

# Edgware Jewish Girls School – Beis Chinuch

Independent school standard inspection report

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Reporting inspector	Jill Bainton

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Royal Exchange Buildings  
St Ann's Square  
Manchester  
M2 7LA

T: 0300 123 1231  
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E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
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## Purpose and scope of the inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005, 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.<sup>1, 2</sup>

## Information about the school

Edgware Jewish Girls School – Beis Chinuch was registered as an Ultra-Orthodox Jewish independent school in September 2009 for 60 girls aged three to seven years of age. There are currently 69 girls on roll; 26 are in the Early Years Foundation Stage, all of whom are in receipt of local authority funding. The school is situated in a large building housing the Yeshurun Synagogue on Fernhurst Gardens in Edgware. The school rents its rooms from the Synagogue. The school occupies most of the rooms on the ground floor, which include an office and four rooms. The last early years inspection was in July 2009 when the provision was judged as good. There are no pupils who have a statement of special educational needs. The school first opened as a nursery and is developing into a one-form entry primary school. The school now has Kindergarten, Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 classes.

The school aims to provide girls with an education that will aid them to develop their knowledge of, and allegiance to, Judaism. It plans to provide the girls with a solid Hebrew and secular education and to furnish them with the necessary tools to become law-abiding, moral and well-rounded citizens. This is the school's first full inspection.

## Evaluation of the school

Edgware Jewish Girls School – Beis Chinuch has made a purposeful start and provides a good quality of education in the main school and in the Early Years Foundation Stage provision. Through the combined Jewish religious studies (*Kodesh*) and secular (*Chol*) curriculum and well-informed teaching, pupils make good progress. Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is outstanding and reflects the Jewish ethos of the school, but the provision for their cultural development is not as strong. Behaviour is outstanding. Procedures for safeguarding the pupils are good. The school has met most of the regulations for registration but there are some shortcomings with respect to the building.

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<sup>1</sup> [www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2002/ukpga\\_20020032\\_en\\_14#pt10-ch1-pb4-l1g162](http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2002/ukpga_20020032_en_14#pt10-ch1-pb4-l1g162)

<sup>2</sup> [www.opsi.gov.uk/ACTS/acts2005/ukpga\\_20050018\\_en\\_15#sch8](http://www.opsi.gov.uk/ACTS/acts2005/ukpga_20050018_en_15#sch8)

## Quality of education

The curriculum is good; it is based on Jewish religious studies (*Kodesh*) in the morning and there is a well-planned range of other subject activities (*Chol*), based on the National Curriculum, each afternoon. There is a suitable written curriculum policy and there are appropriate schemes of work for all subjects taught at the school. The school teaches literacy, numeracy, science, history, geography, art, design and technology and physical education. A specialist music teacher teaches all the classes weekly. History is taught for six weeks followed by six weeks of geography. Sufficient resources and suitable texts have been purchased to complement the schemes of work being used. The staff effectively support the younger pupils' learning through a range of appropriate activities planned using the Early Years Foundation Stage guidance. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are supported very well, especially with the use of 'talking partners' in lessons.

The *Kodesh* curriculum is good and has its own unique *mesoirah* (tradition). This spiritual ethos permeates the whole school. Pupils achieve well in Hebrew reading, writing and *parasha* (weekly Torah portion). Pupils of all abilities are well supported to make good progress. Personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE) is taught through the *Kodesh* curriculum and the pupils learn about such topics as recycling and how to care for the environment. A range of visits and visitors enriches both the teaching and the learning; for example the pupils will soon be pressing olives in preparation for *Chanukah*. The curriculum works well to help prepare the pupils for their future lives within the Jewish community.

Those pupils who have been identified as needing additional support are well supported both in class and individually. Detailed individual education plans are prepared as needed. The planned work is well matched to the needs of these pupils, who are making good progress. There is a good range of educational visits and visitors.

Teaching and assessment are good. In secular subjects, the teachers are well informed, enthusiastic and motivate the pupils to learn. Most of these lessons are well planned, match the differing needs of the pupils' ability and help to increase their knowledge, understanding and skills. In the most effective secular lessons the teachers' enthusiasm instils in the pupils a joy in learning, so that they are engaged and interested in the subject. For example in a Year 2 literacy lesson where the pupils were introduced to a traditional English story with a cunning twist, the pupils responded by using a wide vocabulary to express themselves and participated eagerly in the tasks given. In numeracy in Year 1 the pupils are equipped with very good basic skills to enable them to manipulate 10s and units with a high degree of understanding. Pupils make good progress as staff ensure that the work given to the pupils matches their capabilities and the pupils are given effective support in the small classes. Pupils confirm that staff help them to improve their work and tell them when they are doing well. Pupils with specific learning difficulties also make good progress because they are supported effectively in class and sometimes in small

groups. The teachers assess the pupils' progress well during lessons with targeted questioning. A range of assessments is used well to establish how effectively the pupils are learning.

