

Beis Aharon School

83–95 Bethune Road, London, N16 5DT

Inspection dates

18–20 November 2014

Overall effectiveness	Inadequate	4
Leadership and management	Inadequate	4
Behaviour and safety of pupils	Inadequate	4
Quality of teaching	Inadequate	4
Achievement of pupils	Inadequate	4
Early years provision	Inadequate	4

Summary of key findings

This is an inadequate school because:

- Leaders and managers have failed to ensure that pupils and children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are protected adequately from harm in school. Procedures to make sure they are safe in school are not carried out properly. Some policies do not provide staff with the information they need to keep pupils safe.
- In the secular subjects, which include English and mathematics, school leaders do not provide adequate support or guidance for teachers. Because of this, the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement are inadequate. Pupils do not make as much progress as they could.
- The school does not teach a broad and balanced range of subjects. Because of this, pupils are not able to achieve as well as they could, especially in the secular subjects.
- The school does not actively promote fundamental British values as required in the independent school standards.
- The proprietor does not hold the school's leaders to account for the safe and effective operation of the school, or for the pupils' achievements in the secular subjects which include English and mathematics.
- Arrangements to check the suitability of staff not carried out rigorously. As a result, staff in the early years setting do not have the level of qualifications required.
- The quality of education has declined since the previous inspection. A substantial number of the independent school standards are not met.

The school has the following strengths:

- Although their safety is not promoted adequately, children in the early years setting make good progress in their learning.
- Pupils throughout the school behave well. They are courteous and thoughtful.
- Pupils achieve well in their Jewish religious studies. They acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to make good progress in understanding and carrying out the requirements of their religion and the traditions of their community.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school 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 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements. The details are listed in the full report.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out with a day’s notice. The inspectors observed 22 lessons. An interpreter joined them in some of the lessons that were taught in Yiddish.
- The inspectors looked at pupils’ work and spoke to them about it. They held meetings with the proprietor, the headteacher of Jewish religious studies and the headteacher of secular subjects. They met with other staff members and with pupils.
- They looked at documentation including policy statements, schemes of work, teachers’ planning and records of pupils’ progress and of staff training.
- There were too few responses to Ofsted’s online questionnaire, Parent View, to provide any meaningful analysis. There were 14 questionnaire responses from staff were taken into account.

Inspection team

John Gush, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
David Webster	Additional Inspector
Bill James	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Beis Aharon School is an independent Jewish boys' day school situated in North London. It is owned and operated by the Beis Aharon Trust. The chair of the proprietor's board is referred to in the school as 'the governor' and works closely with the headteachers in the management of the school.
- Four headteachers take responsibility for different areas of the school. Three of them lead separate age groups of pupils in Jewish religious studies and one leads the secular subjects that are taught to pupils in Year 4 and above. The school does not use a middle tier of leaders.
- Most of the pupils belong to the local orthodox Jewish community and speak Yiddish as their first language.
- Pupils attend school for six days a week, from Sunday to Friday. The majority of the school day is taken up by Jewish religious studies, which are taught in Yiddish. From Year 4, one hour a day is devoted to what the school refers to as secular studies, which include English and mathematics. These lessons are taught in English.
- The school aims 'to educate our children in the very same way our parents were taught, carrying forward Jewish tradition and Jewish values to the next generation'.
- The school is registered for pupils aged from three to 12 years of age. There are currently 342 pupils on roll, including 87 who attend the school's early years setting on a full-time basis.
- Five pupils have a statement of special educational needs and none are in the care of their local authority.
- No alternative provision is used by the school.
- The school was founded in 1981 and moved into its current premises in 2009. It was last inspected in November 2010.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality and impact of leadership and management by:
 - ensuring that arrangements are made to promote and maintain pupils' safety at all times
 - making sure that a broad and balanced range of subjects is taught
 - ensuring that the school actively promotes fundamental British values
 - ensuring that teachers' performance is checked effectively so that they receive appropriate support to help them improve pupils' rates of progress and attainment
 - ensuring that all the safeguarding requirements of the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage are met
 - developing effective arrangements to check how well the school is managed so that pupils' safety and well-being are assured and pupils have the best possible opportunities to achieve well
 - implementing effective governance arrangements so that the school's leaders are held to account for the safety of pupils and staff, and the quality of pupils' learning.
- Improve the quality of teaching in secular subjects by
 - ensuring that teachers have information about the needs and abilities of the pupils in their classes
 - making sure that teachers use this information to plan lessons that enable all pupils to learn to the best of their ability.
- Improve the range and quality of pupils' learning by ensuring that they have suitable opportunities to develop their ability to communicate in English.

