Inspection of Harpurhey Alternative Provision School

Christ Church Parish Hall, Water Street, Harpurhey, Manchester, Lancashire M9 5US

Inspection dates:	29 to 31 October 2024

Overall effectiveness	**Requires improvement**
The quality of education	**Requires improvement**
Behaviour and attitudes	**Good**
Personal development	**Requires improvement**
Leadership and management	**Requires improvement**
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Inadequate
Does the school meet the independent school standards?	**Yes**

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils benefit from the calm and respectful environment that exists at the school. They value the positive working relationships they have with staff, who care for them well. Most pupils live up to the high expectations the school has of their behaviour and conduct. Pupils are happy.

Most pupils settle in quickly. This is because the school works closely with pupils' home schools, along with parents and carers, to provide them with a robust and welcoming induction programme.

Although the school has high aspirations for pupils' achievement, some pupils do not achieve as well as they should. This is because the proprietor has not ensured that they benefit sufficiently well from the school's academic curriculum and personal development programme.

Pupils have few opportunities to cultivate their talents and interests. This means the school's provision for pupils' personal development is limited. Nevertheless, pupils enjoy visits to the community gym where they take part in fitness activities. During social time, pupils play well together. For example, they enjoy taking part in football. The school has organised visits to local places of interest, for example Manchester Museum and the Cathedral. Pupils take an active role in improving the school. For example, they have developed the school uniform and rewards system.

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

The proprietor has established an environment at the school where everyone is welcome. Pupils study a broad range of subjects. In Years 10 and 11, the school ensures that the curriculum pupils cover is well matched to each pupil's home school curriculum. This means these pupils are well prepared to sit examinations at the end of key stage 4. Most pupils achieve a suite of qualifications that helps them to move on to meaningful post-16 destinations, including further education or employment with training.

In some subjects, the key information pupils should learn has not been set out clearly. At times, this means teachers do not know how to build pupils' knowledge securely over time. Consequently, some pupils do not achieve as well as they should.

Staff make regular checks on what pupils know and remember. However, at times, staff do not promptly address the identified gaps and misconceptions that some pupils have. When this happens, some pupils move on to new learning before they are ready. This means these pupils do not build knowledge as securely as they should.

The school has appropriate arrangements in place to promptly identify the additional needs of pupils. It works closely with pupils' home schools, particularly at the point of transition, to build an accurate picture of each pupil's needs. Staff receive training

which helps them to provide effective support to most pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) so they can access the curriculum alongside their peers. However, some of these pupils do not achieve as well as they should. This is because they are adversely affected by the same issues with the quality of education that impact other pupils.

The school's reading programme is at an early stage of development. Most pupils have begun to read books that are well matched to their phonics knowledge and interests. A few pupils join the school with weak early reading skills. They do not receive the support they need to fill gaps in their phonics knowledge so they can catch up and read with confidence and fluency. This hinders their ability to access the wider curriculum successfully.

The books pupils read make a valuable contribution to their understanding of the world. For example, they learn about the differences that exist between people, how to stand up to prejudice and the impact of conflict on communities.

The school provides appropriate support to a small number of pupils who need help to manage their own behaviour. The school has successfully addressed the barriers that have prevented some pupils from attending school regularly. As a result, the number of pupils who are late or persistently absent from school has reduced.

The school's curriculums for personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE), relationships and sex education and health education, and careers education prepare pupils well for adulthood. For example, pupils learn about healthy relationships, how to care for their physical and mental health and the risks that exist in society, including online. Pupils benefit from independent careers advice and guidance.

The school does not provide some pupils with a sufficiently broad range of opportunities to stretch their talents and interests or to make a positive contribution to society. This limits some pupils from developing the confidence and resilience they need to overcome the challenges they may face in pursuit of their aspirations.

Staff appreciate the help they receive from the school to carry out their duties. For example, they value the time and the training they receive about how to manage behaviour and pupils' emerging needs. This supports their workload and well-being.

Although the proprietor and the school have not fully realised their ambitions for the quality of education and pupils' wider opportunities at the school, they are clear about what needs to be done. The proprietor and the governors have worked well together to set the strategic direction of the school, and they are beginning to hold leaders at all levels to account more effectively for the quality of education pupils receive. The proprietor ensures that the school meets its statutory responsibilities under schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010. The recent improvements to the quality of education, welfare and health and safety of pupils show that the proprietor and the governing body have the capacity to address the areas for improvement identified in this inspection.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve? (Information for the school and proprietor)

- In a few subjects, the school has not identified precisely what they want pupils to know and remember. As a result, pupils do not develop the breadth and depth of knowledge and understanding they should. The school should identify the key knowledge across all subjects that pupils should learn so they are well prepared for each stage of their education.
- On occasion, the school is not quick enough to rectify the gaps and misconceptions in some pupils' knowledge. This means these pupils move on to new learning before they are ready. The school should ensure staff address thoroughly pupils' misunderstandings before introducing new knowledge so they build their knowledge securely over time.
- Some pupils do not receive the support they need to quickly become confident and fluent readers. When this happens, these pupils struggle to access some parts of the school's curriculum. The school should implement a suitable reading catch up programme so pupils can achieve well.
- Some pupils are not provided with a broad enough range of opportunities to develop their talents and interests. At times, this hinders their wider development. The school should ensure that pupils routinely access a programme of activities that builds their confidence and resilience and helps them to fully achieve their aspirations.

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	10342100
Type of school	Other independent school
School category	Independent day school
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	23
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Michael Hill
Headteacher	Michael Hill
Annual fees (day pupils)	£13,995 to £29,995
Telephone number	07432 506 703
Website	www.haps.manchester.sch.uk
Email address	admin@haps.manchester.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	29 November to 1 December 2022

Information about this school

- The school operates from premises at Christ Church Parish Hall, Water Street, Harpurhey, Manchester, Lancashire, M9 5US. The school is registered to admit up to 25 pupils.
- The current proprietor has been in place since January 2024. The proprietor is also the headteacher.
- The school does not currently make use of any alternative provision.
- The previous standard inspection was 29 November to 1 December 2022. The Department for Education commissioned a progress monitoring inspection in September 2023 and in May 2024.

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.

Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.

The school meets the independent school standards. These are the requirements set out in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors spoke with the proprietor who is also the headteacher, the chair of governors, the designated safeguarding lead and other school leaders.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in the following subjects: English, mathematics and PSHE. They discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited some lessons, reviewed pupils' work and spoke with staff and pupils.
- Inspectors reviewed the curriculum plans and pupils' work for a range of other subjects.
- Inspectors met with leaders to discuss SEND, the curriculum, assessment, pupils' behaviour and the provision for pupils' wider development.
- There were no responses to Ofsted Parent View or Ofsted's online surveys for staff and pupils. Inspectors gathered the views of parents, staff and pupils throughout the inspection.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors reviewed the single central record; 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.

- Inspectors spoke with pupils about their experiences of school life. They observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and at break- and lunchtime.
- Inspectors spoke with staff about their workload and well-being.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation, including those relating to the independent school standards and the curriculum.
- The lead inspector made a tour of the school to check the suitability of the premises and accommodation against the relevant independent school standards.

Inspection team

Andy Cunningham, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Lindy Griffiths	Ofsted Inspector

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