

Kisharon Day School

1011 Finchley Road, London, NW11 7HB

Inspection dates 26–27 February 2014

Overall effectiveness	Good	2
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	Outstanding	1
Leadership and management	Good	2

Summary of key findings

This school is good because

- Pupils make good progress from a range of complex starting points because of good teaching.
- The behaviour and personal development of pupils is outstanding because of the exceptionally positive relationships and very high expectations of staff.
- Plans and schemes of work are securely in place and provide good opportunities for pupils to experience a broad and balanced range of subjects including Jewish Studies.
- Exemplary approaches to working with a very wide range of outside agencies support the outstanding development of pupils' welfare, health and safety.
- The headteacher provides a very clear direction for the improvement of teaching and pupils' progress. She is supported and challenged well by the governors who are passionate and ambitious for the school. They have improved significantly since the last inspection.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Teaching is inconsistent in quality. A few teachers do not always use assessment information about pupils' individual needs when planning lessons.
- Teachers' assessment information for some subjects, including design and technology and art, is not fully recorded.
- The systems that monitor the quality of teaching and check how much progress pupils are making are too reliant on the headteacher.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets schedule 1 of The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, as amended by The Educational (Independent Schools Standards) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012 ('the independent school standards) and associated requirements.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection was unannounced.
- In addition to a series of short visits to most classes, four part-lessons were observed by the inspector and headteacher. Pupils' work was looked at. Meetings were held with the headteacher, the head of Jewish Studies, parents and carers and governors.
- The school's documentation was checked, including schemes of work, teachers' assessments and safeguarding documents.
- The school's compliance with the independent schools standards was checked in full with the headteacher.
- No questionnaires were completed by parents and carers because the inspection was unannounced, but the inspector did meet with a small group of parents and carers. The school's own recent parental survey was also taken into account.

Inspection team

Lead inspector, John Seal

Her Majesty's Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is an independent Orthodox Jewish special school for boys and girls. It is part of Kisharon, a charitable organisation providing a range of educational and care services for children and adults from the Orthodox Jewish communities in North and North West London.
- Located in Golders Green, in the London Borough of Barnet, the school is situated in a large house which was previously a ballet school.
- The school opened in 1976 and is registered for up to 45 pupils and admits pupils from four to 19 years of age. There are currently 37 pupils on roll aged from five to 19 years. Currently, there are no children in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- All the pupils have a statement of special educational needs. Pupils who attend the school have a wide range of learning difficulties from moderate to severe and multiple learning difficulties. These include physical, sensory and communication impairments and medical conditions.
- Nine pupils receive free school meals funding and one speaks English as an additional language. No children are in care.
- The school's previous full Ofsted inspection was in May 2013. There was an emergency inspection in November 2013. Although this report was not published, copies of this report were sent to parents and carers by the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that all teaching matches the best in the school by:
 - consistently planning activities for all pupils that meet the specific objectives in their statement of special educational needs
 - ensuring the progress pupils make is looked at while checking the quality of teaching
 - making sure that teachers record pupils' progress in all subjects and make good use of the information in planning lessons.
- Ensure the roles and responsibilities for checking the quality of teaching and pupils' progress are distributed securely among staff, beyond the headteacher.

Inspection judgements

Pupils' achievement

Good

Achievement is good. Pupils are encouraged to make good progress because of the wide range of teaching strategies employed by skilful and well-trained staff, based on secure planning. This includes the progress made in their Jewish Studies. Adults 'tune in' to pupils' different and complex communication needs and encourage them to engage fully in their learning and social development. Pupils' progress is visibly evident in most classes through their excitement and interest in the activities that staff have prepared for them. Clear impact of the well-chosen activities on pupils' social and physical development was observed in lessons. Pupils were able to acknowledge each other, adults and respond strongly to a range of stimuli. Pupils make good progress in their reading, writing and mathematical skills because of the well-structured approaches to developing communication demanded by all adults. Most staff heed and fulfil the requirements of each pupil's statement of special educational needs.

In pupils' work seen during the inspection and in lessons, the progress in developing specific motor skills, writing and reading is good. The school's accurate assessment of the small steps pupils make provides a strong picture of progress over time. The good use of 'topic folders' to collect photographs and evidence of pupils' work with teachers' comments and assessments is developing rapidly.

