

Mechinoh School

13 Upper Park Road, Salford M7 4HY

Inspection date

7 November 2023

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(1), 2(1)(a), 2(1)(b), 2(1)(b)(i), 2(2), 2(2)(a), 2(2)(d), 2(2)(d)(i), 2(2)(d)(ii), 2(2)(e), 2(2)(e)(i), 2(2)(e)(ii), 2(2)(e)(iii)

- At the previous standard inspection in May 2022, these independent school standards (the standards) were identified as unmet. Inspectors found that the curriculum lacked structure, was of a poor standard and did not enable pupils to gain a secure body of subject knowledge. Pupils experienced a series of disconnected lessons. As a result, pupils did not achieve as well as they should.
- At the previous standard inspection in May 2022, inspectors also found that the provision for pupils' personal, social and health education (PSHE), and the provision for their careers information, advice and guidance, were poor. For example, the PSHE curriculum did not cover in sufficient depth how to teach pupils about all the protected characteristics, including sexual orientation and gender reassignment. Consequently, pupils were not well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- When the school's action plan was evaluated in December 2022, it was judged that leaders' plans to improve the quality of education for pupils were not sufficient to address these standards.
- At the time of the progress monitoring inspection in March 2023, the inspector found that there had been some improvements to the curriculum. These developments included the appointment of new staff to improve the secular (Chol) curriculum and to support those pupils struggling with their reading. Curriculum plans had been created in a few subjects, including mathematics and English. However, many curriculum subjects still did not have plans or schemes of work.
- Also, at the time of the progress monitoring inspection in March 2023, the inspector concluded that the curriculum plans and schemes of work did not provide the detail required to ensure that pupils' ages, aptitudes and special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) were taken into account. The inspector also found that leaders had made no changes to the PSHE curriculum since the standard inspection in May 2022. Additionally, the inspector found that there remained a lack of a systematic approach to the delivery of careers education. For example, there continued to be no impartial

careers information, advice and guidance on offer to pupils.

- Following the progress monitoring inspection in March 2023, a second action plan was submitted by the school and it was evaluated in June 2023. Again, it was judged that leaders' plans to improve the quality of education were not sufficient to address these standards.
- Since the previous progress monitoring inspection in March 2023, leaders have continued to make some small improvements to their curriculum plans and schemes of work. As well as curriculum plans for mathematics and English, there is now a plan for science. Leaders are currently developing the schemes of work for geography and history to ensure that they are appropriately detailed.
- The current curriculum policy is out of date, and it does not reflect the curriculum that leaders are offering, or seeking to offer, to pupils. This means that the curriculum as a whole does not take account of the ages, aptitudes and needs of all pupils, including those with SEND. There are no coherent curriculum plans and schemes of work for aesthetic and creative, technological experiences and physical education.
- Leaders have not made appropriate changes to their PSHE curriculum. Pupils do not learn about any of the protected characteristics in sufficient detail. Leaders have chosen not to teach pupils about sexual orientation or gender reassignment. This limits pupils' preparation for life in modern Britain.
- Leaders have developed a programme of careers advice and guidance for pupils. There is now a careers policy in place. Pupils said that they value their careers education. Leaders have employed an external provider to offer impartial careers information, advice and guidance to all pupils.

Paragraphs 2A(1), 2A(1)(b), 2A(1)(d)

- These standards were identified as unmet at the May 2022 inspection. This inspection found that the curriculum for relationships and sex education (RSE) was poorly designed. Consequently, pupils did not build their RSE knowledge in an age-appropriate way. In addition, leaders had not fully consulted with parents and carers about the RSE policy.
- When the school's action plan was evaluated in December 2022, it was judged that leaders' plans to improve the RSE curriculum for pupils were not sufficient to address this standard.
- At the time of the progress monitoring inspection in March 2023, leaders had made no changes to the statutory RSE curriculum or policy since the May 2022 inspection found these to be unsuitable. However, leaders had taken steps to consult with parents and carers about the RSE curriculum and they had produced a statement of intent.
- Following the progress monitoring inspection in March 2023, a second action plan was submitted by the school and it was evaluated in June 2023. Again, it was judged that leaders' plans to improve the RSE curriculum were not sufficient to address this standard.
- At this progress monitoring inspection, leaders stated that they did not intend to provide pupils with a full and comprehensive RSE curriculum. The school's policy and practice did not fully comply with the statutory guidance in relation to the protected characteristics. However, pupils were receiving some aspects of an RSE curriculum, for example about

puberty and reproduction, through one-to-one tuition sessions with year group tutors.