An external review of governance is highly recommended. This needs to be undertaken urgently in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

- **The school must meet the following independent school standards.**

- Ensure that a written policy on the curriculum, supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work, is drawn up and implemented effectively (paragraph 2(1)).

- Ensure that full-time supervised education is available for pupils of compulsory school age which gives

pupils experience of the whole curriculum identified in paragraph 2(1) (paragraph 2(2)(a)).

Ensure that the curriculum includes subject matter appropriate for the ages and aptitudes of pupils (paragraph 2(2)(b)).

Ensure that, where the principal language of instruction is a language other than English, lessons in written and spoken English are provided to all pupils (paragraph 2(2)(d)).

Ensure that the curriculum includes personal, social and health education which reflects the school's aims and ethos (paragraph 2(2)(f)).

Ensure that the curriculum includes appropriate careers guidance for pupils receiving secondary education (paragraph 2(2)(g)).

Ensure that the curriculum provides adequate preparation of pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life (paragraph 2(2)(j)).

Ensure that pupils are able to acquire new knowledge and make progress according to their ability so that they increase their understanding and develop their skills in the subjects taught (paragraph 3 and 3(a)).

Ensure that a framework is in place to assess pupils' work regularly and thoroughly and that information from that assessment is used to plan teaching so that pupils can progress (paragraph 3 and 3(g)).

Ensure that the school actively promotes the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs (paragraph 5 and 5(a)).

Ensure that the school actively promotes principles which enable pupils to acquire a broad general knowledge of and respect for public institutions and services in England (paragraph 5, 5(b) and 5(b)(iv)).

Ensure that the school actively promotes principles which further tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions by enabling pupils to acquire an appreciation of and respect for their own and other cultures (paragraph 5 and 5(b)(v)).

Ensure that the school actively promotes principles which encourage respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010 (paragraph 5 and 5(b)(vi)).

Ensure that arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school; and that such arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State (paragraph 7, 7(a) and 7(b)).

Ensure that a written policy to promote good behaviour among pupils and set out the sanctions to be adopted in the event of pupils' misbehaviour is drawn up and effectively implemented (paragraph 9).

Ensure that an effective anti-bullying strategy is drawn up and implemented (paragraph 10).

Ensure that a written policy on compliance with relevant health and safety laws is drawn up and effectively implemented (paragraph 11).

Comply with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (paragraph 13).

Ensure that school staff are deployed to ensure the proper supervision of pupils and, in particular, that the correct ratio of suitably qualified staff is available to supervise the early years children (paragraph 15).

Ensure that an admission and attendance register is maintained in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (paragraph 17).

Ensure that all the required checks to ensure the suitability of staff members to work with children are carried out (paragraphs 19(2) to 19(2)(d) inclusive and 19(3)).

Ensure that further checks are carried out where a criminal record check is not adequate to show that a staff member or member of the proprietorial body is suitable to work with children because they have only recently arrived in or returned to the United Kingdom (paragraph 21(6) and 21(6)(b)(iii)).

Ensure that the single central register of checks contains information about all the checks that are required to check that staff members and members of the proprietorial body are suitable to work with children (paragraphs 22(3) to 22(3)(f) inclusive and 22(4)).

Ensure that suitable accommodation is provided for the medical examination and treatment of pupils and for the short-term care of sick and injured pupils (paragraph 23B(1), 23B(1)(a) and 23B(1)(b)).

Ensure that suitable outdoor space is provided for pupils to play outside (paragraph 23G(1) and 23G(1)(b)).

