

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 1231
www.gov.uk/ofsted



20 September 2022

John Dalziel
Executive Headteacher
The King David High School
Eaton Road
Crumpsall
Manchester
M8 5DY

Dear Mr Dalziel

Special measures monitoring inspection of The King David High School

Following my visit with Pippa Jackson-Maitland, Her Majesty's Inspector, to your school on 12 and 13 July, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings. Thank you for the help you gave during the inspection and for the time you made available to discuss the actions that have been taken since the school's most recent section 5 inspection.

The inspection was the first monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection that took place in November 2021. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The monitoring inspection report is attached.

This was the second routine inspection the school has received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. We discussed the ongoing impact of the pandemic with you and have taken that into account in our evaluation.

Having considered the evidence, I am of the opinion that at this time:

The school continues to be inadequate. Leaders and those responsible for governance are not taking effective action towards the removal of special measures.

The school's action plan is not fit for purpose.

Having considered the evidence, I strongly recommend that the school does not seek to appoint early career teachers.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the board of trustees, the regional schools' commissioner and the director of children's services for Manchester. This letter will be published on the Ofsted reports website.

Yours sincerely

Tim Hill
Her Majesty's Inspector

Report on the first monitoring inspection on 12 July 2022 and 13 July 2022

Context

A new assistant headteacher has recently been appointed who will take up post in September 2022. School leaders report that there were high levels of staff absence during the spring term 2022 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. At the time of the inspection, there were several teachers absent due to COVID-19. These absences were covered by supply staff or cover supervisors.

The progress made towards the removal of special measures

There was a reluctance on the part of the governors to accept some of the findings from the previous inspection. This has led to a delay in governors and senior leaders taking the swift action necessary to begin addressing the school's weaknesses. More recently, leaders have started to make some positive changes to practice, but the impact of this work is limited because these changes are so new. Consequently, the school is not as far forward on its improvement journey as it should be. Previously identified weaknesses remain, including those related to safeguarding and governance.

It is of concern that, as well as delays in improving the school, there has been a deterioration in pupils' behaviour since the time of the last inspection. Staff have also raised concerns about pupils' behaviour. Leaders recognise that there are inconsistencies in the management of pupils' behaviour. They have taken some early action to address these concerns but more needs to be done to ensure that behaviour improves.

Safeguarding arrangements remain ineffective. While leaders have taken steps to improve the systems to manage safeguarding concerns, not all staff take on board their responsibilities fully. For example, many pupils, and students in the sixth form, still feel that some staff do not take worries about their mental health seriously enough. When concerns are reported, the safeguarding team usually respond to these quickly. However, a few staff are not as professionally curious and vigilant as they should be, and, therefore, some concerns go unreported.

Leaders have taken action to promote everyone's awareness of safeguarding, but there is further work to do. Training has helped to improve the staff's understanding, although gaps in their knowledge of safeguarding still exist. Leaders' risk assessments continue to be too generic and do not adequately assess risk. Leaders commissioned a recent local authority safeguarding review, although they have not used the findings to set out a course of improvement. This has left safeguarding leaders without a clear plan of action to bring about the necessary improvements needed to keep pupils and students safe.

The recently formed senior leadership team are more accepting of the previous inspection findings. They share a common goal to addressing the issues identified. In recent months, senior leaders have commissioned several reviews to get a baseline view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. These reviews have enabled leaders to gain a more accurate

view of the specific shortcomings that exist. However, leaders' commitment to addressing weaknesses is hindered because the school's improvement plan does not set out, sufficiently well, a set of actions to bring about improvement. There are no clearly defined milestones and success criteria. This makes it difficult to evaluate the impact of improvement actions. Senior leaders are in the process of restructuring leadership responsibilities, so that middle leaders can more effectively carry out their responsibilities. For instance, planned changes to pastoral leadership are scheduled to be implemented in the new academic year. The delay in organising these changes has slowed the school's progress in bringing about much needed improvements.