Teaching in *Kodesh* is good and pupils make good progress overall. In the best lessons, positive relationships strengthen pupils' learning. Their excellent behaviour and keenness to work hard and to do well promote a good learning ethos. Teachers inject good pace and lots of interest into their lessons and carefully targeted questions help to promote good learning. For example, Year 1 pupils know which sons were born to the different wives of Jacob, which is challenging work at this age. An overemphasis on the use of worksheets in *Kodesh* sometimes hampers creativity and independence. The teaching of *middos* (Torah values) is outstanding and enables the pupils to begin to develop high standards of integrity. Resources are adequate and there is some use of technology to enhance pupils' learning. The school is planning to extend the technology resources. Although assessment information is collected, recorded and taken into account when planning lessons, there is no systematic framework for planning to ensure that the information is used consistently by all staff to plan teaching, set targets and provide greater challenge.

## **Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils**

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils and the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good overall. Pupils' spiritual development is outstanding. They develop markedly in confidence, sensitivity and understanding, as they grow older. This is seen in the way they *daven* (pray) with *kavonoh* (reverence) and in conversations with the inspectors. All those spoken to had a good understanding of concepts such as friendship, happiness and sadness. All are able to express very clear views about the school.

Pupils' moral development is outstanding. They have very clear views about right and wrong and their behaviour is outstanding. Attendance is very good and pupils very much enjoy school and learning. Through their academic work and personal development, they are developing knowledge and skills, which should not only ensure their future economic well-being but also prepare them to lead successful lives within their *Kehila* (community). They contribute positively to the wider community; for example through charity fund raising and links with a home for the elderly.

Pupils' social and personal development is outstanding. The school is like a family and older girls support younger ones and act as good role models for them. They take responsibility and handle this well; pupils who are monitors fulfil their tasks maturely and even the little ones help to tidy away sensibly.

Pupils' cultural knowledge and understanding of their heritage is extensive. It is an achievement that from the youngest of ages the pupils learn in both Hebrew and English. Activities related to work on the *Parasha* (weekly portion) enable the pupils

to write proficiently in both languages, and learning about *Derech Eretz* (respect for all) ensures an appreciation of all faiths and cultures. However, provision for their understanding of other cultures is not sufficiently developed.

## **Welfare, health and safety of pupils**

The provision for the welfare, health and safety of the pupils is good. The school safeguards and promotes the welfare of all the pupils including the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. All the necessary policies are in place, including those for anti-bullying, health and safety on visits outside school, and behaviour. The school's day-to-day practices minimise health and safety risks to the pupils. Risk assessments are carried out on visits outside school and on activities within the premises. The policy for safeguarding meets the latest guidance. A named person for child protection has been trained to the required level, as have the rest of the staff. There has been a satisfactory fire service report during the last two years and the school has complied with the recommendations made. The school holds termly fire drills, which are documented, and all fire appliances are checked annually. The first-aid policy meets the guidelines and several staff are trained first aiders.

The pupils are encouraged to eat healthily and are given fruit at break time. The school also has the benefit of links with *Hazolah* (Jewish emergency services). Pupils are very well supervised. Procedures for keeping the registers are all in order. The school fulfils its duties under the Disability Discrimination Act and has devised a three-year accessibility plan.

## **Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors**

The school checks the suitability of all staff to work with children and holds the information on the required single central register of staff appointments.

## **Premises of and accommodation at the school**

The school shares the building with the synagogue. All the regular members of the synagogue who come in during the day, for example the secretary, have had the necessary check with the Criminal Records Bureau. There are a small number of members of the synagogue who meet each morning and afternoon for prayers in the synagogue hall and the school has taken steps to ensure that all pupils are safe during this time. The building is in generally good decorative order. The room used as the medical facility for pupils who are unwell does not have the required hand basin with hot and cold water. The areas used for the Early Years Foundation Stage are suitable and effectively used. However, the carpet in one room is very worn and stained. Classrooms are adequate for the number of pupils but generally the heating is not sufficient and two rooms have no natural light and inadequate ventilation. The school has now reached its maximum capacity. The proprietor is very aware of this and is actively looking for new premises. There is an adequate hard play area outside with appropriate outdoor toys. There are some inadequate security arrangements.