Ensure that information regarding the name of the headteacher and the name and contact address of the proprietor is provided to parents, carers and others (paragraph 24(1) and 24(1)(a)).

Ensure information regarding the school's curriculum, the number of staff and their qualifications, the academic achievements of pupils and the number of complaints is provided to parents, carers and others (paragraph 24(1)(b)).

Ensure that financial information is made available to the local authorities of those pupils for whom public funds are made available (paragraph 24(1)(h)).

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are inadequate

- Leadership and management are inadequate because the safety and welfare of pupils in the school are not promoted well enough. This is because policies to make sure that they do not come to harm from an accident or from any abuse are not implemented fully. In addition, the checks to make sure that staff are suitable to work with children are not completed properly. Leaders have not ensured that teaching and achievement are good. They have ensured that pupils behave well.
- None of the four headteachers hold overall responsibility for the effectiveness of the whole school. None have a clear view of the school's strengths and areas of weakness. As a result of this some areas of the school are less effective than others, in particular in the teaching of secular subjects. As a result, pupils do not achieve as well as they could in these subjects.
- The school's leaders have not ensured that pupils learn about a broad range of subjects. The school does not have a suitable plan for teaching some of the subject areas. These include history, geography, art and physical education. Pupils in Years 7 and 8 do not receive any careers education or guidance and no plans exist to ensure that pupils receive adequate personal, social and health education. Because of this, they are not as well prepared as they could be for the opportunities and responsibilities of adult life.
- English is not taught until pupils are in Year 4. This means that pupils are not able to develop the expected fluency that they are capable of in reading or in written and spoken English. Although English is introduced well to the early years children, and some develop confidence in the use of some English words and expressions, this work is not carried on into Year 1.
- Leaders and managers do not actively promote pupils' awareness and understanding of the whole range of fundamental British values. The school has no planned approach to help them to learn about English institutions and services, or to acquire an appreciation and respect for other faiths and cultures. Pupils are strongly encouraged to respect all, but the school does not help them to understand about the range of differences that exist between people. As a result, pupils are not prepared adequately for life in modern Britain.
- The support given by leaders of the secular subjects for teachers to support pupils' achievements is not strong. Leaders do not check effectively if teachers act on the advice they are given or whether it helps the pupils in their lessons to make progress. In addition, the arrangements to assess what pupils, or groups of pupils, know and can do are not rigorous enough. Leaders do not make sure that teachers always use information about pupils' abilities to enable them to learn well. Because of this, pupils do not all make the rates of progress they could.
- The proprietor has provided suitable accommodation for the school, but some aspects do not meet the requirements of the independent school standards. The current location of the medical room means that it is not suitable for treating sick or injured boys. Early years children are in danger of tripping when using the outdoor space because the surface is damaged and is lifting up in some areas.
- The information that the school provides for parents, carers and others does not meet requirements. This is because the name and contact address of the proprietor is not provided and the names of the headteachers are not included. In addition, no mention is made of the number of staff or a summary of their qualifications, and the number of complaints made in the previous year is not given. Also, no information is provided about pupils' academic achievements.
- Leadership of the Jewish religious studies programme is effective. Leaders in each of three year groups use good procedures to make sure that teachers work well with pupils to help them to learn. They visit lessons frequently and listen to pupils read to demonstrate their learning. They look at pupils' work in their books and the marks they achieve in tests. They ensure that additional support is available where it is needed for individual pupils. They also advise teachers how to improve their teaching and check if their advice is acted upon. This helps pupils to make progress in these subjects.
- Leaders and managers set high standards for behaviour in the school as a whole. This results in the strong ethos of respect between pupils and staff that pervades the school. This has a valuable impact on pupils' learning.
- The school's complaints procedure meets requirements and is used appropriately.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The school's proprietor is not aware of all the requirements for independent schools and, because of this, is not able to hold the school's leaders and managers to account for the safe and effective operation of the school.
 - No effective checking systems are in place to ensure that the requirements of the independent school

standards are met.

