

Beis Malka Girls' School

93 Alkham Road, London, N16 6XD

Inspection dates

15 July 2015

Overall outcome

Unmet independent school standards identified

Reason for the inspection

- This emergency inspection was commissioned by the Department for Education to report on the school's compliance with the whole or specified parts of Parts 1, 2, 3 and 8 of the the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.
- The inspection focused on the following parts of the Independent School Standards: Part 1: Quality of education, paragraphs 2(1)(b)(ii), 2(2)(d), 2(2)e, 2(2)(i) and 3(i); the whole of Part 2: Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils; Part 3: Welfare, health and safety of pupils, paragraphs 7(a) and 7(b) particularly focusing on the wording of the school's safeguarding policy; the whole of Part 8: Quality of leadership and management.
- The inspection was conducted without notice.

Main findings

- The school's curriculum reflects the school's aim and ethos which, in the headteacher's words, is 'to provide an Hasidic orthodox education to the pupils with clear guidance on how to live their lives and which covers all aspects of life'.
- Leaders subscribe strictly to the values and ethos of the Orthodox Jewish faith. Leaders consider that the precepts of their faith take precedence over the requirements of the Independent School Standards.
- The headteacher works closely with governors, some of whom have dedicated office space within the school.
- The school's curriculum covers a range of subjects which includes English, mathematics, science, art, Hebrew, accounting and physical education (PE). GCSE science is limited to the single award. There are no opportunities for students to sit separate single science subjects, or double and triple award science, at GCSE.
- The school's written policies, plans and practice promote some aspects of fundamental British values. Displays around the school are simultaneously written in English and Hebrew; these reflect life in modern Britain with particular emphasis on community, the recent general election and citizenship.
- The school's personal, social, health and economic education (PSHEE) programme encourages pupils to show respect for other people in a general sense. However, it does not pay particular regard to all of the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010.
- Pupils speak generally, but articulately, about respect, democracy and the rule of law and know the difference between the civil and criminal justice systems. They know about a range of different faiths and beliefs. In discussion, pupils emphasised the importance of respecting difference and were able to give limited examples of what 'difference' means, for example age, skin colour, looks and disability.
- However, pupils were not able to give any further examples regarding 'difference'. The headteacher accurately predicted the pupils' lack of knowledge about homophobic bullying, because 'they wouldn't know that word'.
- Leaders deliberately prohibit teaching about, or any reference to, certain protected

characteristics, for example sexual orientation or preference. The school's justification for this is that acknowledgement of these characteristics contravenes the school's ethos. The headteacher commented, 'If we had to teach that we would have to close as an orthodox school.'

- Careers guidance provided by the school is limited in scope. It does not help pupils to fulfil their potential because they are not aware of the range of options available to them. As a result, 28 current Year 11 leavers have chosen to go to an Orthodox Jewish seminary and the remaining three leavers are going to Israel.
- Some pupils participate in a volunteering programme. However, there was insufficient evidence to demonstrate that pupils are able to contribute positively and more widely to society outside their faith community.
- The school's safeguarding policy does not meet requirements. It refers to guidance and documents on safeguarding and safer recruitment which are out of date and refer to terminology no longer in use.
- The safeguarding policy does not contain a job description for the three designated safeguarding leads in the school. If an accusation were to be made against the headteacher, the policy states that the Chair of Governors would 'take responsibility for dealing with the issue'. However, the policy is vague on what action the Chair of Governors should take.
- The designated child protection leads do not have robust knowledge of the latest guidance from the Department for Education. As a result, arrangements are not securely in place to safeguard and promote the safety and welfare of pupils at the school.
- The single central record meets requirements; however, it is not formally or systematically checked by senior leaders.
- The admissions register for the school does not meet requirements. There are almost no entries in the 'Details of Leaving' column and are limited to recording 'Israel' or 'went abroad'.
- The school site contains an unregistered crèche.
- Because a significant number of independent school standards were found to be unmet, including those for safeguarding, inspectors judged that the school was also failing to meet the standards relating to leadership and management.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school must take action to meet The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 and associated requirements

- Ensure that leaders pay particular regard to all of the protected characteristics of the Equality Act 2010 in the planning and delivery of the school's PSHE and spiritual, moral, social and cultural programmes. (Paragraphs 2(2)(d)(ii) and 5(b)(vi))
- Ensure that pupils have access to impartial careers advice that enables them to make informed choices and helps to encourage them to fulfil their potential. (Paragraph 2(2)(e))
- Ensure that teaching does not undermine fundamental British values, particularly respect for people of all protected characteristics as set out in part 6 of the 2010 Act. (Paragraph 3(i) and 3(j))
- Ensure that pupils have the opportunity to contribute positively to society more widely. (Paragraph 5(b)(iii))
- Ensure that arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school by ensuring the safeguarding policy and other related policies are up to date and that the designated child protection leads have job descriptions which they fully understand. (Paragraph 7(a) and 7(b))
- Ensure that the crèche on the school site is registered and operates in accordance with relevant legislation. (Paragraph 7(a) and 7(b))
- Ensure that the admission register accurately records the details of destinations of leavers. (Paragraph 15)

- 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. (Paragraph 34(1)(a))
- Ensure that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently.(Paragraph 34(1)(b))
- Ensure that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school actively promote the well-being of pupils.(Paragraph 34(1)(c))

Inspection team

Vanessa Ward, Lead Inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

John Seal

Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about this school

- Beis Malka Girls' School is an independent Orthodox Jewish day school for girls located in Stoke Newington in the London Borough of Hackney.
- The school has 479 pupils on roll aged from three to 16.
- The school opened in 1980 and was last inspected by Ofsted in October 2013, when its overall effectiveness was judged to be good.
- The school has separate secondary, primary and early years provision. The secondary and primary provision is housed on the site where the inspection took place. The early years provision is located on a separate site and did not form part of this inspection.
- The main school site also contains a crèche for children aged four months to two years. The school confirmed that the crèche is unregistered. On the morning of inspection, 29 babies and young children were in attendance. The school asserted that the crèche is solely for the childcare of children of members of staff and that no child remains for more than four hours per day. The crèche manager did state that it was possible that some babies or young children may on occasion remain in the crèche for longer than four hours a day.
- The school has 46 pupils with additional or special needs.
- The school has applied to be a state-funded school.

School details

Unique reference number	100295
Inspection number	465132
DfE registration number	204/6337

This inspection was conducted at the request of the registration authority for independent schools. It was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008.

Type of school	Orthodox Jewish Day School
School status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	3–16
Gender of pupils	Girls
Number of pupils on the school roll	479
Number of part time pupils	None
Proprietor	Mr A Grosman
Chair	Mr A Grosman
Headteacher	Mrs Wind – Secondary School Mrs Sheinfeld – Primary School
Date of previous school inspection	15–17 October 2013
Annual fees (day pupils)	£2,080
Telephone number	0208 806 2070
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