

# Bnos Beis Yaakov Primary School

Kingsbury Synagogue, Kingsbury Green, London, NW9 8XR

## Inspection dates

21–23 October 2014

## Overall effectiveness

**Requires improvement**

**3**

Leadership and management	Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils	Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils	Requires improvement	3
Early years provision	Requires improvement	3

## Summary of key findings

### This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Teaching is not regularly of good enough quality to ensure that pupils achieve well over time, particularly in mathematics and writing and consequently, teaching requires improvement.
- Pupils' achievement slows when pupils find the work they have been set too easy or too difficult and teachers do not react quickly enough when learning falters.
- Information gathered by teachers through marking, tests and their own observations is not always used effectively to pitch work at the right level.
- The school's curriculum does not provide children in the early years classes with enough experiences to learn and develop outdoors.
- Too much of the responsibility for leading and managing the school falls on the shoulders of the interim headteacher and governors and this limits the school's capacity to improve. As a result, leadership and management require improvement.
- Staff are provided with targets to improve, but these are not closely linked to pupils' achievement, staff training and professional development to raise standards.
- The school improvement plan is incomplete.
- Middle leaders are developing their leadership skills but are not fully contributing to monitoring the school's performance or producing action plans to improve their areas of responsibility.

### The school has the following strengths

- The interim headteacher has acted quickly to address weaknesses and is doing the right things to improve teaching and pupils' achievement across the school.
- The support provided for pupils with special educational needs is increasingly well organised and matched to their individual needs.
- Pupils quickly develop their reading skills. They translate and gain a deep understanding of davening (prayers) and chumash (bible).
- Pupils' behaviour is good and pupils help to make the school a warm, friendly and welcoming place to learn.
- Parents and staff are overwhelmingly supportive and recognise the value of the good personal relationships across the school that help pupils to mature into kind and thoughtful individuals.

### Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets all regulatory requirements.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed 13 lessons taught by 11 different staff, five jointly with the interim headteacher. He held meetings with the interim headteacher and governors and met separately with middle leaders to discuss standards and the curriculum.
- The inspector toured the school's premises and considered the school's adapted part of the synagogue for additional classrooms. He observed lunch and playtimes.
- The inspector met informally with a group of parents and considered the views gathered from 23 responses to the online Parent View survey. The inspector considered 12 responses to the Ofsted staff survey.
- Inspectors held discussions with group of pupils from Year 4 and talked to pupils at playtimes. The inspector heard pupils read, examined pupils' work in a range of subjects and scrutinised school policies and records.
- The school requested a material change to expand pupil numbers and extend the age range of pupils up to the end of primary school age.

## Inspection team

Mark Lindfield, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Bnos Beis Yaakov is a faith school for Orthodox Jewish girls between the ages of three and nine. It shares premises with Kingsbury Synagogue in North West London. The school has separate Nursery and Reception classes providing early years education.
- There are 77 pupils on roll. Around a tenth of pupils are on the school's register for special educational needs and a very small proportion of these are disabled or have a statement of special educational needs.
- A very small proportion of pupils are newly arrived at the school and speak English as an additional language.
- The school opened in September 2010 and was last inspected in May 2011. The school aims to provide 'a holistic approach to learning, wherein spiritual, moral, social and cultural values espoused by the school are embedded in every aspect of school life'.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching so that pupils' achievement, especially in writing and mathematics, is frequently good or better, by:
  - ensuring teachers regularly check and monitor pupils' understanding and quickly adapt teaching where pupils' achievement slows
  - using marking, pupil tracking data and teachers' daily assessments effectively to plan tasks that are well matched to pupils' abilities.
- Improve the quality and breadth of the curriculum by;
  - increasing children's access in the early years to a range of purposeful activities, especially outdoors.
- Improve the effectiveness of leaders and managers by;
  - setting whole school improvement plans that contain specific targets, clear timescales and that describe when and who will monitor and evaluate the planned actions
  - linking teachers' performance management targets to professional development and more rigorously following up to check that staff are raising pupils' achievement
  - continue to develop the role of middle leaders so that they make a greater contribution to monitoring the school's performance and producing action plans to raise achievement
  - stabilise leadership and management by appointing a permanent headteacher.
- In order for the proposed material change to be acceptable, the school should;
  - ensure arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school (paragraph 7)
  - provide suitable toilet and washing facilities for the sole use of pupils (paragraph 23A (1))
  - ensure that the new classrooms on the school premises and the accommodation and facilities provided therein are maintained to a standard such that, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of pupils are ensured (paragraph 23C)
  - ensure that the acoustic conditions and sound insulation of each new classroom or other space are suitable, having regard to the nature of the activities which normally take place therein (paragraph 23D)
  - ensure the lighting in each room or other internal space is suitable, having regard to the nature of the activities which normally take place therein (paragraph 23E (a))
  - ensure a suitable outside space is available in order for physical education to be provided to pupils in accordance with the school curriculum (paragraph 23 G (1)(a))
  - ensure a suitable outside space is available in order for pupils to play outside (paragraph 23 G (1)(b)).