Insufficient information is made available to the proprietor about pupils' achievement or the quality of teaching, especially in the secular subjects. As a result, the proprietor is not able to monitor the performance of teachers, to help those who need to improve or to reward good teaching. The proprietor is thus not able to ensure that pupils are making the progress they are capable of.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are inadequate

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. The behaviour of children in the early years setting is good. They attend regularly and are almost always on time for their lessons. They are keen to learn, listen carefully to their teachers and take part enthusiastically in most of their activities. This helps them to learn. They help one another, making sure that all have the opportunity to make the most of their time in the school.
- Pupils move around the school in an orderly and confident way. They are courteous to visitors and are almost always respectful to their teachers.
- They respond well to the school's ethos of respect. They say that there is no bullying and that they feel safe in school. However, their knowledge of the ways they could be hurt by bullying is limited because the school does not make them aware of the dangers of bullying based on prejudice about the differences between people.
- The policy about supporting good behaviour in school and responding to any misbehaviour is unclear and confusing. As a result, staff are not clear about the school's procedures and how they should act if any issues arise.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual and moral development in a way that enables pupils to gain a strong appreciation of the religious and cultural traditions of their own community. They have a clear understanding of right and wrong, and learn to serve others less well off than themselves. However, pupils' social and cultural development is weaker because the school does not encourage them to develop an awareness and appreciation of other cultures or of the characteristics of people who are different from them.
- A well-understood policy exists in the school that partisan political views must not be put forward or promoted.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is inadequate. This is because the school is not thorough in the way it implements the procedures set out in its policies. As a result, pupils and early years children are not fully protected from harm.
- Most of the school staff are not trained in child protection and the designated leads for the school and the early years setting have not received the required advanced level of child protection training. The child protection policy does not provide sufficient information to help staff members to understand different types of child abuse. Also, it fails to explain how they should act if it is reported, or how to respond if there were to be an accusation about a senior staff member. These failings mean that the school does not do enough to make sure that pupils do not come to any harm from child abuse.
- Checks to ensure that staff members are suitable to work with children are not carried out fully and not recorded in a way that allows them to be examined easily for completeness. No senior staff member has undertaken training in safe recruitment. Because of this, the school cannot be sure that all staff are suitable to work with children.
- Some of the procedures to make sure that pupils are protected from the risk of fire in the school buildings are not carried out as required. Although an external company has been to the school to find out about the level of risk of a fire, the school has not acted on the findings of its report. This means that the school has not done all that it could to protect pupils and early years children from the risk of fire.
- Arrangements to ensure that pupils are safe on educational trips are not thorough and are not carefully checked.
- The admission register, which records the names of pupils enrolled at the school is not accurate. In lessons, attendance registers are not always completed. Because of this, the school cannot be sure when pupils have been in school.

The quality of teaching**is inadequate**

- The quality of teaching is inadequate because teachers do not cover the full range of subjects required and because English language is only taught from Year 4. Learning in the secular subjects is inadequate overall because it does not enable all pupils to make the progress of which they are capable.
- In the secular subjects, which include English and mathematics, as well as history, citizenship and physical education, teaching is too varied in quality. As a result, not all pupils develop their abilities to read, write and speak English as well as they could.
- In some lessons teachers do not engage the interest of pupils and do not always set work at levels that match their different levels of ability. Although pupils generally work hard and behave well in these lessons, they are not always attentive and make slower progress than they could. In other lessons, however, teachers use suitable subject knowledge to engage the pupils' interest and support their learning. They ask questions that draw out and reinforce pupils' knowledge and understanding and provide an appropriate range of activities to enable them to make progress. This includes work in reading and writing in English, and developing their understanding and use of number. In these lessons teachers' questions sometimes challenge more-able pupils well and enable them to extend and develop their thinking skills.
- Some pupils, including those who have a statement of special educational needs, receive additional support to help them to improve their learning. Some pupils benefit from these arrangements, However, the school does not check or record the impact of this additional support.
- Teachers of Jewish religious studies use their high levels of expert knowledge to motivate pupils well. Pupils respond with enthusiasm and engage wholeheartedly with the content of these lessons. In these studies all pupils, including the most able, are challenged at the correct level of their ability. As a result, they gain a wide range of knowledge related to the Jewish tradition. This includes the development of the linguistic skills they need as they read and debate in the three languages used in their religion and community: Yiddish, Hebrew and Aramaic.

