

# Beis Ruchel Girls' School

1–7 Seymour Road, Manchester M8 5BQ

<b>Inspection dates</b>	22–24 June 2016
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. Pupils are eager to learn and relationships between all members of the community are characterised by warmth and generosity of spirit.
- Pupils' well-being is of high priority in the school. As a result, pupils feel safe, well cared for and valued.
- The teaching of reading and mathematics in Chol (secular) lessons is very effective. This ensures that all pupils make rapid progress irrespective of their starting points.
- The Kodesh (Jewish studies) curriculum complements pupils' secular studies effectively, placing the learning of subjects such as history, geography and music within the context of the pupils' Jewish heritage.
- Phonics (the sounds that letters make) is taught well. Pupils enjoy reading at school and have opportunities to read widely in a range of subjects.
- Pupils who have special educational needs or disability are well supported. As a result, they make good progress in their academic and personal development.
- The headteacher knows her pupils as individuals and they know her. She sets high expectations and pupils rise to the challenge and achieve well.
- The recently introduced systems for monitoring the quality of teachers' professional practice are leading to further improvements in the quality of teaching and learning.
- Senior leaders and governors know the school well. They all have a secure understanding of how the quality of teaching has an impact on pupils' learning.
- Children get off to a good start in the early years and settle in quickly.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered well in the curriculum.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The feedback pupils receive on the quality of their work does not always help them to learn from their mistakes, in line with the school's policy.
- Occasionally, the activities that the most able pupils are given to do in lessons are not challenging enough. When this happens their learning slows.
- The learning environment is uninspiring as classrooms and corridors are shabby.
- Senior leaders' analysis of how well groups of pupils are achieving is not sharp enough. This limits leaders' and managers' ability to consider factors beyond the school that influence pupils' performance.
- Pupils do not have a sufficiently extensive English vocabulary to help them make the most of their writing skills.

### Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

## Full report

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

- Bring all teaching in the school up to the quality of the best by:
  - ensuring that all teachers select activities for use in lessons that provide a suitable degree of challenge for the most able pupils in order to accelerate their progress even more
  - making sure that feedback and marking of pupils' work is compliant with the school's policy so that pupils are able to learn from their mistakes
  - maximising the opportunities in lessons to introduce pupils to a wide range of English words, and encouraging pupils to use them, in order to enrich their writing.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
  - sharpening the analysis of pupils' attainment and progress data so that senior leaders and governors have a secure understanding of how well groups of pupils in the school are performing
  - ensuring that the school interior is refreshed as a matter of urgency, in order to provide teachers and pupils with an inviting and high-quality learning environment.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The headteacher, ably supported by her senior colleagues, brings a considered yet determined approach to her role. She is passionate about ensuring that the pupils achieve their best and works tirelessly for the benefit of the school community. High expectations and aspirations are woven into the fabric of the school, uniting everyone in a common sense of purpose. This leads to pupils knowing that they belong and that they are cared for.
- The school is well led and managed. Senior leaders and governors have ensured that the provision is compliant with the requirements of the independent school standards.
- Pupils' behaviour is exemplary, and they are extremely well looked after and cared for by the school community.
- Parents who responded to Ofsted's questionnaire are overwhelmingly positive about the school. All respondents state that they would recommend the school to another parent, which endorses the quality of what the school has to offer and its leadership. As one parent said: 'This is an excellent school. My children love coming to school. They learn well, play well and feel well looked after.'
- Much greater rigour has recently been introduced into the arrangements for monitoring staff performance. Senior leaders regularly check the quality of teaching. They scrutinise the work in pupils' books to determine if it is meeting pupils' needs and to evaluate the quality of teachers' marking. This enables senior leaders to gain an accurate picture of the quality of professional practice in the school.
- Leaders know where teaching is strong and where the quality of classroom performance could be improved further by additional training. Although it is early days, teachers say they are benefiting from the more rigorous approach to improving their classroom performance. However, despite this rigorous approach to monitoring, teachers do not apply the school's marking policy consistently.
- Senior leaders have formed an effective partnership with a local Jewish primary school to develop a system for assessing pupils' progress in light of the changes to the national curriculum. Working with the new secular subject specifications, senior leaders have identified clear expectations of pupils and monitor pupils' progress closely. The school's systems for assessing pupils' performance show that pupils make good progress from their starting points.
- Specialist teachers teach the Kodesh curriculum entirely in Yiddish. Although the Kodesh curriculum is designed primarily to provide pupils with the knowledge, skills and understanding of their heritage, it complements effectively the Chol curriculum. Pupils study, for example, aspects of history, geography and music through Jewish teachings. Pupils engage well with lessons in the Kodesh. This is exemplified every morning during prayers, when the school is filled with pupils' voices raised in song.
- The school's curriculum is broad and balanced, providing pupils with dedicated English and mathematics lessons. Senior leaders have ensured that the further development of pupils' literacy and numeracy are planned for across the curriculum. Aspects of history, for example 'The Vikings' and 'What it was like to live in Victorian England', are themes in English.
- Pupils' awareness of the wider world is covered in geography, and pupils are introduced to fundamental ideas about the way the world works through their study of science. Art, music and physical education are featured in the curriculum and visits to a museum and the City of Manchester contribute to broadening pupils' horizons. These experiences promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively.
- Pupils are encouraged to take an interest in British government and the democratic process. For example, during the inspection, two Year 6 pupils spoke in assembly about the advantages and disadvantages of Great Britain remaining in the European Union.
- Senior leaders have an accurate understanding of how well the school is doing, which informs their plans for developing the school. However, with the exception of reading, their analysis of pupil performance is not sharp enough. On a pupil-by-pupil basis, senior leaders know how well individuals are achieving. This enables them to target extra help for those pupils who fall behind. However, they do not analyse the information they have on achievement well enough to determine the performance of groups of pupils. As a consequence, they are unable to consider other factors beyond the school, which may influence pupils' outcomes and inform plans for improving the school.
- The school buildings are safe and the school site secure. However, the learning environment is shabby. The plaster on the walls and corridors is chipped, the paintwork damaged and the floor tiles worn. As a result, the learning environment is uninviting and some classrooms are untidy. Despite these obvious shortcomings, pupils and teachers work well together.

