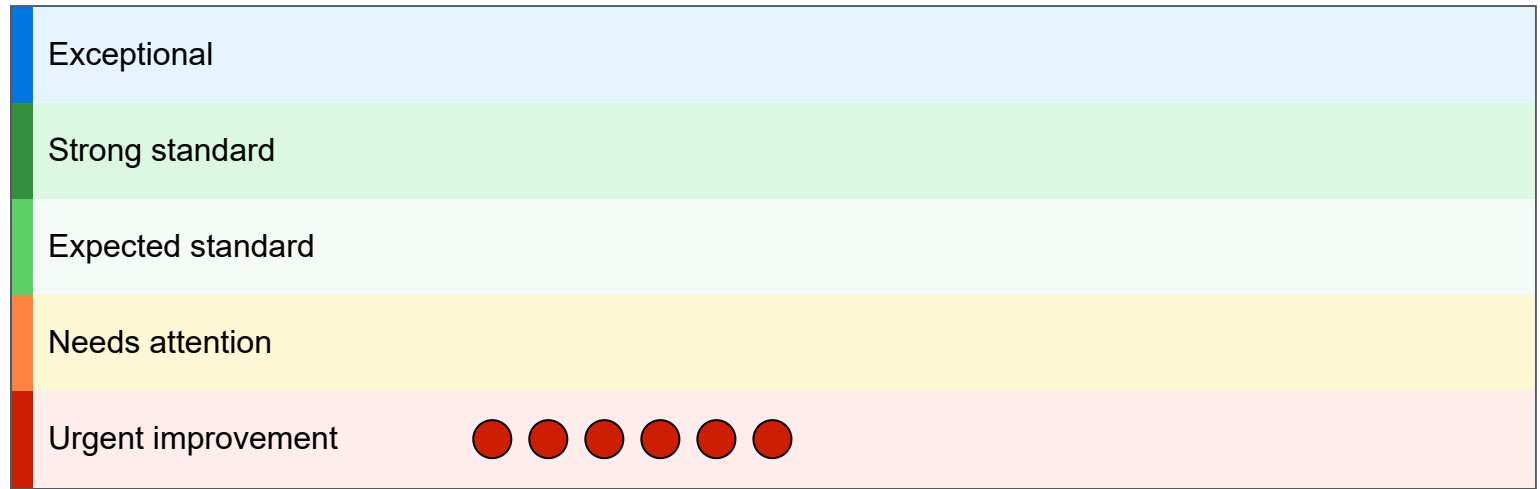


Supreme Start Ltd

Address: Unit 7, Roman Road, Royton, Oldham, OL2 5PJ

Unique reference number (URN): 151243

Inspection report: 27 January 2026



⊗ Safeguarding standards not met

Leaders have not ensured that there is an open and positive safeguarding culture. This puts pupils at significant risk of harm. Therefore, standard 7 of the independent school standards is not met.

Leaders' failures to implement appropriate lone-working practices and policies put pupils and staff at continual risk of physical and emotional harm. For example, staff are often left by themselves to deal with pupils' physical outbursts. Staff are often unsure of how to seek or receive the support of their colleagues when intervening with or restraining pupils who are struggling with their emotions. Adults often lack the knowledge and expertise needed to deal with these situations safely and effectively. At times, their inexperience and actions cause unnecessary escalations in pupils' behaviours which negatively affects pupils' emotional wellbeing.

Over time, leaders' actions in response to concerns about pupils' welfare have not been robust. This means that some vulnerable pupils have not had timely referrals made to other agencies on their behalf. Furthermore, leaders' recordkeeping of safeguarding concerns and incidents in school is fundamentally weak. This includes records relating to how leaders follow up safeguarding concerns.

The proprietor has failed to ensure that safeguarding policies, systems and processes are effective and kept under continual review. For example, the current safeguarding policy is inaccurate and refers to out-of-date statutory guidance.

How we evaluate safeguarding

When we inspect schools for safeguarding, they can have the following outcomes:

- Met: The school has an open and positive culture of safeguarding. All legal requirements are met.
- Not met: The school has not created an open and positive culture of safeguarding. Not all legal requirements are met.
- Insufficient evidence: Inspectors were unable to gather sufficient evidence to judge whether safeguarding standards are met.

