

# Bnei Zion Community School

Independent school standard inspection report

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Reporting inspector	Jonathan Yodaiken

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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

Bnei Zion Community School is an orthodox Jewish primary school for boys aged from three to five years, located in the Stamford Hill area of North London. It caters for the burgeoning Chassidic community in the immediate area. The school aims to provide a 'friendly, welcoming and positive atmosphere' and to help 'every learner reach his potential'. It is located in renovated premises on two floors of a building in a residential area. The school opened in May 2011. It had a pre-registration inspection at the end of May 2011, after which it was registered, in which all regulations were met except one pertaining to providing sufficient lessons in written and spoken English. There are currently 41 children on roll, all within the Early Years Foundation Stage. None of these children has been identified as having special educational needs or disabilities or receive government funding for their education.

## Evaluation of the school

The Bnei Zion Community School provides a good quality of education, meets its aims and parents and carers are highly satisfied with its work. Throughout the school, children make good progress owing to good teaching and a good curriculum. Children's outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is reflected in good behaviour and outstanding attitudes to work. Welfare, health and safety, including safeguarding, are outstanding. The school has addressed the one regulation not met in the pre-registration inspection and now meets all the regulations for independent schools.

## Quality of education

The quality of the curriculum is good throughout the school and follows the Early Years Foundation Stage guidelines. It is supported by comprehensive schemes of work and provides experience in all the required areas of learning, with an appropriate emphasis on developing children's language, mathematics and creative skills. There is a good balance between *Kodesh* (religious studies) and *Chol* (secular studies). The curriculum is based upon the weekly Torah portion read in synagogues and on events in the Jewish calendar, providing plenty of positive play and stimulating activities. Although lessons are mainly conducted in Yiddish, English is

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<sup>1</sup> [www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/32/contents](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/32/contents).

<sup>2</sup> [www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2005/18/contents](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2005/18/contents).

regularly integrated within classroom rituals so that children build up a satisfactory vocabulary. The curriculum places a strong emphasis on *middos* (desirable personal traits) development and on personal, social and health education (PSHE). An example of this is the Sing and Spring programme, in which children dance to music within the classroom. The curriculum provides ample opportunities for children to talk and contribute to their learning.

The quality of teaching and assessment is good and as a result children make good progress. Children settle happily into school owing to the warm welcome they receive and the good induction procedures. Routines are well established and this increases the children's feeling of security. Children enter school with below the expected level of skills and knowledge for their age in all areas with the exception of physical, personal, social and emotional development. When they finish the Early Years Foundation Stage they are at least average in all areas. Staff form good relationships with children and encourage them to enjoy learning. While resources are satisfactory overall, there is a relatively limited range in relation to role play, which sometimes holds back progress. There is a sound balance of focused, adult-led sessions as well as purposeful, child-selected activities. Teachers plan their lessons well for indoor activities and lessons are well matched to the needs of individual children.

Opportunities are occasionally missed for the outdoor learning environment to be used as an outdoor classroom; this an aspect of learning which the school has plans in place to develop. Medium- and long-term planning is good. It is particularly effective in the way that it provides children with meaningful experiences in all the areas of learning, through the depth and breadth of Torah and religious practices. Children are well motivated and exercise their intellect and imagination effectively through role play and practical work.

Procedures for assessment are good. There are regular assessment opportunities in lessons that help inform the focus of teaching during the lesson. Children are assessed regularly against the Early Years Foundation Stage profile when they start and subsequently within a continuous assessment process. This process includes accumulating photographic evidence, as well as written evidence of children's work, to be included in early years profiles.

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

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the children is outstanding. At the core of the ethos of the school is the development of children's *middos* in terms of responsibility, modesty and consideration for others. Staff lead by example and create an exceptionally positive atmosphere that helps children to develop strong spiritual, moral and social values. Pupils *daven* (perform their daily prayers) with great *kavonah* (devotion) and the joy which they demonstrate in their learning helps them to become successful learners. This is reflected by their high attendance levels and in their good behaviour in class and around the school. Celebration of festivals, such as *Rosh Chodesh* (the first day of the lunar month) and *siyumim* (celebration on completion of a section of learning), adds an extra dimension to help the children develop into confident individuals. For example, at the annual *chumash*

(printed Torah) party boys speak publicly and are given solos and duets to perform within the musical entertainment. Moral teaching permeates every aspect of school life effectively, instilling in the children the importance of distinguishing and choosing between right and wrong. An example of this is the way the children apply lessons on the weekly *sedra* (portion of the Torah). Children's social development and awareness are maintained in a variety of ways through their singing together, group work in class, in their playtime activities and through their PSHE lessons, in which they are guided to interact positively with peers. Children learn about the work of the police and fire service linked to role-play activities. They are taught to be tolerant of other cultures and have respect for all, regardless of race and colour, as an important religious concept within *Kodesh* lessons.