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management

### require improvement

- The interim headteacher has acted swiftly to address key priorities and bring stability to the school. In a short space of time he has got to know the school's strengths and weaknesses, got the priorities right and, with governors, has set a clear direction. However, although effective steps have been taken to address regulations and the most urgent priorities, many of the changes are from the start of the term and require further time to take effect.
- The school's improvement plan is currently incomplete. While senior leaders previously identified key priorities and started to compile plans for improvement, the plans lack clear milestones, do not set measurable targets or describe who will monitor and evaluate the separate actions.
- Performance management targets for teachers are not clearly linked to improving pupils' achievement. Monitoring has provided staff with some areas for improvement, but these have not been formalised into targets for the year based on raising pupils' achievement or linked to professional development.
- The interim headteacher has ensured that staff are clear about safeguarding arrangements and the procedures to follow to record and share any concerns for children's welfare and well-being. Staff training at the start of the term has raised staff awareness and ensured the school's procedures are up to date and meet statutory requirements.
- The secular curriculum is in the process of being updated to meet the requirements of the revised National Curriculum and requires further improvement. Governors have agreed a phased approach and have already purchased new mathematics resource materials to use this term.
- The curriculum provides regular opportunities for pupils to respect the feeling of others, demonstrate collective responsibility and influence each other to do good. Pupils' understanding of other faiths and cultures is not well developed.
- The leadership and management of the school currently rest on the shoulders of the interim headteacher and governors. Middle leaders are being encouraged to develop their roles and responsibilities. The mathematics leader has accurately identified the need to develop pupils' understanding of place value and number correspondence and provides support for staff to deliver additional mathematics sessions for those pupils that need additional support.
- Pupils with special educational needs receive increasingly well organised support to catch up with their peers. The school has commissioned specialist support that is helping a small group of pupils to develop their language and communication skills. The mathematics subject leader works alongside them.
- The governance of the school:
 

Governors have an improved understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement. They fully support the changes that the interim headteacher is making. The interim headteacher and governors hold regular monthly meetings to review the effectiveness of additional support for pupils with special educational needs.

Governors have adopted a more active approach to monitoring the work and performance of the school. Through more regular, focused visits, they see the work of the school for themselves..

However, performance management procedures are not effective in tackling weaker performance and rewarding good teachers.
- The school requested a material change to expand pupil numbers and extend the age range of pupils up the end of primary school age. The school plans to build new classrooms inside the synagogue to accommodate pupils in Years 5 and 6. These plans have not been formalised or submitted for approval.
- The proposal to extend the number on roll to 85 pupils is acceptable and there are currently sufficient classrooms to accommodate 85 pupils.
- The request to increase the number of pupils to 150 is not acceptable until such time as the school completes the building of new classrooms and meets all of the standards for premises and accommodation listed in the report. In addition, the school must ensure safeguarding arrangements are rigorous and ensure pupils' safety and well-being in the event of visitors accessing the synagogue during the school day. There are suitable curriculum plans in place for older pupils but there is currently too little space to accommodate up to 150 pupils for physical education and at playtimes.

**The behaviour and safety of pupils****require improvement****Behaviour**

- Behaviour across the school is good. Pupils are considerate and highly respectful of others. Pupils play a significant part in making the school a very warm and friendly school community where smiles are a frequent feature and pupils' enjoyment in much of their work and play is evident.
- Pupils show a caring sensitivity to the needs of others. Children share and take turns from an early age and this cooperation matures as they progress through the school. Older pupils work in small groups and listen thoughtfully to each other. They wait courteously for new pupils who speak English to answer questions.
- Attendance is above average. Pupils enjoy school and many aspects of school life. On occasion, the positive attitudes to learning shown by the majority slip for a minority of pupils when they are unclear about the learning activity.
- Parents, carers and staff are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. They recognise the strength of the support provided by staff for their children. They recognise the special qualities of the school and the tangible sense of community that helps to develop confident and friendly pupils.

**Safety**

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure requires improvement. Work is underway to improve site security, and address previous weaknesses in health and safety procedures.
- Pupils feel safe and act responsibly. They know how to stay safe and healthy and report that bullying is very rare. Playtimes are friendly, with older pupils keeping an eye out for younger children.
- Relationships with adults are strong and supervision is appropriate, so that adults are always on hand to talk with and listen to pupils and respond to their needs.