Urgent improvement ●

Achievement

Urgent improvement ●

Pupils do not achieve well. For too long, they have experienced a curriculum that is poorly conceived and has prevented them from being successful. The school does not consider pupils' complex special educational needs and/or disabilities carefully enough when designing and delivering new learning. Too often, the school does not help pupils to manage their emotions, leading to significant disruptions to their daily education. This further hampers pupils' achievements.

In many cases, pupils make poor progress from their starting points towards the targets in their education, health and care plans. Gaps in their knowledge are not closing at an acceptable rate. Pupils are poorly prepared for the next stage of their education.

Attendance and behaviour

Urgent improvement ●

The school has not instilled a culture of high expectations for attendance. Too often, leaders have not challenged poor attendance or worked to remove the barriers causing it. Until very recently, attendance registers have been recorded incorrectly, making them unreliable. Interim leaders have started to address the many causes of pupils' absences. However, a residual culture of low expectations and poor systems, combined with a weak educational offer, mean that some families often choose to not send their children to school. Consequently, these pupils miss out on crucial learning.

Pupils struggle unduly to manage their emotions and behave well. Their complex special educational needs and/or disabilities make emotional regulation challenging for some. While it is rare for them to experience deliberate bullying or harassment, even when other pupils' feelings are heightened, they frequently experience disruptive schooling. Too often, the school environment and the actions of staff further exacerbate pupils' emotional difficulties. Congested, noisy classrooms quickly overstimulate pupils when they become distressed. Staff frequently fail to de-escalate or manage these situations, including aggressive or violent incidents, because they lack the necessary expertise. They rely too heavily on restrictive physical intervention that is not used consistently well. These practices create an unsettled environment where pupils struggle to feel safe and secure.

Curriculum and teaching

Urgent improvement ●

The school has failed to design a curriculum that is suitable and coherent. Until very recently, the school's curriculum lacked ambition, content and structure. As a result, pupils did not build their knowledge securely and incrementally as they worked towards their individual learning goals. Interim leaders have started to address the systematic failings in teaching and the curriculum. Very recently, they have begun to introduce a new curriculum framework. However, it is far too soon to see any meaningful improvements in the quality of the education that pupils receive, which largely continues to be poor.

Staff lack the subject knowledge, expertise and capacity to deliver the curriculum effectively. They do not consider pupils' prior knowledge or varied starting points properly when designing learning. They do not check pupils' understanding systematically or correct basic errors. Pupils, many with complex needs, often struggle to engage with learning that is ill-conceived and poorly delivered. To compound matters, the classroom environment hinders pupils in accessing their learning successfully.

Support to secure pupils' base knowledge in reading, writing and mathematics is limited. While leaders have introduced new phonics and mathematics programmes recently, these programmes are far from being delivered well and embedded.

Inclusion

Urgent improvement ●

The school has not supported disadvantaged pupils, including those with complex special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), effectively for a significant amount of time. These pupils suffer from a badly designed curriculum. Staff have not had sufficient training or guidance about how to help these pupils succeed. Consequently, learning activities are not tailored well to pupils' individual needs. Planned activities do not pay due regard to important content in pupils' education, health and care (EHC) plans.

All pupils join the school with complex SEND, supported by an EHC plan. Until recently, the school did not use initial information available about pupils well to further assess their needs and reduce barriers to learning. Similarly, the school has not worked well with parents and carers, or professionals, to shape pupils' support. Consequently, many pupils make poor transitions into the school and struggle to access their education.

A substantial amount of work is needed to rectify large-scale historic shortcomings in the school's provision for vulnerable pupils. Interim leaders have identified many deficiencies in the provision. This includes the need for better oversight and monitoring of interventions and personalised support to assist pupils, and ensuring that the accessibility plan is implemented effectively. However, leaders' actions to rectify these weaknesses are only in the earliest stages of development.

Leadership and governance

Urgent improvement ●

The school, including the proprietor, has overseen a period of systemic failures. Over time, the proprietor has not fulfilled its responsibilities to ensure that pupils are safe, well taught and successful. As a result, the proprietor does not ensure that pupils are well prepared for their next steps.

A lack of accountability has allowed a culture of low expectations to take root across many aspects of the school's provision. Significant instability in school leadership and staff has made this situation even worse. Although interim leaders have begun to identify the most pressing issues, long-standing poor practices and minimal capacity elsewhere in the school continue to hamper their ability to bring about swift change.

