

Safe Start School

1, 2, 4 & 5 Henry Square Chambers, Old Street, Ashton-under-Lyne, Tameside, Greater Manchester OL6 7ST

Unique reference number (URN): 147859

Progress monitoring inspection report:

10 February 2026

Overall outcome

The school meets all of the independent school standards that were checked during this inspection

At its most recent inspection, the school was judged to not meet all of the independent school standards.

The purpose of this 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.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

When we carry out progress monitoring inspections of independent schools, we report on the school's likely compliance with part 8 of the independent school standards first. Under part 8, the proprietor is required to ensure that the school meets all of the independent school standards consistently. The standard in part 8 is intended to ensure that the quality of leadership and management at the school is sufficient for that purpose.

At the time of the last standard inspection, inspectors found that the standards had not been consistently met. As a result, the proprietor could not demonstrate the knowledge and skills required to fulfil their responsibilities.

In the school's submitted action plan, it proposed actions to ensure structured professional learning, clearer leadership roles and the use of quality assurance activities to identify areas in which further support is required. In addition, the school proposed to ensure that they developed effective systems to monitor its performance more effectively against the independent school standards (the standards).

At this progress monitoring inspection, the school demonstrated clearly how these systems have been put into place. The proprietor has ensured that they have upskilled relevant

leaders in school to ensure that they have the skills necessary to ensure that the standards are met consistently. This includes training for the headteacher.

In addition, the school has put into place clear systems to evaluate the quality of its provision. It has ensured that any outcomes from this evaluation are linked more clearly to the staff's professional learning.

The proprietor has also ensured that the governing body has clear roles and responsibilities in relation to the school consistently meeting the standards. This includes checking on those standards more regularly, including a clear focus on how the school meets part 1 of the standards.

The proprietor is effectively ensuring that the school is implementing the actions identified in the DfE submitted action plan. As a result, several of the actions have been completed. Where actions are not yet fulfilled, the school is on track to meet these in the given timescales.

Part 1. Quality of education provided

Curriculum

At the time of the standard inspection in January 2025, inspectors found the work to develop the curriculum was very recent. In many subjects, the school had not thought clearly enough about what pupils should know and remember. In addition, inspectors found that the support for pupils to catch up in reading was undeveloped. Some pupils who found reading difficult did not get the support that they needed.

At the previous progress monitoring inspection, inspectors found that the school had redesigned its curriculum offer to pupils since the previous standard inspection. Through their evaluation, the school has now identified the important knowledge it wants pupils to learn while taking into consideration pupils' individual starting points. However, inspectors found that the curriculum was not being delivered effectively. In addition, the school had introduced a new approach to supporting pupils' reading ability. However, inspectors found that this was not being implemented consistently. This resulted in gaps remaining in pupils' phonics knowledge.

At this progress monitoring inspection, the inspector found that the school now implements its curriculum consistently. Following the previous progress monitoring inspection, the school reviewed its curriculum again and refocused it even further on pupils' individual starting points. Teachers now select activities that support the curriculum effectively. In part, this is because the professional learning they have received has strengthened their knowledge and understanding of how to deliver these subjects. Staff subject knowledge is more secure. This allows them to deliver the curriculum effectively and with greater consistency.

The school has now embedded its approach to improving pupils' reading ability. Teachers deliver reading lessons with greater consistency, which enables pupils to read with increasing accuracy and fluency. As a result, pupils can access texts of growing complexity in their lessons.

Teaching

At the last standard inspection, inspectors found that staff did not use the information they had about pupils' special educational needs and/or disabilities effectively enough to adapt their teaching.

At the previous progress monitoring inspection, inspectors found that staff's confidence remained low in how they could make adaptations which support pupils to access the intended curriculum. This means that some of those adaptations did not have the required impact that the school and teachers wanted. In some instances, some pupils struggled to access the curriculum.

At this progress monitoring inspection, the inspector found that the school has provided staff with sufficient training to ensure that adaptations made for pupils are more effective. Staff were more confident in using these strategies for different pupils in lessons. In addition, from the work seen in pupils' books, it was clear that pupils are accessing the curriculum more effectively. In lessons, pupils can use their prior learning when encountering new knowledge.

When delivering lessons, teachers use their knowledge of the curriculum to ensure that lessons are well planned. They use time within lessons effectively in order to support pupils' learning. As a result, pupils are acquiring new knowledge and make effective progress from their individual starting points.

Assessment

At the time of the standard inspection in January 2025, inspectors identified that the school did not use assessment strategies well enough to shape teaching around pupils' misconceptions. As a result, gaps in pupils' learning persisted.

At the previous progress monitoring inspection, inspectors found that teachers still did not use assessment information carefully enough to identify gaps in pupils' understanding or whether pupils had retained prior learning.

At this progress monitoring inspection, the inspector found that assessment information was used more effectively. For example, in lessons, teachers reshape learning more consistently based on their assessment of pupils' learning. This means that the work teachers provide to pupils is more closely matched to their knowledge and understanding.

About this inspection

Inspectors carried out this inspection under sections 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, at the request of the registration authority for independent schools. The inspector checked the school's compliance with the independent school standards. These are the requirements set out in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

Following our renewed inspection framework, all inspections are now led by His Majesty's Inspectors (HMIs) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMIs.

The inspector spoke with the proprietor, director and headteacher during the inspection. He also visited lessons with the headteacher and spoke to pupils about their experiences at the school. He also considered a range of documentation, including the school's submitted action plan.

The inspector 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.

This was the school's second progress monitoring inspection since the school's standard inspection in January 2025. The previous progress monitoring inspection took place in October 2025.

The Department for Education required the school to submit an action plan following the previous progress monitoring inspection to illustrate how it would meet the previously unmet standards identified at its previous standard inspection. This was evaluated in January 2026 and was accepted by the DfE.

Lead inspector

Stuart Perkins	His Majesty's Inspector
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About this school

Proprietor	Safestart School Ltd
Headteacher	Miss Kate Collins
Type of school	Other Independent School
Capacity	38
Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age on roll	27

Number of part-time pupils of compulsory school age on roll	0
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Annual fees for day pupils	£34,200 to £48,000
Email address	admin@safestartschooltameside.com

Annex. Compliance with regulatory requirements

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(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 subparagraph (2) is drawn up and implemented effectively; and

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

2(2)(b) that pupils acquire speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills;

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.

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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