The achievement of pupils**is inadequate**

- The achievement of pupils is inadequate. Independent school standards relating the quality of education are not met. This is because pupils are not given the opportunity to develop the full range of knowledge and skills that are required. They are not well prepared for the opportunities and responsibilities of adult life.
- The school keeps some, but too few, records of pupils' achievements in English and mathematics. In addition, these records are not gathered or analysed in a way that makes it possible to compare pupils' achievements with those of their peers nationally. The records that are available, when considered alongside the work in pupils' books and in their lessons, indicate that many pupils do not make the progress they could and that their achievement is inadequate. This is the case especially in relation to their fluency in reading and in spoken and written English.
- Short lessons in English or mathematics take place for most pupils on four days each week. Pupils work together through textbooks and have opportunities to learn the basic skills of both subjects. Some respond well and gain new skills and understanding. Others carry out tasks to the best of their ability but make little progress.
- In some English lessons pupils have opportunities to debate. However, their attention wanders because only a few take part actively. In history lessons pupils have very limited chances to think about the subject matter introduced by the teacher. Many become fidgety and bored. Pupils enjoy their physical education lessons but they rely on their existing knowledge and skills, for instance of techniques in football, and do not gain new skills in their lessons.
- The school does not know how much progress is made by the school's most able pupils. However, the written work of some pupils shows that a few achieve well and develop a good command of written English.
- In the Jewish religious studies course, pupils' knowledge and understanding are regularly tested and recorded. All the pupils, including those with a statement of special educational needs, achieve well in these subjects. School records show that the most able pupils make very good progress. Pupils gain the knowledge and skills necessary for them to progress to the next stage of their education in this area.

The early years provision**is inadequate**

- The provision for the early years is inadequate because, as in the main school, it fails to ensure that their welfare and safety are suitably protected, and that they are free from harm. In addition, although a suitable number of staff work in the early years setting, they do not all have the required level of qualifications for work with children. Also, children are at risk of tripping up as they play in the outdoor area because some areas of the surface are loose and so unsafe.
- Leaders of the early years have a suitable understanding of the strengths and areas for development of the setting. For example, they are developing a computerised checking system to improve the range and accuracy of their records on children's progress. In addition, specialists in child development who visit the setting help staff to extend their knowledge and understanding of how to meet the needs of this age group.
- As a result of this leadership, all groups of early years children achieve well. Their progress is effectively checked. Children make good progress from their starting points in all the areas of learning.
- The setting promotes some aspects of their social, moral and spiritual development effectively. However, children do not receive the help they need to become aware of, or to learn to appreciate, the ways people are different from one another.
- The range of subjects covered address children's physical health and personal and emotional development well. The well-resourced classrooms and well-planned, purposeful activities engage and interest all the children in the setting.
- Teachers know the children in their class groups well and are aware of their needs and capabilities. They plan learning activities carefully so that all children have the opportunity to make progress. Teaching assistants know what is required and provide effective support in the lessons. Because of this children become confident learners and develop their knowledge and skills well.
- Strong links and good communication exist with parents and carers. Useful information about the early years setting and about their children's progress is made available for them. This enables them to celebrate and extend at home the learning that the children receive in the setting.
- Very strong relationships between staff and children promote high levels of care and enjoyment among the children.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	131170
Inspection number	422718
DfE registration number	204/6398

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.

Type of school	Jewish boys'
School status	Independent
Age range of pupils	3–13
Gender of pupils	Boys
Number of pupils on the school roll	342
Number of part time pupils	0
Proprietor	Beis Aharon Trust Ltd
Chair	Mr J Lipschitz
Headteachers	Rabbi Twerski Rabbi Greenfeld Rabbi Bransdorfer Mr Pomerantz
Date of previous school inspection	8–9 November 2010
Annual fees (day pupils)	£2,860
Telephone number	020 8800 7368
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