

Etz Chaim School at the Belmont

89 Middleton Road, Crumpsall, Manchester, M8 4JY

Inspection dates

16 January 2014

Context of the inspection

- This inspection was undertaken at the request of the registration authority for independent schools in order to monitor the progress the school has made in implementing its action plan.
- The school's last full inspection was in January 2011. The school received an unannounced emergency inspection in October 2012. The inspection confirmed reports that scaffolding surrounding the building created a health and safety hazard and that large unrestrained windows in upper-floor classrooms enabled students to climb out of the building.
- The school produced an action plan in November 2012 that was evaluated by Ofsted in December of that year. The actions proposed by the school at that time were judged to be satisfactory subject to satisfactory implementation.
- A progress monitoring inspection was undertaken on 19 February 2013 at the request of the Department for Education (DfE) to evaluate the progress made by the school in the implementation of its action plan. During that inspection it was confirmed that all scaffolding had been removed from the building but that some windows still posed potential hazards.
- The school produced an action plan dated 8 April 2013 stating that it had conducted additional works on all windows to ensure that they could not be opened wide enough to pose any dangers. There was no formal evaluation of this action plan but the DfE requested a further progress monitoring visit to assess the safety of all windows in the building.
- A second progress monitoring inspection was undertaken on 28 June 2013. This inspection concluded that the school had not attended to all the health and safety issues regarding the unsafe windows. The windows in a number of classrooms still posed potential hazards because the remaining opening spaces were too wide. The school was informed that students must not be left unsupervised in the classrooms with unsafe windows until they were made safe.
- The inspection on 28 June 2013 judged that the school did not meet two of the regulations for independent schools. The proprietor was required to draw up a written policy which complied with relevant health and safety laws, to ensure it was implemented and to maintain the school's accommodation and facilities to a sufficient standard to ensure the health, safety and welfare of students, as far as was reasonably practicable.
- A further action plan was submitted by the school. This was evaluated in September 2013. The actions taken by the school and the proposed timescale were judged to require improvement. The evaluation noted that the school's health and safety policy

would benefit from references to pupils' individual risk assessments and that the school should reflect concerns relating to the accommodation in risk assessments. An on-site visit was also recommended to ensure that the windows were now safe.

- This current progress monitoring inspection is the third and was undertaken at the request of the DfE to evaluate the progress made by the school in the implementation of its action plan, as evaluated in September 2013. The inspection was unannounced.

Summary of the progress made in implementing the action plan

Regulations not met

The inspection of 28 June 2013 found that the school had not made all windows safe. During this present inspection it was found that additional measures have improved the safety of the windows so that satisfactory progress has been made on this specific action point. Upper floor windows now all have bars and gaps between these have been reduced, where needed. Velux window catches have been adjusted. Pupils are not allowed access to upper floors unsupervised.

However, the school has not maintained its accommodation to a sufficient standard overall to ensure the welfare, health and safety of students and so this regulation is still not met. A number of hazards remain, such as uneven or missing ground tiles and low-hanging electrical wiring in the playground.

The school has not drawn up a written policy which complies with all health and safety laws and ensured that this is implemented. There is no written risk assessment for the premises nor, where needed, for individual pupils. The school does not systematically monitor that all the checks related to welfare, health and safety have been implemented.

The school is not compliant with the regulatory Fire Safety Order (2005). Old emergency fire exit signs have not been removed; staff have not received recent training in fire prevention; records of fire drills lack some important detail and the untidiness of the office and reception areas poses a potential fire risk.

The school has acted on a recent recommendation of the fire service on improving evacuation routes by providing a suitable new facility for storage of pupils' coats and bags.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school requires improvement and must take action to meet schedule 1 of The Education (Independent School Standards)(England) Regulations 2010, as amended by the Education (Independent School Standards)(England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

In order to comply with regulatory requirements the school must take the following actions:

Draw up a written policy which complies with relevant health and safety laws and ensure it is implemented.	Regulation 11
Ensure that the Regulatory Reform (Fire safety) Order 2005 is complied with.	Regulation 13
Maintain the school's accommodation and facilities to a sufficient standard to ensure the health, safety and welfare of students, as far as is reasonably practicable.	Regulation 23(c)

Inspection team

Honoree Gordon, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about this school

- Etz Chaim Boys' School was established in 1993 in North Manchester as a strictly orthodox Jewish secondary day school, serving a particular strand of the local Jewish religious community. It is located in a large Victorian building on a main road in Crumpsall, Manchester. There are currently 117 students on roll, aged 11 to 16 years, all of whom speak English and are of White British heritage.
- The school admits students of differing abilities, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities, three of whom currently have statements of special educational needs.
- The school's aim is 'to provide religious, personal and academic education, in order to prepare students for a full religious life in accordance with the religious outlook of their community, whilst forming upright citizens who will be able to give to the community at large'.
- The school's last full inspection was in January 2011.

School details

Unique reference number	131015
Inspection number	423230
DfE registration number	352/6053
This inspection was conducted at the request of the registration authority for independent schools. It was carried out under section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005.	
Type of school	Secondary Boys' Jewish school
School status	Independent School
Age range of pupils	11–16 years
Gender of pupils	Boys
Number of pupils on the school roll	117
Proprietor	Mr N M Halpern
Chair	Mr Y Reich
Headteacher	Rabbi Eli Cohen
Date of previous school inspection	18 January 2011
Annual fees (day pupils)	£5,580
Telephone number	0161 7400300
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