

This Is My Education – TIME

Logic House, Central Street, St Helens, Merseyside WA10 1UD

Inspection date

14 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) and 2(2)g–2(2)(i)

- The independent school standards (the standards) in these paragraphs were identified as unmet at the previous standard inspection in February 2023. Inspectors found that leaders had not provided a broad or balanced curriculum. The curriculum did not meet the needs, abilities or aspirations of the pupils, including those with an education, health and care (EHC) plan. Pupils were not able to study the qualifications that they were capable of accessing. Pupils were ill prepared for life in modern Britain.
- When the school's action plan was evaluated in July 2023, it was judged that leaders' plans to improve the quality of education were sufficient to address these standards, with some modification. This was because leaders planned to widen the breadth of subjects on offer to pupils as part of the curriculum. Leaders outlined that they would create clear, long-term pathways that would include qualifications at level 2 and at level 3. These qualifications would include GCSE and A levels.
- Leaders also planned to engage with external curriculum development experts and a local school that has pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). These actions were to develop their understanding of curriculum design and to develop schemes of work in a wide range of subjects. However, the school's action plan was not specific about the subjects that leaders were going to develop beyond the core subjects. Leaders modified the action plans to specify that they would include subjects relating to human and social, physical and aesthetic and creative education.
- At the time of this progress monitoring inspection, leaders had started to develop the design and breadth of the curriculum. They had implemented some of the actions outlined in their plans. For example, leaders had appointed a specialist teacher in English and mathematics. In these subjects, they had created subject-specific schemes of work. These schemes of work and the specialist teachers were helping pupils to make progress and to learn in these core subjects. Furthermore, pupils were accessing appropriate qualifications in key stage 4 English and mathematics.

- Leaders had also created some curriculum pathways for pupils in different age ranges and stages of ability. They had introduced schemes of work, in a common format, for a wider range of subjects. These included construction, hair and beauty, and life skills.
- Despite these improvements, at the progress monitoring inspection, the inspector found that the curriculum pathways and schemes of work relating to other subjects were at an earlier stage of development. These included plans and schemes of work in human and social, physical and aesthetic and creative education.
- The curriculum in the sixth form was still narrow and did not include appropriate routes and qualifications to enable students to progress to suitable destinations.
- Furthermore, the links that leaders were establishing with other schools and curriculum experts were in their infancy. Leaders had not fully developed their understanding and curriculum thinking across the school. In some subjects, the curriculum design lacked clarity and remained underdeveloped.

Paragraphs 2(2)(e) and 2(2)(e)(i)–2(2)(e)(iii)

- At the time of the standard inspection in February 2023, inspectors found that leaders had prepared pupils poorly for their next steps in education, employment or training. In particular, pupils did not have access to independent and impartial careers advice and guidance.
- When the school's action plan was evaluated in July 2023, it was judged that leaders' actions, if implemented, would likely lead to this standard being met. Leaders had set out their intention to provide all current and future pupils with impartial careers advice. This was so that pupils could secure appropriate future destinations and make informed choices to fulfil their potential. In addition, leaders planned to audit their careers information, advice and guidance provision using the Gatsby benchmarks. They stated that they would create an action plan to meet all the Gatsby benchmarks in full. Leaders had also set out their plans to reflect elements of careers education in each subject-specific scheme of work.
- At the time of this progress monitoring inspection, there was evidence that these planned actions had been implemented in full. Pupils from the previous academic year had been supported to secure appropriate destinations. Independent and impartial careers advice had been secured. All current pupils had received careers guidance on a one-to-one basis.
- A Gatsby benchmark audit had taken place. An action plan had been produced based on the audit's findings, with ambitious but appropriate success criteria and timescales. Many actions had already been implemented and these had impacted positively on pupils' experiences. For example, pupils had visited local colleges and universities. There was evidence that pupils felt that the curriculum was more ambitious in English and mathematics and that the school was more aspirational for their future interests and next steps.

Paragraphs 3 and 3(a)–3(g)

- At the time of the standard inspection, inspectors found that staff lacked subject-specific knowledge and a sufficient understanding of pedagogical approaches. Assessment was not used effectively.