Staff report positively about leaders' actions to support their workload and wellbeing. However, leaders have consistently failed to meet staff's professional development needs. They have not equipped staff to work with pupils with significant needs or to deliver curriculums that require high levels of personalisation. This failure has had a hugely detrimental impact on pupils' outcomes.

The school has no structures in place to hold leaders to account and to help prevent non-compliance with the independent school standards (ISS) from occurring. This means that the proprietor's failure in many of its fundamental duties go unchecked. As a result, the ISS relating to pupils' welfare and supervision are unmet. For example, the proprietor has not ensured that there are robust risk assessments in place or suitable fire-safety practices. Additionally, the proprietor has introduced policies that sometimes do not reflect the uniqueness of the school and it has not made the school's annual complaints information

available. These administrative shortcomings prevent the school from functioning as a transparent and well-run institution.

Personal development and wellbeing

Urgent improvement ●

The school has not ensured that the curriculum for personal, social, health and economic education is broad or balanced. It does not support pupils' character development effectively or prepare them well for their future. Similarly, the personal development programme is limited in scope and poorly designed. Together, the school's work to promote pupils' wider development, character and wellbeing has fallen far short of what they need. Interim leaders have identified these issues and changes are in progress. However, it is too soon to see any meaningful impact of the new approaches recently introduced.

The relationships and sex education and health education programme is not tailored suitably to pupils' special educational needs and/or disabilities. Pupils are not taught effectively about specific risks to their wellbeing. This failure is particularly acute for disadvantaged pupils who do not benefit from targeted support to help them understand healthy boundaries or to build their resilience.

Pupils do not experience a wide, rich range of experiences. Very recently, leaders have begun to provide some opportunities. For instance, pupils enjoyed a visit from firefighters with their fire engine, as well as trips to a multi-sensory activity centre and a working farm.

The school's approaches to supporting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development have typically been weak, with a lack of clear intent. Opportunities for pupils to understand appropriate choices and respect others have often been executed poorly. There is now a concerted effort on the part of new leaders to promote British values more deliberately. While this signals a positive step, these intentions are embryonic and they need time to embed fully before any evidence of impact can be seen.

What it's like to be a pupil at this school

Pupils are not safe at this school. Staff do not have the expertise to support pupils or to manage pupils' behaviours or conflicts effectively. As a result, incidents of challenging behaviour frequently escalate. In turn, this leads to an overreliance and overuse of restrictive physical interventions, which places pupils under further duress. Although pupils seldom experience bullying, they often find school a stressful and confusing place to be. Many pupils find classrooms are too congested, which causes them to feel overstimulated or distressed. This creates an environment for pupils that is both unstable and unpredictable. It means some families feel their children are better off not going to school, which then negatively impacts pupils' attendance and wellbeing.

Pupils do not learn as well as they should. For a long time, the curriculum has been organised poorly, which has left pupils with significant gaps in their knowledge. For many, school has been a place where they have struggled rather than thrived. Pupils are not making the progress that they are capable of, and this is leaving them poorly prepared for their future. Barriers to learning for pupils, all of whom have significant special educational

needs and/or disabilities, are not reduced effectively. Teaching is not personalised sufficiently to pupils' individual needs and starting points. This has further stunted their personal and academic progress.

Recently, there have been some small signs of improvement. Pupils have started to enjoy new experiences that were not available to them before. They value the recent opportunities to visit the local library and have outdoor physical education in the nearby park. These outings, along with new swimming lessons, are high points in their week. However, these experiences are very new. For most of their time at the school, pupils have missed out on the rich and varied education that they deserve.

Next steps

- The proprietor must secure a robust culture of safeguarding. This culture must ensure appropriate vigilance to the risks faced by vulnerable pupils, be underpinned by consistently effective practice and include rigorous oversight by leaders.
 - Leaders must provide staff with the specific guidance and training required to support pupils' emotional and behavioural needs effectively. This includes eradicating the overuse and overreliance on restrictive physical interventions.
 - Leaders must ensure that the learning environment is conducive to pupils' sensory and physical needs, so that pupils feel secure and can access their education effectively.
 - Leaders must establish and maintain high expectations for pupils' attendance. This includes developing robust attendance systems and procedures to monitor and tackle absenteeism, and to record attendance accurately.
 - Leaders must ensure that the curriculum is developed fully and tailored sufficiently to meet the complex needs of the pupils it serves.
 - Leaders must provide a coherent and well-sequenced personal development programme that is designed to meet the specific needs of pupils and prepare them well for the future.
 - Leaders must implement robust assessment approaches that identify and help to close gaps in pupils' knowledge, so that they can achieve well from their individual starting points.
 - Leaders must ensure that all staff have the necessary skills and expertise to deliver high-quality learning and academic support for pupils with complex needs.
 - The proprietor must acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to maintain ongoing and consistent compliance with all of the independent school standards (ISS). It should take immediate action to address the unmet ISS.
-