**The quality of teaching****requires improvement**

- Teaching across the school is not regularly of good quality because it does not consistently help pupils of different abilities to achieve well. Staff do not always plan work at the right level. Consequently, although pupils often try hard they do not always make good progress because they either struggle to complete all of the work set or complete the work very quickly.
- An over reliance on worksheets in some subjects, regardless of pupils' ability, means that more able pupils are not always challenged to deepen their understanding and make better progress. Teaching is better where teachers use a range of strategies to raise the level of challenge, questioning more able pupils according to their ability and making links to pupils' learning in previous lessons and homework.
- Marking of pupils' English and mathematics work provides supportive comments and regularly identifies improvements in spelling and punctuation, it is less successful in improving pupils' writing techniques and mathematical skills. Marking across other subjects is not as thorough and is less successful in improving pupils' writing across the curriculum..
- The best teaching is typified by work that challenges and motivates pupils. In a mathematics lesson, Year 3 pupils made good progress in developing their knowledge of the properties of three-dimensional shapes. Pupils enjoyed constructing cuboids and pyramids during the lesson and were challenged to identify the number of vertices, faces and sides in their shapes.
- Teachers' subject knowledge is stronger in the teaching of *Kodesh* (religious studies). Pupils start the day with enthusiastic and well observed recitation of prayers in Hebrew.
- Pupils with special educational needs receive additional support that is helping them to catch up with their peers. Teaching assistants provide small group activities out of the classroom that are helping pupils to develop their language, communication and reading skills and their number recognition and counting.
- Relationships are a strong feature of the school. Teachers know pupils well and give them attention and show them consideration. Staff engender a friendly, calm and orderly school with cheerful and happy pupils.

**The achievement of pupils****requires improvement**

- Children arrive at the school with levels of development that are broadly typical for their age. They settle quickly into school life from an early age because of the warm and caring support from staff. As a result, children make stronger progress in their personal and social development and in their number, reading and expressive arts.

- By the time children leave Reception, a smaller proportion of children than nationally reach higher levels of development. Early years children make expected progress in their self-care, writing, listening and attention and in their understanding of shape, space and measure.
- Year 2 pupils make expected progress in writing and number and reach average standards. Year 2 pupils make better progress in reading, so that the majority of pupils reach higher levels of attainment by the end of the year.
- Pupils' progress in writing requires improvement. In English lessons, pupils regularly produce writing in a range of genres using appropriate levels of grammar and punctuation. However, opportunities for pupils to apply their writing skills in other subjects are more limited. Too often pupils are given worksheets to complete that do not require them to produce high quality writing.
- Reading is a strength of the school, pupils make good progress in reading across all year groups. From starting school, pupils quickly acquire reading skills and knowledge and read increasingly confidently in both Hebrew and English as they move through the school.
- Progress in mathematics is weaker than in reading. The mathematics leader has accurately identified the need to improve the teaching of place value and number correspondence. She provides support for teaching assistants to help in the delivery of additional mathematics sessions for those pupils with lower levels of development.
- Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those not reading or using mathematical skills expected for their age are given effective additional help that is helping them to catch up with their peers and make better progress in developing their recognition of number and their communication and language skills.

### The early years provision

### requires improvement

- Staff in both classes relate well to children. They create a calm atmosphere that helps children to settle quickly into school life, grow in confidence and make good progress in developing their personal and social skills.
- There are limited opportunities for children in both classes to develop and learn outdoors. The school has plans to develop the outdoor areas around the school and increase children's access to outdoor areas.
- Assessment of children's learning and development is variable. Stronger practice is evident in the Nursery class where staff regularly complete long and short observations of children's learning.
- Staff in both classes use their observations of children's learning to plan reading and mathematical activities for small groups of children. However, observations are used less effectively in other areas of children's learning to challenge children, particularly more able children, to make better progress.
- Staff in the Nursery class provide a balance of adult led sessions and activities for children to select for themselves, they repeatedly ask children questions and expect young children to speak in sentences when they respond. This is not replicated across the early years. As a result, not all children are helped to make good progress in developing their listening skills and their understanding.
- Staff record and monitor children's progress across the early years. However, in the absence of the leader of the early years, this information is not used effectively to draw up action plans to address weaker areas of learning and improve children's progress.

## What inspection judgements mean

School	
Grade	Judgement
Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Requires improvement
Grade 4	Inadequate

Detailed grade characteristics can be viewed in the *Non-association independent school inspection handbook* which is published on the Ofsted website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/140053](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/140053).

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	136231
<b>Inspection number</b>	447183
<b>DfE registration number</b>	304/6114

This inspection was carried out under section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as inserted 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>	Jewish Faith
<b>School status</b>	Independent school
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–9
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Girls
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	77
<b>Number of part time pupils</b>	0
<b>Proprietor</b>	Mr Richard Harounoff
<b>Interim headteacher</b>	Rabbi Nathaniel Lieberman
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	24–25 May 2011
<b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>	£3,150
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8204 4078
<b>Fax number</b>	n/a
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