

# Menorah Grammar School

Abbots Road, Edgware, HA8 0QS

**Inspection dates** 23–25 June 2015

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Inadequate</b>	<b>4</b>
Leadership and management	Inadequate	4
Behaviour and safety of pupils	Inadequate	4
Quality of teaching	Good	2
Achievement of pupils	Good	2
Sixth form provision	Inadequate	4

## Summary of key findings

### This is an inadequate school.

- Leaders and managers have not ensured that all the independent school standards are met. The provision for the welfare and safety of students in the sixth form is inadequate.
- Recruitment procedures do not record whether the school has confirmed with referees that applicants are suitable to work with children.
- The school's recording of safeguarding incidents is unclear and incomplete.
- Leaders and managers have not followed the statutory guidance issued by the Secretary of State for Education in dealing with allegations against members of staff.
- Teaching in English does not enable students to achieve as well as in mathematics and science.
- Teachers do not consistently follow the school's marking policy to show students what they need to do to improve their work.
- A small number of students are persistently late for school and lessons.

### The school has the following strengths

- Leaders and managers have carried out an accurate self-assessment and produced an action plan for improving the school, which has begun to show results.
- Students are polite, respectful and behave well.
- Students make good progress. Although they are entered for GCSE and A-level examinations a year early, they achieve results in mathematics and science which are above the national average.
- Students with special educational needs receive a highly personalised education which enables them to make good progress in both their behaviour and their learning.
- Leaders and managers have successfully improved the quality of teaching in both *kodesh* (religious studies) and *chol* (secular studies) through lesson observations and staff training.
- All students in the sixth form gain qualifications which enable them to proceed to university after studying in yeshiva.

### Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school must take action to meet the schedule to The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 and associated requirements. The details are listed in the full report.

## Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out with one day's notice. The inspectors carried out a range of activities to check compliance with the independent school standards.
- The inspectors observed teaching and learning in both *kodesh* and *chol* lessons. They analysed the school's records of students' achievements and behaviour. They scrutinised school policies, including the safeguarding policy, as well as other records and documentation.
- The inspectors spoke to students, staff, senior managers and governors.
- The inspectors took into account the views of parents expressed through 61 responses to the online Parent View survey and to paper-based surveys for parents who did not have internet access. They also considered survey responses from 15 members of staff.

## Inspection team

Michael Glickman, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Angela Cook

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Menorah Grammar School is a secondary school for orthodox Jewish boys.
- The school is owned by a limited company. The governance is through a board of governors.
- There are two distinct strands within the curriculum; *kodesh* (religious studies) and *chol* (secular studies). *Kodesh* is taught in the morning and *chol* in the afternoon.
- The school is registered for 219 students aged between 11 and 18. It currently has 177 students on roll, 12 of whom are in the sixth form. There are 39 students who have statements of special educational needs or education, health and care plans. They are educated in a special unit within the school, known as the Darchei Noam Centre. A very small number students are looked after by a local authority.
- The school is run by a senior leadership team consisting of the headteacher and the head of *kodesh*. They are assisted by a deputy headteacher and an assistant headteacher. There is a separate head for the Darchei Noam Centre
- The school aims 'to educate the whole child and to provide a secure and nurturing environment where students learn tolerance, consideration and respect for others.'
- The school opened in 1978. It was last inspected in January 2012. At that time, it was found to provide a good standard of education. A number of regulations were not met, relating to safeguarding, the safety of students, medical checks on staff, the premises and the complaints policy. At a progress monitoring inspection in June 2012, all the regulations were found to be met except one relating to the state of the decoration of the premises.
- There is no other alternative provision provided off site.

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

- Leaders and managers must improve the provision for the welfare and safety of students by
  - implementing recording systems to ensure that all safeguarding concerns are fully and clearly documented
  - following recruitment procedures to ensure that all appointed staff are suitable to work with children
  - implementing a safeguarding policy which has regard to the statutory guidance on safeguarding issued by the Secretary of State for Education
- Improve the quality of teaching in English to achieve results at GCSE comparable to mathematics and science
- Ensure that all teachers follow the school's marking policy to show students what they need to do to improve their work
- Develop strategies to completely eliminate lateness to school and lessons
- The school must meet the following independent school standards
  - The proprietor must ensure that arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school; and such arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State (paragraphs 7, 7(a) and 7(b)).
  - The proprietor must ensure that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school standards are met consistently; fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently; and actively promote the well-being of pupils (paragraphs 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b) and 34(1)(c)).

