

Beis Yaakov Girls School

Independent school standard inspection report

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Reporting inspector	Julie Winyard HMI

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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.^{1, 2}

Information about the school

Beis Yaakov Girls School opened in January 2011. The school is situated on the ground floor of a semi-detached house in Hackney in North London and serves the local ultra-Orthodox Jewish community. Lessons are conducted in English and the girls are fluent English speakers; they have a basic knowledge and understanding of the Yiddish language. The school, in adherence to its religious ethos, aims to follow the educational traditions and regulations of Orthodox Judaism as well as the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum.

There are 20 girls on roll aged from three to five years. All attend full time. There are 14 girls in the Nursery and six in Reception. All children receive 15 hours of free education as a result of government funding until they turn five years of age. There are no children with a statement of special educational needs.

The school aims to 'maintain a happy and caring environment in which children feel secure to grow and develop intellectually, socially, emotionally, culturally, spiritually and physically; to encourage positive attitudes towards one's self and good *middos* (attitude and character) towards others'. This is the school's first inspection.

The school is currently seeking new premises in order to expand to meet local need. This is likely to happen from September 2012. In the meantime, the school has requested a material change to the present provision for an additional two nursery children and one reception child.

Evaluation of the school

Beis Yaakov Girls School meets its aims. The quality of the curriculum, teaching and assessment is good, ensuring children's good progress. Good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development contributes substantially to the girls' good behaviour. The school makes outstanding provision for children's welfare, health and safety and safeguarding arrangements are exceptionally robust. All parent and carer questionnaires returned were highly complementary of the school; in the words of one parent or carer, 'We are absolutely delighted with the school in every single aspect.' All the regulations are met, as are the learning, development and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

¹ www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/32/contents.

² www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2005/18/contents.

The school's request for a material change to increase the pupil roll to 23 is recommended.

Quality of education

The school makes good provision for meeting the needs of all children. The staff are kind and caring and are confident in the delivery of the curriculum. Early Years Foundation Stage requirements are integrated well through both the *Chol* (secular) and *Kodesh* (religious) curricula. Planning is detailed and both *Chol* and *Kodesh* are underpinned by schemes of work that set out clear long, medium and short-term outcomes with suitable progression from Nursery into Reception. Planning takes good account of children's interests and is sufficiently flexible to enable new interests to be taken on board. An outstanding aspect of the curriculum is the wide range of educational visits arranged for the children. These visits enrich children's learning because they are followed through with activities back in school, for example the making of *matzos* (unleavened crackers) after a visit to the local bakery. The school uses a number of commercial schemes of work which support children's good learning and development in the Reception class. The school's curriculum policy and schemes of work include appropriate provision for the additional children proposed in the material change request.

The quality of teaching is good overall. Staff have very enthusiastic attitudes towards the delivery of activities and create a really enjoyable learning environment. As a result of this, the children are excited and eager to learn which is evident in the good progress they make. Teachers take part in a good range of training sessions to further develop their skills.

The learning environment is well equipped and the outside area is attractive and has been developed well to provide for all the Early Years Foundation Stage areas of learning. It is used throughout the day and in all weathers. For example during the inspection there was a lot of rain and the children were very excited that they had their wellington boots so that they could splash in the puddles. Children have the opportunity to make choices about their own resources, which are easily accessible to them. For example during free play in the mornings, staff set up a wide range of activities for children to be involved in, including some sensory packages which allowed children to experience different materials safely.

The provision for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is good because pupils' additional needs are identified as early as possible. Effective use is made of external professionals.

Good records are kept about children's progress and development against the Early Years Foundation Stage goals. These are recorded and updated regularly. The next steps for each child's learning are carefully recorded and built into teachers' planning and observations. Teachers are well equipped to meet the needs of the requested three additional children.

Although the headteacher monitors lesson planning very thoroughly and observes teaching on a regular basis, the outcomes of this are occasionally not used to secure improvements in teaching or the sharing of good practice between teachers; for example in developing teacher's understanding of how to engage children better in some adult-led learning sessions. In addition, because children are so used to a relaxed learning environment where they are free to choose their learning activities, there are a few occasions when they do not understand what to do when the teacher wishes to teach them a specific concept. An example of this was when children talked and did not listen carefully enough to the teacher or to each other. It is because of these two issues that the quality of teaching is good rather than outstanding.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

The spiritual, moral social and cultural development of the children is good. Spirituality is taught through an appreciation of what *Hashem* (God) does for us. Children are encouraged to recite blessings (*brachos*) before and after eating food. They say their prayers (*davening*) and in these, consider the world around them and appreciate its beauty.

