

Inspection of Manchester Mesivta School

Beechwood, Charlton Avenue, Prestwich, Greater Manchester M25 0PH

Inspection dates: 30 and 31 January 2024

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
The quality of education	Requires improvement
Behaviour and attitudes	Requires improvement
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Requires improvement
Sixth-form provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils, and students in the sixth form, enjoy coming to this school. They feel part of a tight-knit community. Pupils and staff said that there is a 'family' feel to the school. Adults care for pupils' well-being and safety. Pupils feel safe when they are in school. They know who to speak to if they are worried or upset.

The school has recently introduced a new code of conduct. This is understood by pupils. However, staff do not apply this new code consistently well. This means that some pupils do not behave as well as expected in some lessons and around the corridors at breaktimes and lunchtimes.

The school is ambitious for its pupils. It has high expectations of what pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), should achieve. Pupils in key stage 4 achieve well in public examinations. However, some pupils do not have the opportunity to learn a curriculum which is broad and balanced and in line with the national curriculum. This is due to weaknesses in the design and delivery of some aspects of the curriculum. As a result, pupils' achievement is hindered. In contrast, students in the sixth form achieve well.

Pupils, including those with SEND, benefit from a wide range of extra-curricular activities, including many trips to places outside of school. At lunchtimes, pupils across different year groups mix well together, either playing football in the playground or attending various clubs.

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

Recently, the school has reviewed its subject curriculums with the intention of making them broader and more ambitious. In some subjects, these changes have resulted in curriculums that are well designed and fulfil the expectations of the national curriculum. These changes help pupils to learn effectively. However, in other subjects, the scope of what pupils can learn is more limited. This is due to weaknesses in the overall design of the curriculum. This is especially the case at key stage 3. As a result, some pupils do not receive a fully rounded education nor do they learn all that they should to help them to be successful in their future learning.

In most subjects, teachers have strong subject knowledge. This is especially true in key stage 4 and in the sixth form. They explain concepts clearly to pupils. Teachers know their pupils well and adapt the teaching of subject content to the specific needs of their pupils. In discussions, pupils demonstrate that they have a secure grasp of subject knowledge. They can link their current learning with what they have learned in the past. However, this is not the case in other subjects. At times, teachers do not think carefully enough about the best way to help pupils learn the content of the curriculum. This prevents pupils from building a secure body of knowledge over time.

Teachers, including those who teach in the sixth form, make careful checks on pupils learning to spot misconceptions. Most pupils listen carefully to their teachers' advice and try hard to improve their work.

The school has recently acted to improve the behaviour of a small minority of pupils who disrupt the learning of others. Changes to the behaviour policy, and closer monitoring of pupils' behaviour, are helping to make a difference. Most pupils behave well in lessons and around the school site. However, the school's behaviour policy is not applied consistently well by all staff. Equally, the regular routines outlined in the new policy are not followed closely enough. As a result, a small minority of pupils continue, on occasions, to spoil the learning for the majority. Students in the sixth form behave well. They enjoy very good relationships with their teachers and display strong attitudes to learning.

The school has appropriate processes in place for tackling any concerns about pupils' attendance. The school knows its pupils and families well. This information is used effectively to understand the underlying causes of individual absences. The school then works thoughtfully with the pupil and the family to improve attendance. The school engages purposefully with other agencies if necessary.

The additional needs of pupils with SEND are identified accurately. Most staff are becoming increasingly confident in using the information that the school provides to support pupils with SEND to learn well. However, some teachers are in the early stages of knowing how to adapt learning to meet the needs of pupils with SEND. This means that the achievement of this group of pupils is variable across subjects and year groups.

Recently, the school has improved its systems to identify pupils who have gaps in their reading knowledge. These systems enable teachers to pinpoint and remedy the specific problems that individual pupils face with reading. Most pupils become more confident readers over time. The school also encourages all pupils to read widely and often. It has invested in new books for the library. Even so, pupils' desire to use the library is underdeveloped.

Pupils, including students in the sixth form, learn about pertinent issues in modern society, including citizenship and relationships. Their teachers draw upon resources from the secular and the Kodesh (religious) curriculums effectively. Pupils learn about different faiths and cultures. They are respectful and tolerant of others, regardless of difference. Students in the sixth form take on wider responsibilities such as leading prayers.

All pupils receive age-appropriate careers education, information, advice and guidance. Many past pupils visit the school to inspire current pupils about a wide range of careers. Pupils also receive independent careers advice. However, pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to learn about the full range of education and training options open to them, including technical education and apprenticeships.

Over the past few months there have been changes in governance with the appointment of a new chair and vice-chair of the governing body. Governors have a realistic view of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Staff appreciate the wide range of support that they receive from the school to ensure that change is managed well and does not have a negative impact on their well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, especially at key stage 3, some pupils do not have the opportunity to study the full range of topics as outlined in the national curriculum. Consequently, these pupils do not receive as broad and balanced an education as they should. This hinders their achievement. The school should ensure that the curriculum is designed to enable pupils to learn all that they should.
- The new behaviour policy is not followed consistently well by all staff. As a result, some pupils do not follow the code of conduct when in lessons or as they move around the school. This disrupts the learning of others. The school should ensure that staff are suitably equipped to follow the behaviour code so that pupils can learn without interruption.
- The school does not provide pupils with opportunities to learn about the full range of education and training options open to them, including technical education and apprenticeships. As a result, pupils cannot make fully informed choices when considering their post-16 and post-18 options. The school should ensure that pupils, and students in the sixth form, receive the full range of learning opportunities to which they are entitled.

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.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need](#)

of help and protection; pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's pupil premium funding (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	134195
Local authority	Bury
Inspection number	10314031
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Boys
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Boys
Number of pupils on the school roll	247
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	30
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Avrom Topperman
Headteacher	Zevi Katz
Website	www.mesivta.org.uk
Dates of previous inspection	4 and 5 May 2022, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is an Orthodox Jewish school. Its most recent section 48 inspection took place in March 2017. The school is awaiting confirmation about its next section 48 inspection.
- The current headteacher took up his post in January 2024.
- Since the previous inspection, the number of pupils on roll has increased.
- The school was given permission by the Department for Education from September 2023 to extend the age range of the school from 11 to 16 to 11 to 18.
- There have been recent changes to governance. This includes the appointment of a new chair and vice-chair of the governing body.
- The school does not make use of alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors spoke with the headteacher, other senior leaders, subject leaders, staff and members of the governing body, including the chair of the governing body.
- An inspector spoke with representatives of the local authority.
- Inspectors spoke to many pupils about their experience of school and their views on behaviour and bullying. Inspectors also observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and at breaktimes.
- Inspectors reviewed a wide range of evidence, including the school's improvement plans, minutes of governing body meetings and records of pupils' behaviour and attendance.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors reviewed the single central record; took into account 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.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in English, history and mathematics. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also spoke to leaders about the curriculum in some other subjects.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. They also considered the responses to Ofsted's online staff survey. No responses were received from Ofsted's online pupil survey.

Inspection team

Timothy Gartside, lead inspector

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