Paragraphs 3, 3(a), 3(b), 3(c), 3(d), 3(e), 3(f), 3(g)

- The standard inspection in May 2022 identified that leaders had not provided teachers with the training and support that they required to design or deliver subject curriculums effectively. Teachers were ill-equipped to identify and meet the needs of pupils with SEND. Leaders and teachers did not check how well pupils remembered what they had been taught in the different subjects across the curriculum.
- When the school's action plan was evaluated in December 2022, it was judged that leaders' plans to improve the delivery of the curriculum were not sufficient to address this standard.
- At the time of the progress monitoring inspection in March 2023, the proprietor had appointed new staff to focus on the Chol curriculum. Leaders had also invested in new resources such as textbooks for science, mathematics and English. However, at the time of the inspection, these were not being used by pupils. Furthermore, in other subjects, learning resources were being used as a substitute for a scheme of work. Assessment strategies were also found to be underdeveloped.
- Following the progress monitoring inspection in March 2023, a second action plan was submitted by the school and it was evaluated in June 2023. Again, it was judged that leaders' plans to improve the delivery of the curriculum were not sufficient to address this standard.
- At this progress monitoring inspection, it was evident that resources were now being used by pupils as intended in science, mathematics and English. Leaders had also created some appropriate resources for wider curriculum subjects. While this has given some improved structure to the teaching that pupils receive in the wider curriculum, the quality and number of resources available to pupils varies depending on the subject area. The absence of schemes of work and curriculum plans in many subjects continue to be a considerable barrier to pupils' learning and achievement. This deficit is also a barrier to how well teachers implement the curriculum. Leaders have still not provided staff with sufficient suitable training to deliver the curriculum consistently well.
- At the time of this inspection, it was evident that leaders were using assessment information to identify pupils who were struggling to learn. However, teachers did not routinely use assessment to adapt their teaching to help pupils learn well. For example, the activities presented to pupils were the same for all, with no regard for pupils' abilities or needs. Therefore, teachers were not using assessment information to adapt learning to appropriately meet the aptitudes and needs of pupils, including those pupils with SEND.
- The standards in this part remain unmet.

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

Paragraphs 5, 5(b), 5(b)(vi)

- At the standard inspection in May 2022, it was found that the proprietor did not encourage pupils to have respect for people with the protected characteristics of gender reassignment or sexual orientation. This meant that pupils were not well prepared for life in modern Britain.

- When the school's action plan was evaluated in December 2022, it was judged that leaders' plans to improve the teaching about protected characteristics were not sufficient to address this standard. The action plan did not clearly identify specific actions to develop pupils' respect for the protected characteristics, including sexual orientation and gender reassignment.
- At the time of the progress monitoring inspection in March 2023, leaders stated that they actively promoted tolerance and respect for all people. This was enshrined in their Kodesh curriculum and Chol studies. Leaders asserted that they would provide support to pupils and families regarding the protected characteristics if requested. However, leaders had no intention to provide pupils with any education regarding the protected characteristics of sexual orientation or gender reassignment.
- Following the progress monitoring inspection in March 2023, a second action plan was submitted by the school and it was evaluated in June 2023. Again, it was judged that leaders' plans to ensure that pupils learned about all the protected characteristics were not sufficient to address this standard.
- At the time of this progress monitoring inspection, leaders' views on the protected characteristics relating to sexual orientation and gender reassignment continued to be the same. However, leaders were in the process of reviewing their teaching of the other seven protected characteristics to ensure that these could be actively and fully taught within the school's curriculum.
- The standard in this part remains unmet.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety