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

Arrangements for the welfare, health and safety of the pupils are outstanding. The school places a high priority on ensuring children's safety and well-being at all times and the children feel secure as a result. The school has the full range of required policies, including those for bullying, child protection, health and safety, first aid and behaviour. All the policy documents and procedures fully meet requirements. As a result of an effective induction process and ongoing training, the staff are very familiar with these and implement them consistently. All staff have attended training in safeguarding and there is a designated member of staff for child protection who has received advanced training. The consistent approach adults have to supporting children to resolve conflicts results in children having a heightened awareness of potential risk, but also of ensuring that they keep safe. Senior staff have been trained in safe recruitment and all the required procedures are followed meticulously. The school has a good level of fire safety, as identified by its risk assessment. There are sufficient first aiders, including a member of staff who has completed paediatric first aid training. All the required risk assessments are carried out effectively for educational visits and within school. The school has a sanctions book, and admissions and attendance registers, which are all completed appropriately. The school fulfils its duties under the Equality Action 2010 and it has devised a three-year accessibility plan.

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

The school carries out all the required checks on the suitability of staff and any other adults who work in the school. They are checked for their experience, qualifications and suitability for working with children. Records are kept scrupulously and securely in a single central register. The single central register is maintained appropriately.

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

The school provides appropriate accommodation for the children's education and this enables effective learning to take place. Classrooms are of an adequate size for the number in each class and the school has an appropriate designated room for children who are unwell. There are sufficient washrooms and toilet facilities for the ages of

children and the numbers on roll. The premises and accommodation are maintained tidily and have recently been renovated and refurbished to a good standard. The playground area is secure and safe and provides an adequate outdoor play and learning facility.

### **Provision of information**

The school makes appropriate provision for the dissemination of information to parents, carers and others. Parents and carers are invited to see all policies, which are held in the school. Regular reports sent to parents and carers provide clear information of their children's progress, attainment, behaviour and social skills. These include a monthly communication to parents and carers sharing with them pictures of their children involved in various learning activities. There were 35 parents and carers who returned completed questionnaires on their children's progress, all being overwhelmingly positive about the work of the school.

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

The school has a comprehensive complaints policy, which meets all the regulations and is made known to parents and carers through the school prospectus.

### **Compliance with regulatory requirements**

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

### **What the school could do to improve further**

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

- implement plans to provide a wide range of opportunities in the outdoor learning area to inspire children to explore and gain greater knowledge of the world around them
- increase the variety of resources which act as a stimulus for role play.

## 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

<b>School status</b>	Independent		
<b>Type of school</b>	Jewish day school		
<b>Date school opened</b>	May 2011		
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–5 years		
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Male		
<b>Number on roll (full-time pupils)</b>	Boys: 41	Girls: 0	Total: 41
<b>Number on roll (part-time pupils)</b>	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
<b>Number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs</b>	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
<b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>	£12,064		
<b>Address of school</b>	49–51 Ravensdale Road London N16 6TJ		
<b>Telephone number</b>	07824510435		
<b>Email address</b>	rlenzk@yahoo.com		
<b>Headteacher</b>	Rabbi Y Silberstein		
<b>Proprietor</b>	Mr B Rudzinski		



**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.**



9 July 2012

Dear Children

### **Inspection of Bnei Zion Community School**

Thank you for helping us to understand your school. We really enjoyed our visit and were made most welcome.

We found that you make good progress. The school makes sure you are safe and well cared for and you behave well. You make good progress in acquiring the skills you will need later in your lives and your attendance is high. We were particularly impressed with your outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This shows that you fully understand the Torah values the school teaches you. In addition, it is so special for the way in which your teachers care and guide you. You attend a good school, which prepares you well for your future.

We have asked the school to consider how it can improve the quality of resources and the use of the outdoor play area.

Wishing you every mazel and brocho in the future.

Yours sincerely

Jonathan Yodaiken  
Lead inspector