## ■ The governance of the school

- The governing body comprises a small group of individuals who are all representatives of the local Jewish community. They have been in post for some considerable time, some members having been with the school since it opened. As a result, they know the school well and have accrued a wealth of experience that ensures they are well placed to provide effective oversight of the school.
  - The governing body meets regularly. At these meetings, the headteacher provides the governors with information about the operation of the school. This information includes an evaluation of the quality of teaching and its impact on pupils' outcomes. This enables the governing body to hold the headteacher to account for the school's performance and also to support her and her senior colleagues in their work to improve the school.
  - The governing body has plans to move the school from the current site into larger, more up-to-date accommodation. However, it is aware that, in the interim, the current school buildings need refreshing to provide a more inviting learning environment for the pupils.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The school's safeguarding policy meets statutory requirements. The school's designated officer for child protection and the school staff have received appropriate training. As a result, pupils' safety and welfare are promoted extremely effectively. The school does not have a website, so school policies relating to child protection are made available to parents on request.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- Senior leaders have invested in good-quality resources to provide teachers with a framework for the teaching of English, mathematics, science and reading in the Chol curriculum. This ensures appropriate coverage of the subject content and at an age-appropriate level for the pupils.
- Pupils make the most rapid progress when teachers select activities that challenge the pupils to think hard about their learning and apply their developing skills and understanding to tackle more complex problems. In mathematics, for example, pupils demonstrate their grasp of the key ideas by answering questions of ever-increasing difficulty. This helps them to secure their understanding and move forward with their learning. However, in a few lessons, teaching does not always tax the most able pupils. When this happens, their rate of progress slows.
- Pupils are enabled to see the relevance of mathematics in their other subjects. For example, upper key stage 2 pupils were able to demonstrate their graph skills by carrying out a survey among their peers and representing the results as a pictogram. In another activity, pupils in a food technology class were given a budget to buy the ingredients to decorate cupcakes. In these ways, the importance of mathematics as a key skill is being emphasised to the pupils and their numeracy is being developed effectively.
- The development of pupils' literacy, both written and oral, is given high priority in Chol lessons. Irrespective of the subject being taught, teachers maximise opportunities to introduce pupils to key words and reinforce the rules of English grammar. Given that most pupils speak English as an additional language, teaching is effective in improving pupils' confidence in structuring their writing and using correct grammar and punctuation. However, some middle- and lower-ability pupils only use a narrow range of words in their writing. This limits their attainment at the highest levels.
- The teaching of reading in English is highly effective and promoted well across the curriculum, with all groups of pupils making rapid progress. Pupils are able to use their understanding of phonics skilfully to read unfamiliar words. For older pupils, this enables them to read fluently and maintain their engagement with the text. When they read aloud, the best readers use appropriate emphasis and cadence to capture the listener's interest.
- At the start of the academic year, teachers set pupils targets in terms of what pupils need to do in each of their subjects in order to move their learning forward. This enables pupils to take ownership of their learning and make good progress.
- There is a lack of consistency in the application of the school's marking policy by teachers. Where marking is most effective, pupils are given regular feedback about what they have done well and what they need to do to improve their work, which pupils then act on. However, in some pupils' books, marking is unhelpful. In these circumstances, opportunities for pupils to learn from their mistakes are being missed.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare are outstanding

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- The safety of pupils is a priority of the school. Senior leaders' records in relation to safeguarding are meticulously kept. These records provide a detailed, chronological record of any concerns and the resulting actions taken. All staff have undertaken the required training in order to ensure they keep pupils safe. The staff are fully aware of the signs that indicate a child may be at risk of harm and the action they should take to ensure the children's well-being.
- The school's leaders believe that the home is the foundation for the moral development of the child. Accordingly, senior leaders provide help and support to parents as they teach their children to stay safe, for example helping children to recognise the signs that someone may mean them harm and the help that is available to minimise the risks.
- The single central record of the checks made on the suitability of staff to work with young people is stringently monitored to ensure it fully meets statutory requirements. When potential employees are interviewed for a post at the school, at least one member of the panel has undergone safer recruitment training. In these ways, the possibility of appointing an unsuitable individual is minimised.
- Relationships between the teachers and the pupils, and the pupils' relationships with each other, are characteristically warm and friendly. A family atmosphere pervades throughout the school. As one parent who responded to the questionnaire wrote: 'The headteacher is so caring, she treats each child as if they were her own daughter.' Accordingly, pupils feel very safe, highly valued and extremely well cared for in an emotionally secure environment.
- The school and its community feel that children should be protected from invidious aspects of the internet and modern technology. As a result, the pupils do not have access to the worldwide web or mobile devices. Senior leaders believe that this shields pupils from online dangers.
- The school site is secure. Closed-circuit television enables the site to be monitored throughout the day. This ensures that only staff and invited guests can gain access to the school site.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils' conduct around the school is exemplary. Pupils invariably adhere to the school rules. This is exemplified in the way they move around the extremely compact school site, acting responsibly in the corridors to minimise the risk of congestion and following their teachers' instructions the first time of asking. As a result, the school is a very calm and purposeful place of scholarship.
- Pupils display very positive attitudes to learning, eager to tackle the tasks their teachers have set them in lessons. Pupils' willingness to learn does not falter even when the teaching is less than inspiring.
- The school's philosophy is rooted in the values of the pursuit of justice for all, the call to 'love your neighbour' and to follow ways of peace. These values are borne out in the pupils, who are invariably well mannered, polite and caring, and who also have a keen sense of right and wrong.
- Pupils express the belief that everyone is of equal value and deserving of respect. As a consequence, the community does not tolerate discrimination and the school's work to ensure equality of opportunities is admirable. This makes a significant contribution to pupils' understanding of the fundamental British values of tolerance and respect for others.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school; this is reflected in their high rates of attendance. If a pupil does not arrive at school in the morning and the headteacher has not received advanced notice of the absence, then she will contact parents. This enables her to determine the reasons for the non-attendance and make sure that the child is safe.
- Pupils have a fundamental understanding of what constitutes bullying behaviour. They know that difference, ignorance and misunderstanding can lead to people being unkind, making others feel uncomfortable or scared. The school's religious ethos, which places the child at the centre of the school's work and celebrates their individuality, means that bullying at Beis Ruchel is extremely rare. Should any bullying occur the pupils are confident that their teachers will sort it out.

