

# Beis Malka Girls' School

93 Alkham Road, London N16 6XD

## Inspection dates

15-17 October 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Pupils' achievement	Good	2
Pupils' behaviour and personal development	Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching	Good	2
Quality of curriculum	Good	2
Pupils' welfare, health and safety	Good	2
Leadership and management	Good	2

## Summary of key findings

### This school is good because

- Pupils' achievement is good; pupils enjoy learning and are consistently engaged in lessons. As a result they achieve well and make good progress. Particularly impressive is the progress made in Torah studies and mathematics throughout the school, and geography and biblical Hebrew within the secondary school.
- The dual curriculum which embraces both *Kodesh* (religious studies) and *Chol* (secular studies) is good. It provides all pupils, including those with special educational needs and disabilities with a rich education.
- Teaching is good. Teachers have good subject knowledge, know their pupils well and have high expectations of them.
- Pupils' behaviour and their personal development are outstanding, as is provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Leadership and management are good and have had a positive impact on improving the quality of teaching, the curriculum and pupils' achievement. The governors provide outstanding support to the staff, which promotes a very positive atmosphere within the school. The senior leaders have made good provision for ensuring that pupils are safe. The school has continued to improve since the last inspection.

### It is not yet outstanding because

- Teaching does not always support pupils at different ability levels because teachers do not use assessment information consistently to ensure the individual pupils' needs are always fully met. Marking also does not always identify what pupils need to do to improve their work.
- The procedures for the monitoring of teaching and learning are not rigorous enough in giving feedback to teachers, linked to follow up observations and professional development.

## Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets schedule 1 of the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2012, as amended by the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspection was carried out with one day's notice.
- The inspectors observed 21 lessons taught within the three departments: Early Years Foundation Stage, Primary School and Secondary School. They looked at pupils' work and held meetings with headteachers, senior members of staff and representatives of the governing body.
- The inspectors took account of the views of parents and carers and members of staff.
- The inspectors looked at the school's documentation, including schemes of work and teachers' planning, and interviewed three groups of pupils representing classes within the primary and secondary schools.

## Inspection team

Jonathan Yodaiken, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Fayge Levenberg	Additional Inspector
Clementina Olufunke Aina	Additional Inspector
Flora Bean	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Beis Malka Girls' School is an independent day school for orthodox Jewish girls aged from three to 16 years. It opened in 1980 and is located near Stamford Hill and serves the orthodox Jewish community in the London Borough of Hackney. The school is located on two sites, one housing the purpose-built Early Years Foundation Stage and the other the primary and secondary departments.
- The school currently has 447 pupils on roll, 89 within the Early Years Foundation Stage, 217 in the primary school and 141 within the secondary school. Seven pupils have statements of special educational needs.
- The school aims to 'instil in pupils a determination for self-improvement, both academically and personally, through combining an education which is supported by the school's religious and cultural ethos, yet is uncompromising in its intention of achieve high educational standards'.
- The school was previously inspected in March 2010.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching by:
  - ensuring that teachers throughout the school use assessment rigorously to identify pupils' level of attainment consistently, so that classroom activities focus upon individual pupils' needs and scaffold their knowledge and skills
  - ensuring that marking identifies more specifically what pupils need to do to improve their work and make sure that they have regular opportunities to respond to marking and feedback.
- Further improve leadership and management by:
  - extending and embedding a more formal and systematic approach to lesson observations, which provides guidance on how the quality of teaching can be improved and is linked to follow-up observations and professional development

## Inspection judgements

### Pupils' achievement

**Good**

The achievement of pupils, including children in the Early Years Foundation Stage, is good due to the good quality of the teaching and curriculum. Pupils enter the school with literacy skills below, and numeracy skills broadly in line with, expectations for their age. As pupils go through primary school they develop their literacy and numeracy skills well. Younger pupils make rapid progress in learning the sounds that letters represent (phonics). Reading is given a high priority and pupils are able to reflect upon the books they have read by the end of Year 4. Pupils also make noticeable improvements in developing their writing skills. Attainment in mathematics is above average and a range of practical activities are used to extend pupils' learning.

Students' achievement in the secondary school in both *Kodesh* and *Chol* is good. Attainment, in English language is average as demonstrated by GCSE results, however, progress is good taking into account students' low starting point and that most of them speak Yiddish at home. Their progress exceeds that normally expected in a range of other subjects including mathematics, geography and biblical Hebrew, where GCSE examination results are very strong. A small number of students complete A-levels in mathematics and similarly achieve good results. Progress in *Chumash* (Torah) is outstanding with grammatical skills built up year on year. However, a small proportion of pupils throughout the school make slower progress because their teachers do not fully match teaching to their needs.

Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, including pupils with a statement of special education need, make accelerated progress because of the expert support they receive within lessons.

### Pupils' behaviour and personal development

**Outstanding**

Pupils' behaviour and personal development are outstanding. Provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is also outstanding. There are excellent relationships between staff and pupils and between pupils themselves. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary in lessons and around the school. They show great respect to adults and are extremely polite and courteous. Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning and report that they enjoy coming to school. Pupils' attendance is high and they arrive in school on time.

Pupils are taught the difference between right and wrong and to respect the law through the *Kodesh* curriculum and through citizenship lessons, wherein they gain a good knowledge of public institutions and services in England, and key aspects of a democracy. Pupils throughout the school take on responsibilities, such as organising shows, end of year events and charity drives. Older girls look after younger pupils at lunchtimes and girls from the secondary school are encouraged to spend time helping younger pupils from needy families over the weekend. Pupils take part in a *shmiras haloshon* (guard one's tongue) activity which ensures they understand the importance of not speaking badly about others. Their self-esteem and confidence is strongly promoted through all aspects of school life, but particularly when pupils are encouraged to express their feelings in circle time. Pupils develop their spirituality throughout the *Kodesh* curriculum and through art, music, drama and all the extra-curricular events which take place at the school, for example, those linked to *Yom Tovim* (festivals) *Chanukah* (festival of lights) and *Purim* (festival of lots). Pupils develop a very good understanding of diversity through learning about other countries and cultures, for example, when learning about Eskimos during geography lessons and learning about communities in Africa, in terms of Jewish life there. This greatly promotes pupils' understanding and respect for their own and other cultures, religions and backgrounds and prepares them well for life in a multicultural, democratic Britain.

**Quality of teaching****Good**

The quality of teaching is good and enables pupils to make good progress. Teachers know their pupils very well and provide well-judged care and support, particularly for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Relationships between staff and pupils are very positive and teachers are generous with praise. In the Early Years Foundation Stage the children's starting points have been accurately identified and continuous assessment helps them to progress mostly well. In the primary and secondary schools, in the vast majority of lessons the pace is good and they are presented in a way which encourages pupils to reflect and analyse. This was exemplified within a Year 10 literacy lesson relating to the poem 'From a Carriage Window' written by Robert Louis Stevenson, when students were organised in groups to reflect upon and analyse the change in rhythm which helps to create the setting for the poem. In a Year 6 literacy lesson pupils reflected upon and identified their own suggested ending to the 'Secret Garden' and were encouraged to share this with other pupils. In the very few lessons which are less successful, high achievers are not sufficiently challenged and questions are not directed so as to ensure that pupils of different levels of attainment are involved.

Although the quality of marking of pupils' work has improved since the last inspection it is still not consistently good enough across all year groups and subjects in giving advice on next steps for improvement. In addition, pupils are not given sufficient opportunities to respond when next steps are identified in their books. This is one reason why teaching and achievement are not outstanding.

Assessments are recorded in individual files and are accurate. Particularly impressive is the use of agreed criteria in the assessment of writing, linked to targets. However, this assessment practice is less rigorous, and less reliable, in other subjects.

**Quality of curriculum****Good**

The quality of the curriculum is good in both the primary and secondary schools. The curriculum is divided into two parts; *Kodesh* is taught in the morning and *Chol* in the afternoon. Both curricula provide the pupils with a solid grounding in all of the required areas of learning. For the *Chol* curriculum, the school uses the National Curriculum as a guide for the teaching of the main subjects, linked to schemes of work and short term planning. Many aspects of secular learning are integrated within *Kodesh*; these include meaningful experiences, particularly in literacy, geography and music. The curriculum in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good and includes all the required elements. The *Kodesh* curriculum includes all of the subjects appropriate to the backgrounds and expectations of the pupils and their parents. There is an appropriate focus upon skill-building which has been successfully implemented in *Sedra* (weekly portion of the Torah) and in *Ishon hakodesh* (teaching of Hebrew language) and somewhat within *Chumash* in the primary school. This now needs to be extended to the secondary school and in all subjects so that there is a progression of skills and knowledge within a curriculum map in all *Kodesh* subjects. The pupils can communicate, read and write in Yiddish, Hebrew and English. Personal, social and health education is taught discretely. Practical subjects such as art, sewing and music are taught alongside academic subjects through the *Chol* curriculum. The school promotes healthy lifestyles; however, opportunities to participate in sport and exercise are adequate but limited.