- When the school's action plan was evaluated in July 2023, it was judged that this standard was likely to be met. However, the proposed actions would need some modification. This was because although leaders had set out clear actions and timescales to support non-specialist staff, there was a lack of detail about how this would be implemented. More thought was required to ensure that non-specialist staff would have the knowledge, skills and understanding to deliver a range of subjects with confidence.
- At the time of this progress monitoring inspection, some improvements had been made in this standard. Two qualified teachers with specialist knowledge in English and mathematics had been appointed. These teachers had started to deliver training for staff about the use of consistent pedagogical approaches, including the effective use of assessment strategies in these subjects. These staff were also providing some quality assurance of teaching and learning strategies in all subjects. However, this work was in its early stages. Leaders had not demonstrated that all non-specialist staff in all subjects had been consistently supported to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding of how to deliver and assess the curriculum to sufficiently meet this standard.
- Some of the standards in this part remain unmet.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

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

- At the time of the standard inspection, these standards were unmet because leaders had failed to create a culture of safeguarding in the school. Leaders and staff lacked the training and appropriate knowledge to carry out their duties. They did not follow the government's statutory guidance. This put pupils' safety and welfare at risk.
- When the school's action plan was evaluated in July 2023, it was judged that these standards would be likely to be met if the actions were implemented. The proprietor had acted with appropriate urgency to identify relevant and appropriate actions, many of which had already been carried out. For example, the proprietor had actioned a swift review to identify and address deficiencies in safeguarding arrangements. The proprietor planned to revise safeguarding and welfare policies. The proprietor also planned to provide additional training, as well as more regular, context-specific safeguarding updates in team meetings.
- When the progress monitoring visit took place, there was evidence that these actions had been implemented as a priority with a positive impact. Safeguarding arrangements had been overhauled. All leaders and staff had received up-to-date and appropriate safeguarding training. They were knowledgeable about the government's statutory guidance. External scrutiny and support from the local authority were helping to ensure that the statutory guidance was implemented effectively. Staff had a shared understanding of how to report safeguarding and welfare concerns. These were acted on and recorded in a timely way. Weekly safeguarding team meetings were in place to monitor the welfare needs of pupils and to provide regular safeguarding updates for staff.
- The standards in this part are met.

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

Paragraphs 18(1), 18(2)–18(3) and 21(1)–21(3)(b)

- During the standard inspection, inspectors found that leaders had not ensured that all the appropriate checks had been made on staff's suitability to work with pupils. The single central record (SCR) was incomplete.
- When the school's action plan was evaluated in July 2023, it was judged that leaders were acting urgently and appropriately to address this standard and that it would likely be met if all the actions outlined were implemented. For example, the proprietor had ensured that all checks on staff had been swiftly audited, reviewed and updated. In addition, leaders planned to: set out more rigorous policies and procedures for staff recruitment; invest in a new human resources system for storing staff information and details of staff training; and ensure external scrutiny and auditing of the SCR on a regular basis.
- At the time of this progress monitoring visit, there was evidence that leaders had implemented all of their outlined actions swiftly and effectively. The SCR was complete and well managed. All required checks for all staff were in place and up to date. New, rigorous policies and procedures for safer recruitment were in place, as well as new human resources systems for maintaining staff records. The local authority had audited the SCR to ensure that it was compliant.
- The standards in this part are met.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraphs 34(1)–34(1)(c)

- At the time of the standard inspection, inspectors identified a number of unmet standards. They found that the proprietor and school leaders lacked the knowledge and understanding to ensure that the quality of education provided by the school was acceptable. Additionally, inspectors found that leaders had failed to fulfil their statutory safeguarding responsibilities and promote the well-being of pupils.
- When the school's action plan was evaluated in July 2023, it was found that these standards would be likely to be met, but that some actions would require modifications. Specifically, it was judged that leaders would need to indicate exactly which schemes of work they would be developing and how they would ensure that non-specialist staff received the necessary experience and expertise to design and deliver the schemes of work. In addition, leaders had set out their intention to set up a system to regularly check and monitor compliance with the standards so that these would be consistently met in the future.
- When the progress monitoring inspection took place, it was evident that leaders had successfully implemented some of their planned actions. These actions related to the suitability of staff and the welfare, health and safety of pupils. However, there are still a number of standards that remain unmet in relation to the quality of education that pupils receive. In addition, leaders' plans to implement systems that consistently monitor compliance with the standards are underdeveloped.
- Some of 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, 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	148758
DfE registration number	342/6006
Inspection number	10306087