## Outcomes for pupils

are good

- Pupils make good progress from their starting points.
- After a dip in results in 2015, senior leaders revised the way that phonics was taught in the school. As a result, pupils' attainment in the phonics screening check at the end of Year 1 rose to 90% this year. This is nine percentage points above the national average for girls. As most pupils speak Yiddish as their first language, this represents strong progress, ensuring that pupils are well prepared to tackle the reading materials they will encounter in key stage 2.
- The school's assessment information shows that all groups of pupils are making at least good progress in reading. The data for lower-ability pupils is particularly impressive, with all pupils in this group making at least the progress expected of them, and a minority of pupils doing even better than this.
- Evidence from the work in books shows that pupils make rapid progress in the way they structure their written work. As pupils move through the school, their writing becomes increasingly well organised. Sentences are usually grammatically correct, and pupils' spelling and punctuation are accurate. In the best examples, particularly those of the most able girls, writing can be lively and ideas sustained so that stories have an appropriate structure.
- The school places a great deal of emphasis on handwriting style, which is developed as pupils move through the school. As a result, by Year 6 pupils have adopted a legible, cursive style. Although pupils are taught to structure their writing well, what prevents them from attaining at the highest level is their limited choice of vocabulary. Only the most able pupils use words that add effect to a piece of writing in order to capture the readers' attention. This is a result of middle- and lower-ability pupils still getting to grips with learning English.
- The structured approach that the school has adopted to the teaching of mathematics ensures that the work pupils are given to do is appropriate to their age and stage of mathematical understanding. By the end of Year 2, for example, pupils can solve addition and subtraction problems involving two-figure numbers, with the most able pupils competently dealing with numbers bigger than this. In Year 6, pupils can demonstrate their understanding of symmetry, use the four rules of number to solve mathematical puzzles and use fractions to describe proportions of objects. Accordingly, pupils of all abilities make good progress in mathematics and have the required knowledge and understanding to get off to a good start in key stage 3.
- Pupils who have special educational needs or disability are well supported. The special educational needs coordinator determines the support pupils require to help them keep up and ensures that this is in place. The school's records indicate that all pupils on the special educational needs register make good progress. Pupils with emotional difficulties make particularly impressive gains in their personal development as a result of the help they receive.

## Early years provision

is good

- Children get off to a good start in the Nursery. As is the case in the rest of the school, staff have high expectations of what the children can achieve. As a result of effective teaching and a nurturing environment, children make good progress in most areas of learning.
- Children enter the Nursery with skills and abilities broadly typical for their age. They are self-confident, aware and manage their behaviour well. They are able to form relationships with other children and their teachers, and show good control and coordination. They are aware of risks when they play and have age-appropriate numeracy skills. However, as almost all children speak Yiddish as their first language, their reading and writing skills in English are underdeveloped.
- All lessons in the Nursery are taught in Yiddish, with English being introduced to the children in the Reception Year. This is a conscious decision by the leadership of the early years provision, to help the children settle in to the routine of school.
- The children make good gains in their development in all the required areas of learning, with the exception of reading and writing in English. This is planned for, as pupils' English language skills are developed as they move through the school. Consequently, within the school's religious and cultural context, children are well prepared for their move into Year 1.
- The teaching of mathematics is strong in the early years, and children's progress from their starting point is particularly rapid in this area of learning.