Extra-curricular activities, such as a highly successful play performed for the community and educational visits enhance pupils' self-confidence and reinforce the sense of harmony within the school. The school organises visits by the senior girls to Shonfeld Square (a home for the elderly) and supports the Yad L'Yad programme wherein older girls help needy children within the community. The Year 5 class prepares a farewell *siyum* (party) event for Year 6 graduates. Parents and carers remarked that these extra-curricular activities greatly enhance their girls' school experience.

**Pupils' welfare, health and safety****Good**

The provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety is good and all the independent school regulations are met. Safeguarding arrangements are soundly in place and the school has correctly checked the suitability of staff and others to work with pupils. This information is held in a single central register, as required. The designated staff responsible for safeguarding, and all other staff, have been trained to the required level. All essential policies are in place including those for child protection, health and safety, first aid and anti-bullying. Procedures are in place to record any accidents and incidents and risk assessments are conducted routinely. Checks on electrical appliances and procedures to prevent fire are fully implemented, including checks on fire safety equipment and regular fire drills. A suitable policy for educational visits ensures that appropriate steps are taken to keep pupils safe when on school trips. Pupils are well supervised and the admissions and attendance registers are properly maintained and meet the requirements.

Effective policies that promote good behaviour are consistently applied by staff. Discussions with pupils indicate that behaviour is typically outstanding and that bullying is rare, but should it occur they are confident that staff would deal with it promptly. Pupils report that they feel safe and parents and carers confirm that their children are kept safe. The school promotes healthy lifestyles, particularly healthy eating. Although adequate, opportunities for exercise and taking part in sport are limited.

**Leadership and management****Good**

The quality of leadership and management is good and ensures that pupils achieve well. The school knows itself exceptionally well and leaders throughout the school share a vision for the school. Their warmth and kindness have been pivotal in creating the high morale of staff at the school. The headteachers and other leaders are highly visible in and around the school and take an active role in classroom activities. The pastoral care they provide for pupils at the school is exceptional, with great consideration and care given to the welfare of each and every pupil. Although lesson observations take place regularly, procedures for monitoring the quality of teaching are not sufficiently systematic and formal so as to ensure that targets for teachers and areas for development are followed up in a rigorous way linked to professional development. Although the range of education resources is somewhat limited, staff are constantly looking for ways to maximise the use of resources and to plan for future purchases. This is exemplified by the well-developed plans to relocate those students in the senior school who are based in the on-site rented accommodation to a planned extension within the school. The premises and accommodation comply with all requirements and are suitable for safe and effective learning. Particularly impressive is the new accommodation designed especially for the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The school is in the process of developing 'assessment for learning' strategies in all core subjects. At present, although core skills have been identified, this information has not been used to track pupils' progress or to identify gaps in their learning in the classroom, so that appropriate interventions can be put in place. The management of special education needs and/or disabilities within the school is outstanding with excellent coordination between the primary and secondary school. These pupils are well supported and gain confidence due to the focused interventions provided.

Staff questionnaires indicate that staff are proud to work in the school and value the support from leaders. There is a very positive ethos within the school that fosters pupils' good academic achievement, outstanding personal development and their exemplary behaviour.

The governors are highly committed to the success of the school and are closely involved both strategically and in its day to day running. They offer outstanding support to the staff.

The school provides all the required information to parents, carers and others through its parents' handbook and regular newsletters. Parents are exceptionally happy with the education provided by the school, a typical comment being 'the school provides all that we want for our girls'. Reports on pupils' progress are sent to parents and carers twice yearly. The school complaints policy complies with requirements. The school's actions since the last inspection have brought about improvements in many areas including welfare, health and safety. The governors have ensured that all the regulations for independent schools are met.



## What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	A school which provides an exceptional quality of education and significantly exceeds minimum requirements.
Grade 2	Good	A school which provides a high quality of education that exceeds minimum requirements.
Grade 3	Adequate	A school which meets minimum requirements but needs to improve the quality of education it provides.
Grade 4	Inadequate	A school where minimum requirements are not met and/or the quality of education has serious weaknesses.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	100295
<b>Inspection number</b>	420196
<b>DfE registration number</b>	204/6337

This inspection was carried out 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.

<b>Type of school</b>	Orthodox Jewish Day School
<b>School status</b>	Independent School
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3-16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Girls
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	447
<b>Number of part time pupils</b>	None
<b>Proprietor</b>	Mr A Grossman
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Wind – Secondary School Mrs Sheinfeld – Primary School Mrs Spitzer – Early Years Mrs Eisenbach – Early Years
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	March 2010
<b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>	£2080 per annum
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 88062070
<b>Fax number</b>	020 88061719
<b>Email address</b>	mail@beismalka.com

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit [www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk), or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store St  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2013

