect of each such person-
 - 18(2)(c)(iv) where appropriate, the person's qualifications;
- 21(3) The information referred to in this sub-paragraph is-
 - 21(3)(a)(iv) checks were made to ensure, where appropriate, that S had the relevant qualifications;

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.
- 27 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that-
 - 27(b) external lighting is provided in order to ensure that people can safely enter

and leave the school premises.

- 29(1) The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that suitable outdoor space is provided in order to enable-
 - 29(1)(a) physical education to be provided to pupils in accordance with the school curriculum; and
 - 29(1)(b) pupils to play outside.

Part 6. Provision of information

- 32(1) The standard about the provision of information by the school is met if the proprietor ensures that-
 - 32(1)(a) the information specified in sub-paragraph (2) is provided to parents of pupils and parents of prospective pupils and, on request, to the Chief Inspector[14], the Secretary of State or an independent inspectorate[15];
 - 32(1)(b) the information specified in sub-paragraph (3) is made available to parents of pupils and parents of prospective pupils and, on request, to the Chief Inspector, the Secretary of State or an independent inspectorate.

Part 7. Manner in which complaints are handled

- 33 The standard about the manner in which complaints are handled is met if the proprietor ensures that a complaints procedure is drawn up and effectively implemented which deals with the handling of complaints from parents of pupils and which-
 - 33(f) where the parent is not satisfied with the response to the complaint made in accordance with sub-paragraph (e), makes provision for a hearing before a panel appointed by or on behalf of the proprietor and consisting of at least three people who were not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint;
 - 33(g) ensures that, where there is a panel hearing of a complaint, one panel member is independent of the management and running of the school;
 - 33(h) allows for a parent to attend and be accompanied at a panel hearing if they wish;
 - 33(i) provides for the panel to make findings and recommendations and stipulates that a copy of those findings and recommendations is-
 - 33(i)(i) provided to the complainant and, where relevant, the person complained about; and
 - 33(i)(ii) available for inspection on the school premises by the proprietor and the head teacher;

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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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

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