About this inspection

Inspectors carried out this standard inspection under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008 and checked the school's compliance with the independent school standards (the ISS). 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 (HMI) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMIs.

Inspectors spoke with the headteacher, who is also the special educational needs and disabilities coordinator, and other senior leaders during the inspection. The lead inspector contacted representatives of each local authority who have placed pupils at this school. He also spoke with the proprietor and their representatives, including an external consultant.

Inspectors visited lessons, spoke with pupils and looked at curriculum information and examples of pupils' work. They reviewed school documents that included: the school's self-evaluation document, the school development plan and external quality assurance visit records. Inspectors also reviewed other documents to evaluate the school's ongoing compliance with the ISS. Although requested a number of times, inspectors were not given full and complete access to the school's historic complaint records.

The lead inspector also made a tour of the school to consider the suitability of the premises.

Inspectors considered the staff's responses to Ofsted's online survey. There were no responses to Ofsted's online surveys for pupils. Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments.

The Department for Education (DfE) requested that several themes arising from recent complaints submitted to them were considered as part of this inspection. The information in these complaints related to concerns about pupils' safety and welfare, behavioural standards at the school, staff's conduct and expertise, the overall quality of education, and how well pupils' special educational needs and/or disabilities are understood and catered for.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school is a special school that caters for pupils with education, health and care plans with their primary identified need as either social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) or autism. Recently, the school has decided to focus its provision to cater solely for pupils with autism. The school is currently liaising with commissioning local authorities to identify more appropriate settings for the few pupils on roll whose primary identified need is SEMH.

The school does not use any alternative provision.

The school operates from Unit 7, Roman Road, Royton, Oldham OL2 5PJ.

The school has experienced significant and ongoing turbulence in leadership and staffing since opening in September 2024. Many of the current teaching and support staff have only been appointed this academic year. There have been three different headteachers in the last 18 months. The interim headteacher that was in post during this inspection is currently employed through an ongoing temporary agreement via a third-party. A deputy headteacher was appointed in November 2025.

The school is registered to admit 20 pupils. At the time of the inspection, 15 pupils were on roll at the school.

This is the school's first standard inspection since it registered its opening with the DfE on 24 September 2024.

The proprietor of this school is Supreme Start Limited. Aneela Sattar is the sole director of the proprietor body.

The school's current fee range is £60,000 to £95,000 for day pupils. However, the admissions policy reflected some discrepancies in the school's fee structure.

The email address of the school is info@supreme-start.com.

Interim headteacher: Rachael Martin

Independent school standards

Independent school standards are either met or not met for each category.

1. Quality of education provided

Standards not met

The following standards have not been met:

Paragraph 2(1)

The standard in this paragraph is met if–

- (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
- (b) the written policy, plans and schemes of work–
 - (i) take into account the ages, aptitudes and needs of all pupils, including those pupils with an EHC plan; and

Paragraph 2(2)

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

- (h) that all pupils have the opportunity to learn and make progress; and

Paragraph 2A(1)

The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor–

- (e) makes and keeps up to date a separate written statement of its policy with regard to the provision of education as required by each of paragraphs (a) and (b),
- (f) consults parents of registered pupils at the school before making or revising a statement under sub-paragraph (e), and
- (g) publishes a copy of the statement on a website and provides a copy of the statement free of charge to anyone who asks for one.