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are inadequate

- School leaders have failed to put in place recruitment and incident recording procedures which ensure the safety of students. As a result, a number of independent school standards has not been met.
- The school has accepted information from job applicants and referees without fully ensuring that applicants are suitable to work with children. Although this may have been done verbally, it has not been formally recorded.
- The school does not record safeguarding incidents and allegations against staff in a standard format. This results in unclear and incomplete records. For example, it is not always possible to distinguish between witness statements and school comments. In some cases, important pieces of documentation are missing.
- The school has not taken into consideration statutory guidance issued by the Secretary of State for Education when dealing with allegations against staff. It has no record of whether it has reported cases to the local authority designated officer.
- Leaders and managers have successfully created an environment in which learning and good behaviour can flourish. They monitor students' progress closely in both *kodesh* and *chol* and meet with all teachers regularly and hold them to account if students do not progress as well as expected. Leaders have instituted teacher training programmes and carry out regular lesson observations. Teachers are also encouraged to observe one another's lessons. This has been effective in improving the quality of teaching.
- Middle managers are effective in improving teaching and learning. They are effectively involved in staff training, lesson observations and improvements in administration and student tracking.
- Leaders and managers know the local community well and are sensitive to their needs. They have recognised that parents wish their sons to leave school after Year 12 and proceed to yeshiva (Talmudical College). They therefore enter students a year early for both GCSE and A-level examinations, to ensure that they leave school with academic qualifications. In most subjects this approach is successful.
- The school works well to promote equality of opportunity and tackle discrimination. Students learn to respect others, regardless of culture or lifestyle. Disabled students are well supported by the school and their classmates.
- Students receive careers guidance throughout the school. Younger students are already considering a range of career options.
- There is very good provision for students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. In *kodesh*, a programme linked to the weekly Bible portion covers topics relating to personal behaviour and relationships. Weekly *chol* assemblies look at areas such as democracy and current affairs. Local politicians have visited the school and been questioned by students. Through joint working between *kodesh* and *chol*, students are well prepared for life in modern Britain. They develop respect for democracy and the rule of law and learn about British institutions. The school has ensured that they are not exposed to any extremist views.
- The school occupies part of a former local authority school building. The remainder of the building houses a primary school which has its own entrance and playground. There is no access between the premises. Although meeting requirements, the building is generally in poor condition.
- The school maintains admission and attendance registers which comply with requirements.
- The school provides information to parents, including its safeguarding and complaints policy, via its website. As many parents do not have internet access, the information is also made available in printed form.
- The school works well with local authorities who fund looked after students and those with statements of special educational needs or education, health and care plans. It provides them with information for annual reviews and accounts of expenditure.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors are in close contact with both the headteacher and the head of *kodesh*. They are well informed about the quality of teaching and the achievement of students.
  - Governors are all parents of students or former students. They are very accessible to the parent body and are responsive to its requests. They make effective use of their professional skills in supporting school development, including finance, human resources and building maintenance.
  - The governors have drawn up and begun to implement plans to significantly improve the standard of the premises. They have purchased resources to support teaching which have been deployed

effectively.

The governors are responsible for overseeing the work of the senior leadership team. They have decided not to link teachers' pay progression to the quality of their teaching.

The Chair of the Governing Body has responsibility for safeguarding. He has received appropriate training. Although he is informed of safeguarding incidents, he was unaware of the deficiencies in the school's recording procedures.

## The behaviour and safety of pupils are inadequate

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of students is good. Students are polite and welcoming to visitors. They generally behave well in lessons and are quick to follow instructions. They concentrate well and are eager to learn. As a result, they make good progress.
- The school has identified that students are sometimes late for school or for individual lessons. It has taken steps to address the issue and has seen improvements. However, a small number of students still fail to arrive in school or at their next lesson punctually.
- Students in the Darchei Noam Centre often have behavioural difficulties. These have been very effectively addressed using highly personalised behaviour management schemes. As a result, students in the unit work well and make good progress. Parents are full of praise for the improvements in behaviour that they have seen in their sons.

### Safety

- The school's work to keep students safe and secure is inadequate. This is because the school has not implemented the proper procedures when recruiting staff and when recording and dealing with safeguarding incidents. As a result, some regulations relating to the welfare, health and safety of students have not been met.
- Students say that they feel safe in school. Incidents of bullying are rare and are promptly dealt with by staff. Students know about different types of bullying and understand the importance of respecting people with different lifestyles.
- Students learn to keep themselves safe online as part of their information and communication technology course. They are also taught about personal safety. For example, a representative from Transport for London recently spoke about safety on public transport.
- The school has recently improved the security of the premises. All visitors have their identity checked before being permitted to enter the building.
- Risk assessments have been carried out by an external company. Fire safety equipment is professionally maintained and fire drills are carried out regularly.