Children are taught to care for each other and understand what is right and wrong. Relationships are good between children and between teachers and children. As a result children feel happy and safe in their learning environment and are confident to talk to all adults who work with them. Overall children's behaviour is good, especially when involved in activities they have chosen to do.

Children are taught to share and to take turns in using different pieces of equipment. They rapidly become independent, for example, pouring their own milk and deciding how much they would like. They have a good understanding of daily routines and are ready to go outside for break and to come inside when lessons begin again. They have a good awareness of personal hygiene and wash their hands before their snack and their lunch.

Children are given a good awareness of other cultures through books and toys. People from other countries and cultures represented within the local community are invited into the school to talk about their way of life. Parents and carers have been asked to send in pictures of their families living in other countries. The large wall map in the entrance of the school celebrates these worldwide family connections.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

There is outstanding provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety. Pupils love coming to school and say they feel very safe. The hot lunches provided for younger pupils are nourishing, tasty and reflect their dietary requirements. Children serve themselves at lunchtime and eat a good and balanced diet. They choose to eat a range of vegetables. One parent commented, 'When my child started Nursery she did not touch fruit or veg and with the encouragement from her teachers she now

gets her five-a-day happily.' All policies required are in place and are reflected in the outstanding practice seen during the inspection. These include policies for child protection, behaviour, anti-bullying, fire and first aid. Health and safety policies and procedures are excellent; for example risk assessments to ensure the school is safe and secure are exemplary. School visits are exceptionally well planned and all possible action is taken to ensure children are kept safe when they are out of school. All staff have received child protection training and this is updated as required. An appropriate number of staff have been trained to administer first aid, including paediatric care. Arrangements regarding the storage and administration of medicines are secure. There is excellent supervision of pupils at all times in class, on the playground and around the school. There are regular fire drills and records show the school building is evacuated quickly and that the time for this has improved with practice. The school meets the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors

There are robust procedures for the recruitment of staff. A single central register is correctly maintained and meets requirements.

Premises and accommodation at the school

The school's premises and accommodation enable pupils to learn effectively, safely and securely. Classrooms are of an adequate size for the number of pupils being taught. The decoration and furnishings are of good quality. The classroom space will accommodate the additional three children requested by the school.

Provision of information

The school brochure includes the necessary information and safeguarding and child protection policies are available on request. All parents and carers who returned the questionnaire are very positive about the school. The school sends annually informative written reports to parents and carers about their children's progress. There are also weekly newsletters. There are opportunities for parents and carers to come to formal and informal meetings every term.

Manner in which complaints are to be handled

The school's complaints procedure meets requirements; there have been no formal complaints since the last inspection.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The proprietor has ensured that the school meets The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, schedule 1 ('the Regulations').

The school meets the learning, development and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

What the school could do to improve further

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

- Ensure that children are taught to listen effectively.
- Ensure that the headteacher's observations of teaching and learning always support the sharing of good teaching practice.

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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School details

School status	Independent		
Type of school	Orthodox Jewish		
Date school opened	January 2011		
Age range of pupils	3–5 years		
Gender of pupils	Girls		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 0	Girls: 20	Total: 20
Number on roll (part-time pupils)	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
Number of pupils who are looked after	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
Annual fees (day pupils)	£0		
Address of school	116 Bethune Road Hackney N16 5DU		
Telephone number	020 7502 2840		
Email address	admin@byggs.org.uk		
Headteacher	Mrs Rachel Dresner		
Proprietor	Mr Mark Grosskopf		

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



2 May 2012

Dear Children

Inspection of Beis Yaakov Girls School, Bethune Road, Hackney N16 5DU

Thank you very much for welcoming us to your school. We really enjoyed our visit. We were very pleased to see you working hard and doing some exciting things. You are very good at choosing things to do, helped of course by your teachers.

We think you have good teachers who plan lots of wonderful activities for you. In particular, we think the visits that you have out of school are outstanding in quality and really help you to learn more about the world you live in.

We think that you are well looked after by your teachers and as a result, you feel happy and safe in school. We were impressed by the good quality of the food you eat. You are very careful to make sure that it is healthy.

There are two things we have asked your teachers to do to make it even better and you can help them put them into practice. First, we would like you to learn to listen very carefully to your teachers when they need to tell you things. Mostly you do this well but sometimes you do not listen well enough. Second, we have asked your headteacher to check how well you are learning and to share all the good ideas teachers have with everyone in the school.

I would like to wish you all the very best for your future lives.

Yours sincerely

Julie Winyard
Her Majesty's Inspector