The older pupils achieve well through the accreditations gained in the Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN). The strong emphasis of the school on preparing pupils for their future lives is seen clearly in their successes within the Duke of Edinburgh Scheme. There are well-developed plans for links with local colleges to increase the amount of further education opportunities for older pupils.

Pupils' behaviour and personal development

Outstanding

Pupils' behaviour and personal development are outstanding. The school's systems for managing pupils' behaviour leads to a calm atmosphere around the school. Pupils respond well to staff and behave very well. They are keen to be involved in their learning. Pupils' attendance is regular and for some this is a significant improvement as before they attended Kisharon, their attendance was often non-existent or very sporadic. Staff work hard with each pupil to help them develop different skills for interacting with each other.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very strongly promoted by the school's passionate emphasis on developing life skills. As a result, pupils are aware of the different cultures and beliefs that make up modern Britain. The school has a very positive and friendly atmosphere which ensures a very effective promotion of tolerance and harmony. This ensures pupils are given a well-balanced view of the need to understand different political and religious beliefs. A good example of this is how the school celebrates the different backgrounds of staff by demonstrating how people from other religions and cultures celebrate their festivals, dress and behave. To introduce pupils to public institutions and services in England, there are regular visits to the local library, post office and bank. These visits are also used very well to enhance pupils' ability to interact with the public and develop their social skills.

Pupils' confidence and self-esteem are a key focus for the school. The oldest pupils have regular sessions for developing their independence outside of school including work experiences. Recently, a school council has been formed where pupils are encouraged to contribute to how their environment can be improved.

Quality of teaching**Good**

The quality of teaching is good. Most lesson plans are adapted with care to match the objectives in each pupil's statement of special educational needs, supporting their good progress. Where staff do this, pupils are attentive and their interest is held, increasing rates of progress. Music, sounds, lights, many visual cues and singing are used to good effect to help pupils focus and gain interest. However, not all lessons are as thorough as this. In a few cases, pupils all do the same work regardless of the requirements in their statements. Although the very high staffing level and one-to-one support compensate for the lack of specific detail in the planning and activity undertaken, this approach hinders pupils from making more progress and increases their reliance on adults. Staff work well together as teams in classrooms and across the school, developing very positive relationships with pupils.

The school's systems for assessment are reasonably effective and staff know the pupils very well. This knowledge is usually put to good use in the setting of objectives for each pupil both academically and socially. Records of pupils' progress and understanding have developed quickly since the last inspection. There are some very good examples of 'topic folders' which have examples of pupils' work, photographs and teachers' evaluations. The headteacher recognises that there is still some work to be done on these records, because some folders do not provide enough written information regarding pupils' progress in some subjects, for example in design and technology and art.

Quality of curriculum**Good**

The quality of the curriculum is good. The policies, schemes of work and plans are securely in place for all subjects and areas of learning. The *Kodesh* (religious) curriculum has been improved since the last inspection. The head of Jewish Studies is developing a range of materials that are part of the cycle of festivals and familiar events to meet the needs of all abilities including the more able. The school has produced a framework to outline specific skills required by the older pupils to learn and celebrate their faith more independently. As a result, all pupils' learning and achievement in their Jewish Studies are good. Promoting pupils' skills in reading, writing, communication and numeracy is a priority for the school. Parents and carers who spoke to the inspector were very pleased with their children's progress. Pupils' work and school assessment information seen during the inspection support this positive picture, demonstrating how plans underpin successfully the good progress made in most lessons. Work in other subjects, such as science, history and geography, has been improved because of the more thorough planning now in place. The plans for design and technology, and art are less fully formed and less well assessed by teachers, but the headteacher has already identified these as areas for further improvement.

Those pupils with the most profound and multiple learning difficulties are well supported by plans drawn up between both teaching staff and in-house therapists. This has ensured that each pupil makes good progress in their ability to communicate and in developing their independence. One pupil was seen during the inspection using his walking frame to turn corners which was something he was not doing when he started the school recently.

The school meets the requirements well for teaching pupils about personal, social and health education. This is woven into both the *Kodesh* and *Chol* (secular) curriculum to ensure it is an integral part of pupils' learning. There are regular timetabled physical activities in addition to physiotherapy including weekly visits to the swimming pool.