## **Provision of information**

The school provides parents, carers and others with a good range of information through its prospectus and parents' handbook. Close links with home and the school to support the pupils in their learning and development are a strong feature of the school. Parents are kept well informed through written reports and regular meetings. They are overwhelmingly supportive of the school, making comments in the pre-inspection questionnaire such as, 'I am thrilled with this dynamic and inspirational provision... the staff provide a first-class secular and Kodesh education... I can honestly say that the school has enhanced my children's lives.'

## **Manner in which complaints are to be handled**

The school has a set of procedures which meet the regulations.

## **Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

The overall effectiveness of the setting is good. The children are well cared for in a nurturing environment. They make good progress in their learning and personal development. The school has a very good partnership with parents and carers who are very supportive and have a high regard for the school and the care it gives to their children. They feel well informed through regular feedback from the staff. The children's welfare, health and well-being are promoted well. Staff are all trained in safeguarding. The leadership and management of the setting are good. Those in charge have a clear idea of how to take the setting forward.

The outcomes for the children are good. They enjoy their life at school and a parent reported that her daughter is very upset if she cannot come to school. Children are developing an understanding of how to stay safe. They are encouraged to eat healthily and take regular exercise.

The provision for the children is good. The planned activities promote the six areas of learning well. Most staff have attended appropriate training courses and have a good knowledge of the curriculum. The learning environment is positive and used well, both indoors and outside. The outside activities have to be planned carefully during the school day in order to overcome the limitations of the layout of the building. This is done effectively. The children have a range of planned purposeful play activities, which reflect both the *Kodesh* and secular curriculum. There is a good balance of adult-led and child-initiated activity. During child-led activities in the home corner, staff are supportive, assisting the children in finding the resources they need and helping them to extend their imaginative play. There is a reasonable range of resources available but provision for technology is limited. Staff make good use of regular observations on the children to inform their planning. Children's learning is effectively assessed and they make good progress. The children behave very well, are kind towards each other and the adults and respectful to those around them.

## Compliance with regulatory requirements

The proprietor has ensured that the school meets The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, schedule 1 ('the Regulations'), with the exception of those listed below.<sup>3</sup>

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils (standards in part 2) and must:

- give the pupils an appreciation of and respect for other cultures, in a way that promotes tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions (paragraph 5(e)).

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of the premises of and accommodation at schools (standards in part 5) and must:

- ensure there are adequate security arrangements in place for the grounds and the building (paragraph 23(d))
- provide appropriate facilities for pupils who are ill, in accordance with the Education (School Premises) Regulations 1999 (paragraph 23(k))
- provide appropriate lighting, heating and ventilation in all classrooms that has regard to the Education (School Premises) Regulations 1999 (paragraph 23(o))
- provide appropriate flooring in good condition (paragraph 23(r))
- ensure there are appropriate arrangements for providing outside space for pupils to play safely (paragraph 23(s)).

## What the school could do to improve further

While not required by regulations, the school might wish to consider the following points for development:

- Increase technology resources to support the learning of pupils and the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Improve the recording of assessments in the *Kodesh* lessons and reduce the excessive use of worksheets.

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<sup>3</sup> [www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2010/1997/contents/made](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2010/1997/contents/made)



## Inspection judgements

outstanding	good	satisfactory	inadequate
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### The quality of education

Overall quality of education		✓		
How well the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of pupils		✓		
How effective teaching and assessment are in meeting the full range of pupils' needs		✓		
How well pupils make progress in their learning		✓		

### Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Quality of provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development		✓		
The behaviour of pupils	✓			

### Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The overall welfare, health and safety of pupils		✓		
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### The quality of the Early Years Foundation Stage provision

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage		✓		
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage		✓		
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage		✓		
Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage		✓		

## School details

<b>School status</b>	Independent
<b>Type of school</b>	Jewish girls day school
<b>Date school opened</b>	September 2009
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–7 years
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Girls
<b>Number on roll (full-time pupils)</b>	69
<b>Number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs</b>	0
<b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>	£ 2,600
<b>Address of school</b>	Yeshurun Synagogue Fernhurst Gardens Edgeware HA7 7PH
<b>Telephone number</b>	0208 9510239
<b>Email address</b>	beischinuch@btconnect.com
<b>Headteacher</b>	Rabbi Moshe Cohen
<b>Proprietor</b>	Beis Chinuch Limited