- Relationships between the children, and between the children and their teachers, are as strong as they are in the rest of the school. The children play well together and work cooperatively on joint activities. They are able to sit quietly when a member of staff requires their attention and display high levels of energy and joy when playing.
- The early years staff engage well with parents. Effective communication between home and school ensures that significant adults in each child's life share information and are well informed about their child's progress.
- The early years leader manages the provision effectively. She supports staff training, which has resulted in consistently strong teaching across the early years provision.
- The staff know the children well. They keep detailed evidence of each child's learning journey, enabling them to make accurate judgements about each child's progress and level of development, which in turn informs their teaching. For example, more demanding activities are provided for the most able and extra help is given where a child is falling behind.
- The leader's analysis of pupils' attainment, together with progress data, does not go beyond the level of individual children. As a consequence, leaders and managers of the provision do not have a secure grasp of how groups of children are progressing, in order to inform future developments.
- The teachers make the best use of the indoor and outdoor areas of learning at their disposal. However, as is the case in the rest of the school, the decor is tired and in need of refreshing.
- Arrangements for safeguarding the children in the early years are consistent with those in the rest of the school. The staff have up-to-date training in child protection and know the action they should take if they suspect a child is at risk of harm.
- The early years provision meets all the requirements of the independent school standards.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	130286
<b>Inspection number</b>	10008551
<b>DfE registration number</b>	352/6050

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 Day School
<b>School status</b>	Independent school
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Girls
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	264
<b>Number of part-time pupils</b>	0
<b>Proprietor</b>	Mr B Krausz
<b>Chair</b>	Mr B Krausz
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs E Krausz
<b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>	£1,591–£3,900
<b>Telephone number</b>	0161 795 1830
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:beisruchelmanchester@tiscali.co.uk">beisruchelmanchester@tiscali.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	2 February 2010

## Information about this school

- Beis Ruchel Girls School is an independent school, which opened in November 1995.
- The school is located in the Crumpsall area of Manchester, about four miles north of the city centre.
- There are 264 pupils on roll.
- The school is a provider of nursery education.
- There are 14 pupils who have special educational needs or disability. Very few pupils have an education, health and care plan.
- The school provides education for the children of the religious Orthodox Jewish Chassidic communities in Manchester and Salford.
- Most pupils are members of the Satmar community; however, girls from other Jewish backgrounds attend the school.
- The school offers a religious (Kodesh) and a secular (Chol) curriculum.
- All pupils are bilingual, able to speak Yiddish and English. Almost all pupils speak English as their second language.
- The school aims to prepare the girls to become active members of their community, living ethical lives in harmony with others.
- All pupils are educated on the school site.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning across the school, scrutinised the work in pupils' books and heard pupils read.
- Meetings were held with the governing body, the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the special educational needs coordinator, a group of teachers and two groups of pupils.
- The pupils were observed arriving at the school in the morning and during playtimes. At these times, inspectors took the opportunity to have informal conversations with pupils.
- In order to check their compliance with the independent school standards, inspectors reviewed a number of school policies and the school's arrangements for keeping pupils safe.
- The school's records of pupils' attendance, behaviour, attainment and progress were examined.
- Senior leaders' evaluations of how well the school is doing and the school development plan were reviewed.
- Accompanied by the site manager, one inspector made a tour of the school site to check that the school buildings and grounds meet requirements.
- Inspectors took into account the 52 responses to Ofsted's parents' questionnaire.

## Inspection team

Charles Lowry, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Jonathan Woodyatt

Ofsted Inspector

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