Paragraph 3

The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that the teaching at the school–

- (a) enables pupils to acquire new knowledge and make good progress according to their ability so that they increase their understanding and develop their skills in the subjects taught;
 - (b) fosters in pupils self-motivation, the application of intellectual, physical and creative effort, interest in their work and the ability to think and learn for themselves;
 - (c) involves well planned lessons and effective teaching methods, activities and management of class time;
 - (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;
 - (e) demonstrates good knowledge and understanding of the subject matter being taught;
 - (f) utilises effectively classroom resources of a good quality, quantity and range;
 - (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;
 - (h) utilises effective strategies for managing behaviour and encouraging pupils to act responsibly;
-

2. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

Standards not met

The following standards have not been met:

Paragraph 5

The standard about the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils at the school is met if the proprietor–

- (b) ensures that principles are actively promoted which–
 - (i) enable pupils to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence;
 - (iii) encourage pupils to accept responsibility for their behaviour, show initiative and understand how they can contribute positively to the lives of those living and working in the locality in which the school is situated and to society more widely;
-

3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Standards not met

The following standards have not been met:

Paragraph 7

The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that–

- (a)** arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school; and
- (b)** such arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State.

Paragraph 9

The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor promotes good behaviour amongst pupils by ensuring that–

- (b)** the policy is implemented effectively; and
- (c)** a record is kept of the sanctions imposed upon pupils for serious misbehaviour.

Paragraph 11

The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that relevant health and safety laws are complied with by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written health and safety policy.

Paragraph 12

The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005[1].

Paragraph 13

The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that first aid is administered in a timely and competent manner by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written first aid policy.

Paragraph 14

The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that pupils are properly supervised through the appropriate deployment of school staff.

Paragraph 15

The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that an admission and attendance register is maintained in accordance with the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024.

Paragraph 16

The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that–

- (a)** the welfare of pupils at the school is safeguarded and promoted by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written risk assessment policy; and
- (b)** appropriate action is taken to reduce risks that are identified.

4. Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

Standards met

All standards have been met.

5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Standards not met

The following standards have not been met:

Paragraph 25

The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that the school premises and the accommodation and facilities provided therein are maintained to a standard such that, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of pupils are ensured.

Paragraph 26

The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that the acoustic conditions and sound insulation of each room or other space are suitable, having regard to the nature of the activities which normally take place therein.

6. Provision of information

Standards not met

The following standards have not been met:

Paragraph 32(1)

The standard about the provision of information by the school is met if the proprietor ensures that–

(b) the information specified in sub-paragraph (3) is made available to parents of pupils and parents of prospective pupils and, on request, to the Chief Inspector, the Secretary of State or an independent inspectorate;

Paragraph 32(3)

The information specified in this sub-paragraph is–

(f) details of the complaints procedure referred to in paragraph 33, and the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year; and

7. Manner in which complaints are handled

Standards not met

The following standards have not been met:

Paragraph 33

The standard about the manner in which complaints are handled is met if the proprietor ensures that a complaints procedure is drawn up and effectively implemented which deals with the handling of complaints from parents of pupils and which–

- (i) provides for the panel to make findings and recommendations and stipulates that a copy of those findings and recommendations is–
 - (ii) available for inspection on the school premises by the proprietor and the head teacher;
- (j) provides for a written record to be kept of all complaints that are made in accordance with sub-paragraph (e) and–
 - (i) whether they are resolved following a formal procedure, or proceed to a panel hearing; and
 - (ii) action taken by the school as a result of those complaints (regardless of whether they are upheld); and
- (k) provides that correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints are to be kept confidential except where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 109 of the 2008 Act requests access to them.

8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Standards not met

The following standards have not been met:

Paragraph 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–

- (a) demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school standards are met consistently;
- (b) fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently; and
- (c) actively promote the wellbeing of pupils.

Lead inspector:

David Spruce, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspector:

Phillip Walmsley, Ofsted Inspector

Facts and figures used on inspection

This data was available to the inspector at the time of the inspection.

 This data is from 27 January 2026

Total pupils

15

School capacity

20

Pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan

15

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

15

Our grades explained

Exceptional ●

Practice is exceptional: of the highest standard nationally. Other schools can learn from it.

Strong standard ●

The school reaches a strong standard. Leaders are working above the standard expected of them.

Expected standard ●

The school is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standard set out in statutory and non-statutory legislation and the professional standards expected of them.

Needs attention ●

The expected standards are not met but leaders are likely able to make the necessary improvements.

Urgent improvement ●

The school needs to make urgent improvements to provide the expected standard of education and/or care.

Insufficient evidence

Inspectors were unable to gather reliable enough evidence to grade an evaluation area. This is rare and normally only happens if there are no pupils on roll at the school.

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

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