

Chances Mentoring

Unit 3 Whitegate Business Centre, Jardine Way, Oldham, Lancashire OL9 9JT

Inspection date

5 November 2025

Overall outcome

The school is likely to meet the relevant independent school standards if the material change relating to the school is implemented

Main inspection findings

Part 1. Quality of education provided

Paragraphs 2(1) to 2(1)(b)(i), 2(2)(h), 3, 3(c), 3(d)

- The school has ensured that the curriculum is designed and adapted well to suit the aptitudes and needs of all pupils.
- The proprietor has ensured that there is a wide range of strategies in place to support all aspects of pupils' welfare and academic development. This is especially true for those pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan, where staff focus on pupils' specific needs to help them to learn effectively.
- The curriculum is designed well to build on pupils' prior learning. Teachers are well informed about individual pupils' prior attainment and plan lessons that are focused on catering for pupils' needs. Teachers use time well to settle pupils so that they are ready for learning. Pupils can recall their recent learning well. Their work demonstrates how they make positive progress through the curriculum. Pupils have opportunities to gain short-term entry level unit awards as well as studying for a range of qualifications up to GCSE level.
- The proprietor has ensured that the independent school standards (the standards) in this part are likely to be met.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

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

- There is a clear safeguarding policy in place that offers guidance for staff on how to handle any safeguarding concerns. Staff are provided with a range of training opportunities and safeguarding updates and there is a vigilant culture within the school. The school's policy takes into account the most recent statutory guidance. The proprietor has ensured that this is published on the school's website.

Paragraphs 11, 12, 14, 16(a) and 16(b)

- The school has a diligent approach to health and safety. For example, in the vocational curriculum, pupils have ample opportunities to learn about health and safety in the workplace. The school's risk assessment policy ensures consistency in developing a wide range of risk assessments, which includes assessments for the premises and off-site activities. There are regular health and safety maintenance checks, such as on the school's roller shutters.
- The school complies with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. For example, the school has a comprehensive fire risk assessment. The proprietor ensures that there are regular checks on the school's fire-fighting equipment and emergency lighting system.
- The school has a high staff-to-pupil ratio in place. It intends to maintain this proportion of staff if it is successful in its application for the material change.
- The proprietor has ensured that the standards in this part are likely to be met if the material change is approved.

Part 4. Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

Paragraphs 18(2) to 18(2)(e), 18(3), 19(2) to 19(2)(d)(ii), 19(3), 20(6) to 20(6)(c), 21(1) to 21(3)(b), and 21(5) to 21(6)

- The proprietor has ensured that the single central record of pre-employment checks is maintained well and kept up to date. The school has strong processes in place to check on contractors, volunteers and any supply staff that they may use in the future.
- These checks always take place before staff take up their appointment.
- There is suitable training in place for new staff. The proprietor has clear plans about the recruitment of new staff should the material change be approved.
- All of the required checks are in place for the proprietor. The school's designated safeguarding lead checks the accuracy of the single central record frequently to ensure that it meets the standards.
- The proprietor has ensured that the standards in this part are likely to be met if the material change is approved.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Paragraphs 23(1) to 23(1)(c), 24(1) to 24(1)(b), 24(2), 25 to 29(1)(b)

- The building is comprised of two separate industrial units and has eight classrooms in total across two floors. There are also two intervention rooms, a large construction area and a hair and beauty salon. The school has an indoor sports hall that is well equipped for physical activities. The premises are maintained to a very high standard and kept clean, tidy and in an excellent state of repair. They are suitable for the proposed increase in the number of pupils.

- The proprietor has ensured that there is a small medical room on site that includes a washing facility and is near to a toilet.
- Classrooms are well lit and have appropriate acoustics. There is lighting to the exterior near the main entrance and all fire exits.
- All drinking water is appropriately signed. Where water is unsuitable for drinking, this also has the correct signage to inform pupils and staff.
- Appropriate toilet facilities are in place. All toilet cubicles are for single use and can be locked from the inside.
- There is suitable space for pupils at breaktimes to play as well as an appropriate space for pupils' physical education. The school incorporates a shower for the use of pupils following physical activity.
- The proprietor has ensured that the relevant standards are likely to be met if the material change is approved.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraph 34(1) to 34(1)(c)

- The proprietor assures itself about the quality of provision through the analysis of performance information as well as regular meetings with the headteacher. This ensures that the proprietor is well informed about the progress and well-being of each pupil in the school.
- The proprietor has ensured that pupils' welfare is at the heart of the school's provision. There are individual profiles for each pupil that identify a range of strategies for staff to keep pupils calm and engaged in their education.
- The school has a comprehensive accessibility plan to meet the requirements of schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.
- The proprietor intends to manage any increase in pupil numbers slowly so that the pupils presently in the school do not have their routines and education disrupted.
- The proprietor has ensured that these standards are likely to be met if the material change is approved.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school is likely to meet the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements that are relevant to the material change.

School details

Unique reference number	151219
DfE registration number	353/6026
Inspection number	10421744

This inspection was carried out under section 162(4) of the Education Act 2002, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's likely compliance with the independent school standards relevant to the material change that the school has applied to make.

Type of school	Other independent special school
School status	Independent day school
Proprietor	Chances Mentoring Limited
Chair	Callum Siddall
Headteacher	Bethany Peak
Annual fees (day pupils)	£40,000 to £55,000
Telephone number	079 5527 3449
Website	www.chancesmentoring.com
Email address	callum@chancesmentoring.com

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal	Inspector's recommendation
Age range of pupils	11 to 16	11 to 16	11 to 16
Number of pupils on the school roll	16	60	60

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Mixed
Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age	16	60

Number of part-time pupils	0	0
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	16	60
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	16	60
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	16	60

Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	5.5	7.5
Number of part-time teaching staff	1	1

Information about this school

- The school is located at Unit 3 Whitegate Business Centre, Jardine Way, Oldham OL9 9JT. It is housed in two industrial units. It is registered to admit up to 40 pupils.
- All places at the school are commissioned by local authorities and schools.
- All pupils have social, emotional and mental health needs. Many also have other diagnoses, including autistic spectrum disorder.
- The proprietor is Chances Mentoring Limited. There is one director. This director is in the process of establishing an advisory governing body.
- The school currently uses one unregistered alternative provider.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was commissioned by the Department for Education (DfE) in response to the proprietor's request to make a material change to the school. The DfE requested that the inspector consider whether particular independent school standards in Parts 1, 3, 4, 5 and 8 are likely to be met if the material change is approved.
- The proposed change involves extending the number of pupils that the school can admit from 40 to 60. The proprietor has extended the school by developing a second industrial unit next door to the current provision at the same address.
- This was the school's first material change inspection.
- The school's last inspection was a pre-registration inspection that took place in August 2024.
- In evaluating whether the school is likely to continue to meet the relevant standards, the inspector undertook a tour of the proposed premises, considered a range of documentation and discussed the proposed changes with leaders, including the school's headteacher and the proprietor. He visited lessons, spoke with pupils and looked at their work. He also spoke with a small group of staff.

Inspection team

Steve Bentham, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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