Paragraphs 7, 7(a), 7(b), 32(1), 32(1)(c)

- The proprietor has ensured that suitable consideration is given to statutory guidance relating to the safeguarding of pupils. A suitable and up-to-date safeguarding policy is in place, and this is available to parents on request.
- These standards continue to be met.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraphs 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b)

- At the standard inspection in May 2022, inspectors found that this standard was not met. Leaders did not have the knowledge and skills appropriate to their roles to ensure that all the standards were met consistently. The proprietor had not ensured that leaders had fulfilled their responsibilities effectively. The proprietor had not promoted the well-being of pupils. As a result, several standards were not met.
- In the action plan, which was evaluated in December 2022, leaders did not propose actions that would ensure that the specific requirements of this standard would be met. The actions did state that leaders intended to hold more regular meetings with staff to ensure that they promoted pupils' well-being. However, the proposed actions did not address the specific failings in leadership and management that were identified at the standard inspection.
- In the progress monitoring inspection in March 2023, the inspector identified that some of the standards checked during this inspection were now met. They related to pupils' welfare, health and safety. However, other standards, in relation to the quality of

education that pupils received and pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, remained unmet.

- Following the progress monitoring inspection in March 2023, a second action plan was submitted by the school and it was evaluated in June 2023. Again, it was judged that leaders' plans were not appropriate to ensure that they met the standards consistently over time.
- At this progress monitoring inspection, it was clear that leaders are making some improvements to the curriculum. Consequently, the standards relating to careers education and one of the standards relating to RSE are now met. However, there is still much work to be done to improve the quality of education that pupils receive. As a result, many standards remain unmet.
- The standards in this part 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.

School details

Unique reference number	105999
DfE registration number	355/6020
Inspection number	10303936

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	68
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Mechinoh L'Yeshiva
Chair	Rabbi Noach Baddiel
Headteacher	Rabbi Noach Baddiel
Annual fees (day pupils)	None
Telephone number	0161 795 9275
Website	None
Email address	manager@mechinoh.co.uk
Date of previous standard inspection	24 to 26 May 2022

Information about this school

- The latest standard inspection took place on 24 to 26 May 2022. A progress monitoring inspection was conducted on 2 March 2023.
- The school operates from premises at 13 Upper Park Road, Salford, Lancashire, M7 4HY.
- Leaders do not make use of any alternative provision.
- Mechinoh School is an Orthodox Jewish faith school.
- At the time of the standard inspection, there had been no proprietor in place for the preceding 12 months. The headteacher took over as proprietor during the standard inspection in May 2022. At the time of the first progress monitoring inspection in March

2023, the proposed change of proprietorship arrangements had not been agreed by the Department for Education (DfE). However, on the 19 July 2023, the DfE wrote to the school to confirm that the proposed change to the proprietorship arrangements had now been agreed.

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.
- This was the second progress monitoring inspection since the standard inspection in May 2022. It was conducted with 30 minutes' notice.
- Ofsted evaluated leaders' action plan following the standard inspection on 21 December 2022. The DfE rejected this action plan. Following the first progress monitoring inspection in March 2023, Ofsted again evaluated leaders' subsequent action plan. The DfE also rejected this action plan.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, who is also the proprietor. She also met with senior leaders, including the vice-principal, the head of school and the head of the Chol curriculum, as well as other members of staff. She reviewed schemes of work, examples of pupils' work and the curriculum policy. The inspector visited some lessons.
- The inspector spoke with a group of pupils, in the presence of a member of staff, about their experiences of school.
- The inspector examined policy documents, including the safeguarding policy, the single central record and the accessibility plan.

Inspection team

Sue Eastwood, lead inspector

His 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 un-met 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(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)(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].
- 2A(1) The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor-
 - 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.
- 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.

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) 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.

The school now meets the following independent school standards

Part 1. Quality of education provided

- 2(2) For the purposes of paragraph (2)(1)(a), the matters are-
 - 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.
- 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).

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