The governing body has not ensured that there are appropriate governance structures in place to hold leaders to account and closely monitor the school's progress. Evidence from governors' minutes indicates that the most crucial questions to promote improvement are not being asked of leaders. As a result, governors' oversight of important aspects of the school's work, such as safeguarding, is not as strong as it should be. However, it is encouraging that the governing body recently commissioned a review of governance. Some of the emerging findings have been shared and change is underway. For example, the governing body has already revised and rationalised its committee structure. That said, governors are currently unclear about the specific actions needed to improve governance and how their success will be evaluated.

Some governors, including the chair of the governing body, devote a substantial amount of time to the school. They do this with the best of intentions. However, this means that they are too involved in the internal organisation and management of the school. This is hampering the school's journey of improvement because it is adding, unnecessarily, to leaders' workload. This is often through an extra and unneeded layer of decision-making about matters that should be delegated to senior school leaders. More recently, governors have started to take a step back and allow leaders to take more responsibility for day-to-day operational matters, such as timetabling.

The current timetabling arrangements in the Yavneh Girls section remain discriminatory on the grounds of sex because pupils who attend Yavneh Girls are still unable to mix with other pupils (girls or boys), whereas pupils who attend Yavneh Boys can mix socially with other pupils (boys and girls) outside lessons. However, leaders have put plans in place to change this from the new academic year when boys and girls in all three sections of the school will have their extra-curricular activities at the same time. If the leaders' plan is implemented, this should mean that all pupils, including those in Yavneh Girls, get an equitable offer from September 2022. The governing body believes that, once the timetable change is made, the school will fulfil its statutory duties under the Equality Act 2010. Even so, beyond these plans for the future, there was little evidence of change at the time of the inspection.

Pupils' and students' lived experience of careers advice is less favourable than leaders believe. Despite leaders' positive evaluation of careers education against the Gatsby Benchmarks, there is not a well-thought-out, comprehensive programme for careers education across the school. Students in the sixth form report that the personalised

advice that they receive is variable and not always helpful. Leaders have tried to make stronger links between careers and learning in the different curriculum subjects, although this is not consistently happening in practice. Further changes to careers education are planned to go ahead from the new academic year, including extending the careers fair experience to a wider range of year groups.

Leaders have taken some steps towards improving the school's 'learning for life' curriculum. For example, leaders have engaged with an external agency to help evaluate the current provision and teachers have benefited from personal, social, health and economic education training on the topics that they identified as being those they were least confident teaching. The 'learning for life' curriculum now includes a suitable range of content, although some topics are not covered in sufficient depth. In addition, the curriculum is not as responsive as it needs to be in tackling emerging issues, such as the increase in the number of young people vaping. Through staff training, leaders are starting to iron out inconsistencies in how the 'learning for life' curriculum is taught. Leaders have plans to create a team of more specialist teachers for the delivery of 'learning for life' lessons.

Leaders have taken the necessary action to review and update the key stage 3 curriculum for the next academic year. The planned changes are designed to ensure that all pupils in key stage 3 experience a full and varied curriculum from next academic year, enabling them to make better informed decisions about their key stage 4 GCSE options. However, leaders have not fully considered the gaps in pupils' knowledge, particularly for those in Year 9, and the impact this may have on learning new concepts at key stage 4.

Priorities for further improvement

- Leaders should accelerate their work to improve the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements, so that all pupils are safe.
- Leaders should take immediate action to halt the decline in pupils' behaviour. Leaders should review the school's behaviour management policy, its implementation and effectiveness, making changes as necessary.

Additional support

School leaders have recently commissioned external reviews by some external organisations relating to key aspects of the school's work, including special educational needs and governance.

Evidence

The inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised documents, including those related to safeguarding and behaviour, and met with the executive headteacher and all other members of the school's senior leadership team, a group of staff, representatives of those responsible for governance, including the chair of the governing body, and several groups

of pupils and students from the sixth form. Inspectors also met with a representative of the local authority who is working closely with the school.