Support for older pupils has some exemplary features. For example, the 'life skills' programme is linked to further education organisations and protected accommodation outside of school. The pupils' confidence is boosted by the successful accreditation and completion of activities in the ASDAN and Duke of Edinburgh award schemes.

The curriculum is enhanced with frequent and well-supported visits to the local shops, where pupils

are encouraged to buy produce for the lunches cooked on the premises. There is a well-organised and highly rated annual trip to a residential centre for nearly all the pupils. Those who are not able to stay overnight are given opportunities to join their peers for day visits. Pupils were provided with the opportunity to visit a local show in a theatre.

Pupils' welfare, health and safety

Outstanding

The school's provision for welfare, health and safety for its pupils is outstanding. All the required standards are met very well. The school has exemplary procedures and strategies in place to promote the safeguarding of pupils. Of special note is the headteacher's conscientious and diligent approach to working with an extremely wide range of different agencies to ensure pupils receive the best care possible. All staff are trained in child protection to the required standard, especially with regard to the very thoughtful care, close attention and support required for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. The school's procedures for checking staff's suitability for working with children are extremely rigorous. The single central register for recording checks made on the suitability for all staff and governors to work with children is up to date and monitored closely by senior managers.

The policies and procedures for anti-bullying are up to date and effective and are carefully monitored. First aid training is up to date including for staff with paediatric qualifications. Fire prevention procedures and training are very secure. The behaviour management policy is up to date, and the school records behaviour incidents or the very few uses of appropriate restraint with care. Parents and carers who spoke to the inspector and those who responded to the school's own survey were full of praise for the safe environment, great care and thought staff took to look after their children and in encouraging them to learn, be happy and engage with all aspects of their school life. The school ensures that pupils have a healthy diet through making sure fresh fruit and vegetables are purchased and prepared on site. The older pupils above compulsory school age are well prepared for a more independent life beyond school.

The headteacher's extremely conscientious approach to health and safety can be seen in the detailed risk assessments which are in place for activities on and off the school site. The attendance registers are well maintained.

Leadership and management

Good

Leadership and management of the school are good. They are not outstanding because although the school has rapidly improved since the last inspection, leading to better pupil progress and a higher quality of teaching, the procedures for checking the teaching are still developing. For example, feedback to teachers on their lessons is mainly reliant on the headteacher. Other leaders have started to provide suitable information but the written feedback does not always clarify how teaching is intended to make a difference to pupils' learning. Nonetheless, the school's trajectory of improvement has made sure that in the short period of time since the last inspection the areas identified for improvement have been dealt with effectively. The governors share the headteacher's accurate understanding of what the school does well and where it needs to improve and have ensured that Kisharon's other services provide additional and effective support for the leadership functions of the school. This can be seen in the increasing involvement of the charity's human resources and finance officers. Governors now make regular visits to the school to see it in operation. The findings from these visits are fed back to the full governing body meetings. Although this work is in its early stages, it has already provided a better insight for governors into how the school is performing.

The premises and accommodation meet the needs of the pupils. Effective adaptations and additions to the building maintain its suitability for pupils who have high levels of disability and special educational needs. Arrangements and facilities for pupils who are ill are appropriate. Although there is no specific information on the website, all of the required information is

provided, or is made available, to parents, carers and others. Parents and carers are provided with detailed and high-quality reports on their children's academic, social, emotional and physical development and progress. The complaints procedure meets regulatory requirements. The governors have ensured that all the independent school standards 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 the quality of education has serious weaknesses.

School details

Unique reference number	101386
Inspection number	441640
DfE registration number	302/6085

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.

Type of school	Orthodox Jewish Special School for pupils with severe special educational needs and disabilities
School status	Independent School
Age range of pupils	4–19 years
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	37
Number of part time pupils	0
Proprietor	Kisharon Ltd
Chair	Mr Phillip Goldberg
Headteacher	Mrs Sora Kopfstein
Date of previous school inspection	21–23 May 2013
Annual fees (day pupils)	£17,000 – £42,000
Telephone number	020 8455 7483
Fax number	020 8209 0994
Email address	kisharondayschool@kisharon.org.uk

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. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email 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, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: 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.

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
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2014