## The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching is good. As a result, students make good progress, including in literacy and reading. Progress in mathematics and science is outstanding. The school fully meets the regulations relating to the curriculum and teaching.
- Teaching in mathematics and science concentrates on empowering students to learn by themselves. They have full access to all learning materials and are able to work at their own pace, with support available if required. As a result, students who were unsuccessful in primary school now make good progress.
- The teaching in English and humanities, due in part to a high turnover of staff, is not consistently challenging and so not all students make as much progress as they are capable.
- Teachers in both *kodesh* and *chol* track students' achievement closely. This information is used to highlight where additional support is required. Weaker students are enabled to progress at a rate comparable to the rest of the class.
- Students in the Darchei Noam Centre receive teaching tailored to their individual needs in accordance with their statements. Appropriate therapies are available when required. This highly personalised teaching enables them to access much of the curriculum. Some are able to gain qualifications at GCSE.
- The school has a detailed marking policy which shows teachers how they can help students to improve their work. However, teachers do not follow this policy consistently. As a result, students are not always shown what they need to do to improve or what their next steps should be.

**The achievement of pupils****is good**

- All students, including those looked after by local authorities, achieve well. The progress students make in mathematics and science compared to their starting points is outstanding. This is the result of good teaching. Students make relatively slower progress in English.
- The school assesses all students on entry and uses the results to set them challenging targets. Students are entered for GCSE examinations a year early. Despite early entry, they exceed their targets in mathematics and science and achieve GCSE grades significantly higher than the national average. In English, students generally reach their targets and achieve GCSE grades around the national average.
- Students make good progress in *kodesh*. A range of targeted interventions supports weaker students to develop their skills in Hebrew and Aramaic. All students are able to tackle complex texts by the time they enter sixth form.
- The most-able students are helped to proceed at the right pace or to broaden their understanding of a subject. This is particularly facilitated by teaching in mathematics and science. In *kodesh*, they are given additional lectures and study opportunities. In *chol*, they take additional GCSEs.
- Students in the Darchei Noam Centre enter with levels of achievement significantly below those expected for their age. As a result of good teaching, they make very good progress in literacy, reading and mathematics. Some are able to take GCSE examinations and achieve good results in relation to their starting points. The school delays GCSE entry if they feel that it will be beneficial.
- Staff work well with students to develop their self-confidence and self-esteem.

**The sixth form provision****is inadequate**

- The sixth form provision is inadequate because a number of regulations affecting the welfare, health and safety of students have not been met. As a result, leadership and management of the sixth form are inadequate, as is the provision for the safety of students.
- The school is aware that parents wish students to proceed to yeshiva after Year 12. It therefore enters students for A levels a year early, so that they leave school with the appropriate qualifications for university entrance. Despite early entry, achievement is good as a result of good teaching. Students achieve results comparable to, or better than, the national average.
- All students in the sixth form are offered work experience placements through an independent external organisation. They have the opportunity to shadow and be mentored by businessmen and professionals in their areas of interest.
- Students feel a sense of responsibility for younger students. They describe the school as a family. They regularly assist younger students with their *kodesh* studies. They organise an annual football tournament for the whole school and coordinate fundraising activities and celebrations for festivals.
- All students proceed to yeshiva. The school researches the range of available yeshivas and ensures that students find places in the most appropriate institution. Students are offered taster sessions in yeshivas in Britain. Staff also travel to Israel to identify suitable yeshivas there.
- Many students proceed to university after studying for a number of years in yeshiva. Current students already have clear ideas about the professions they wish to enter. The school provides advice on the most suitable courses and the entrance requirements.

## 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.gov.uk/government/publications/non-association-independent-school-inspection-handbook](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/non-association-independent-school-inspection-handbook).

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	101387
<b>Inspection number</b>	462856
<b>DfE registration number</b>	302/6089

This inspection was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, 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 school
<b>School status</b>	Independent school
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Boys
<b>Gender of pupils in the sixth form</b>	Boys
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	177
<b>Of which, number on roll in sixth form</b>	12
<b>Number of part time pupils</b>	0
<b>Proprietor</b>	RABG Memorial Ltd
<b>Chair</b>	Allan Becker
<b>Headteacher</b>	Kevin Brown
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	16–17 January 2012
<b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>	£6,000
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8906 9756
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