

Greater Manchester Alternative Provision

87 Blandford Street, Ashton Under Lyne, Tameside OL6 7HW

Inspection date

12 November 2024

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

Paragraph 2(1) to 2(1)(b)(i), 2(2) and 2(2)(a)

- At the time of the progress monitoring inspection in February 2024, pupils continued to receive the narrow curriculum that had previously been identified at the standard inspection in September 2023. The school's curriculum policy did not make clear the range of subjects that pupils study at the school. The school had taken some small steps towards providing physical and creative education, for example by ordering a range of art materials and beginning to arrange physical education (PE) provision for pupils at a local youth centre. However, the school had not put in place plans and schemes of work for physical, technological, or creative education.
- When the school's action plan was evaluated in May 2024, it was judged that leaders' plans to improve the quality of education for pupils regarding the curriculum were not sufficient to meet this standard.
- The proprietor has now ensured that the curriculum policy reflects the full range of subjects that pupils study at the school. This includes the three curriculum areas that were missing at the time of the previous standard and progress monitoring inspections, namely technological, creative education, and PE.
- However, the curriculum policy is still not supported by appropriate schemes of work for each subject of study. There remains no scheme of work for information technology. There is just a broad outline of where this subject is covered in other curriculum subjects, for example internet research in English and history and online safety in personal, social, health and economic education. There are schemes of work for art, design, and PE, but these remain underdeveloped and do not fully reflect what is being taught. The school's curriculum design is incomplete, which makes it difficult for staff to fully consider the specific and individual needs of pupils, all of whom are pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Paragraph 3, 3(c), 3(d) and 3(g)

- At the time of the progress monitoring inspection, the school had made limited progress in addressing the previously unmet standard. In some subjects, teachers did not follow the curriculum as intended. Learning activities did not take sufficient account of pupils' needs and gaps in their learning.
- When the school's action plan was evaluated in February 2024, it was judged that the school's plans to improve curriculum delivery were not sufficient to meet this standard. This was also the case for the school's plans for identifying gaps in pupils' learning and, from these, devising appropriate activities using the intended curriculum.
- Although the proprietor and headteacher are qualified teachers, they are the only teachers in the school and teach most of the day. This places extra demands on them to run the school and to also access extra-curricular training. Leaders have made small steps in identifying gaps in pupils' learning, but it is not precise enough to enable them to match the curriculum that they offer to the individual needs of pupils. Curriculum plans and schemes of work to ensure that teachers deliver well-planned lessons have not been fully thought through and are still ad hoc.
- Overall, the independent school standards ('the standards') checked in this part remain unmet.

Part 3. Welfare, health, and safety of pupils

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

- The proprietor has ensured that there is a suitable safeguarding policy in place and that this is published on the school's website. This policy has regard to current statutory guidance.
- There are robust procedures in place for staff to report any concerns that they might have about a pupil's welfare. The school communicates effectively with other professionals to ensure that pupils are safe and well when not in school.
- Staff receive regular safeguarding training. This helps staff to recognise when pupils may be at risk from harm. The proprietor has not appointed any new staff since the inspection in September 2023. However, the proprietor understands and carries out the required checks on the suitability of staff whenever they are appointed.
- The standard in paragraph 7 and the requirement in paragraph 32(1)(c) continue to be met.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Paragraph 23(1), 23(1)(c)

- At the time of the progress monitoring inspection, the school had not arranged suitable showers or changing facilities for pupils who receive PE. At that time, the school had begun discussions with a local youth centre to make use of its facilities. However, these arrangements had not been finalised.
- When the school's action plan was evaluated in May 2024, it was judged that the school's plans to address the shower and changing facilities were insufficient to meet these standards.

- The school's pupils now visit a local youth centre for their weekly PE sessions. As part of this arrangement, the school has access to separate changing facilities for boys and girls as well as shower facilities.