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 special school
School status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	13 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	11
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	6
Proprietor	Jillian Fairclough
Headteacher	Jillian Fairclough
Annual fees (day pupils)	£45,000
Telephone number	07771 359 298
Website	www.thisismyeducation.org.uk
Email address	jillianfairclough@thisismyeducation.org.uk
Date of previous standard inspection	28 February to 2 March 2023

Information about this school

- The previous standard inspection took place from 28 February to 2 March 2023.
- Leaders use one unregistered alternative provider. The sole proprietor of This Is My Education – TIME Limited is also one of two directors for this alternative provider. The provision is called MPH training and it is located at the same address as the school. The address is: Logic House, 138 Central Street, St Helens WA10 1UD.
- This Is My Education – TIME caters for up to 40 pupils with SEND. Most pupils who attend the school have an EHC plan. The majority of these pupils have social, emotional and/or mental health needs.
- The proprietor is currently the acting headteacher of the school.

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 that the school has made in meeting the standards and other requirements that it was judged to not comply with at its previous inspection.
- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first progress monitoring inspection since the standard inspection in February 2023. It was conducted without notice.
- The Department for Education (DfE) required the school to prepare a statutory action plan. Ofsted evaluated this plan on 21 July 2023. The DfE accepted the action plan with modifications on 2 August 2023.
- During the inspection, the inspector met with the headteacher, senior leaders and staff.
- The inspector reviewed schemes of work and pupils' work. She also visited some lessons.
- The inspector spoke with a number of pupils about their learning and their wider experiences of school.
- The inspector examined documents, including the safeguarding policy, curriculum documents and documents relating to leadership and management.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: reviewed the SCR; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.

Inspection team

Amanda Downing, 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)(g) where the school has pupils above compulsory school age, a programme of activities which is appropriate to their needs;
 - 2(2)(h) that all pupils have the opportunity to learn and make progress.
- 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 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 requirements of the independent school standards

Part 1. Quality of education provided

- 2(1) The standard in this paragraph is met if-
 - 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;
 - 2(2)(i) effective preparation of pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British society.

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.

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

- 18(2) The standard in this paragraph is met if-
 - 18(2)(b) no such 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;
 - 18(2)(c) the proprietor carries out appropriate checks to confirm in respect of each such person-
 - 18(2)(c)(i) the person's identity;
 - 18(2)(c)(ii) the person's medical fitness;
 - 18(2)(c)(iii) the person's right to work in the United Kingdom; and
 - 18(2)(c)(iv) where appropriate, the person's qualifications;
 - 18(2)(d) the proprietor ensures that, where relevant to any such person, an enhanced criminal record check is made in respect of that person and an enhanced criminal record certificate is obtained before or as soon as practicable after that person's appointment;
 - 18(2)(e) in the case of any person for whom, by reason of that person living or having lived outside the United Kingdom, obtaining such a certificate is not sufficient to establish the person's suitability to work in a school, such further checks are made as the proprietor considers appropriate, having regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State; and

- 18(3) The checks referred to in sub-paragraphs (2)(c) and (except where sub-paragraph (4) applies) (2)(e) must be completed before a person's appointment.
- 21(1) The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor keeps a register which shows such of the information referred to in sub-paragraphs (3) to (7) as is applicable to the school in question.
- 21(3) The information referred to in this sub-paragraph is-
 - 21(3)(a) in relation to each member of staff ("S") appointed on or after 1st May 2007, whether-
 - 21(3)(a)(i) S's identity was checked;
 - 21(3)(a)(ii) a check was made to establish whether S is barred from regulated activity relating to children in accordance with section 3(2) of the 2006 Act;
 - 21(3)(a)(iii) a check was made to establish whether S 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;
 - 21(3)(a)(iv) checks were made to ensure, where appropriate, that S had the relevant qualifications;
 - 21(3)(a)(v) an enhanced criminal record certificate was obtained in respect of S;
 - 21(3)(a)(vi) checks were made pursuant to paragraph 18(2)(d);
 - 21(3)(a)(vii) a check of S's right to work in the United Kingdom was made; and
 - 21(3)(a)(viii) checks were made pursuant to paragraph 18(2)(e),
 - 21(3)(b) in relation to each member of staff ("S"), whether a check was made to establish whether S is subject to a prohibition order or an interim prohibition order, including the date on which such check was completed.

Part 8: Quality of leadership in and management of schools

- 34(1)(c) actively promote the well-being of pupils.

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