Paragraph 29(1) and 29(1)(a)

- At the time of the progress monitoring inspection, the school's arrangements for PE were still not being provided in accordance with the school's curriculum. Moreover, the school had no scheme of work that outlined how PE was to be delivered.
- When the school's action plan was evaluated in May 2024, it was judged that the school's plans to address the lack of opportunity for PE in the curriculum and the lack of a scheme of work were insufficient to meet these standards.
- PE activities are now regularly timetabled in accordance with the school's curriculum requirements. PE sessions for pupils are held weekly at a local youth centre. Pupils talked enthusiastically about their learning in PE. The school has risk assessments in place to ensure pupils' safety when travelling to and from the centre and when using this facility.
- The standards checked in this part are met.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraph 34(1), 34(1)(a) to 34(1)(c)

- At the time of the last progress monitoring inspection, the proprietor had resolved the welfare, health, and safety issues. However, the proprietor had not enacted all of the school's plans for improvement. This included putting in place a management committee to hold the school to account. In addition, some premises issues remained.
- When the school's action plan was evaluated in May 2024, it was judged that the school's plans to improve leadership and management would not fully address the unmet standards.
- The proprietor and headteacher have made some progress to address the issues following the progress monitoring inspection in February 2024. They have ensured that pupils are offered the full breadth of the curriculum. To this end, pupils now receive PE, creative education and have some, although limited, experience of information technology. The school has addressed the unmet standards around premises and accommodation. They continue to promote the well-being of pupils.
- However, there are still some standards that remain unmet. These relate to the quality of education. As such, the proprietor does not demonstrate that it has the capacity or knowledge to meet the standards consistently.
- The school is in the process of setting up systems to ensure that it is regularly held accountable for its work, responsibilities, and the ongoing development of the school. This will include regular checks to ensure that the standards are met. However, this remains at an early stage of development.
- The requirements of this standard 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.

The school now meets the following requirements of the independent school standards

Part 1. Quality of education provided

- 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.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

- 23(1) Subject to sub-paragraph (2), the standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that—
 - 23(1)(c) suitable changing accommodation and showers are provided for pupils aged 11 years or over at the start of the school year who receive physical education.
- 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.

School details

Unique reference number	145290
DfE registration number	357/6005
Inspection number	10353384

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	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	13
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Greater Manchester Alternative Provision Limited
Chair	Cerise Pike
Headteacher	Shane Mahon
Annual fees (day pupils)	£10,775
Telephone number	0161 459 7447
Website	www.gma-provision@gmail.com
Email address	headteacher@gma-provision.co.uk
Date of previous standard inspection	12 to 14 September 2023

Information about this school

- The school's premises are at 87 Blandford Street, Ashton-under-Lyne OL6 7HW. The premises are located on the corner of Portland Street and Blandford Street. There is an independent nursery school operating from the same site called Children4Most. This nursery is separately registered and is not connected to the school.
- The school is registered to admit up to 30 pupils aged from 11 to 16. At the time of the inspection, there were 13 pupils on the school roll.
- The school provides short-term placements for pupils who have disengaged from education or are at risk of exclusion from education.

- The school does not make use of alternative provision.
- The proprietor is Greater Manchester Alternative Provision Limited. However, this is incorrectly recorded on the government's 'Get information about schools' (GIAS) website, as Cerise Pike. The proprietor was made aware of the error and will correct the information recorded.
- The school's previous standard inspection took place from 12 to 14 September 2023. A progress monitoring inspection, commissioned by the Department for Education (DfE), took place on 7 February 2024.

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 September 2023. It was conducted without notice.
- Following the standard inspection, the DfE required the school to prepare an action plan. This plan was statutory. Ofsted evaluated the plan on 1 November 2023. The DfE rejected this action plan.
- The first progress monitoring inspection was conducted on 7 February 2024. At this time, the school continued to not meet some of the standards. The DfE required a further action plan to be submitted. This plan was statutory. Ofsted evaluated the action plan on 1 May 2024. The DfE rejected this action plan.
- The inspector met with the headteacher and the proprietor, who are the only teachers at the school. The inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead.
- The inspector spoke with leaders about the curriculum. She looked at curriculum plans and at samples of pupils' work. The inspector spoke with staff, visited some lessons, and talked with a small number of pupils about their work and about wider school life.
- The inspector checked the school's premises and accommodation standards, as required, as part of this progress monitoring inspection.
- The inspection also considered the school's safeguarding arrangements, including the single central record of pre-employment checks and whether the school's safeguarding policy is available to parents and carers. These requirements of the independent school standards are met.

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.
- 3 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that the teaching at the school-
 - 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(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.

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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