

# Beis Aharon School

22 September 2016

83-95 Bethune Road, London, N16 5ED

**Overall outcome** 

The school does not meet all of the independent school standards that were checked during this inspection

## Main inspection findings

Part 1. Quality of education provided

Paragraphs 2(1), 2(1)(a), (b)(i)(ii); 2(2), 2(2)(a), (e)(i-iii), (f), (h), (i).

- At the time of the last inspection, senior leaders were not making sufficient time available to implement the secular curriculum. The curriculum policy did not include the range of required subjects. Commercial curriculum resources had been purchased, but classroom resources where of poor quality and limited in range. Physical education was limited in its scope. As a result, pupils demonstrated a very restricted understanding of a range of subjects.
- A new headteacher responsible for the secular curriculum has been appointed. He has realised that standards in English and mathematics are far too low. As a result, senior leaders decided to dedicate all the time allocated to the secular curriculum to the teaching of these subjects. They have extended the timetable to one and a half hours per day. Leaders have also purchased additional curriculum resources. However, the time allocated to the secular curriculum is still insufficient to enable pupils to learn in sufficient depth and across the required range of subjects. Therefore, these aspects of the standards continue to be unmet.
- Leaders have not taken pupils' starting points into sufficient account when determining schemes of work. For example, leaders pointed out that some creative and aesthetic learning occurs during pupils' religious education. However, teachers are only just beginning to determine pupils' existing skills. Physical education is provided for all pupils. However, leaders have not yet implemented plans to extend the range of sports and skills on offer. As a result, pupils' physical education currently remains too restricted to meet the requirements of the standards.

Paragraphs 3, 3(a), (b), (c), (d), (e), (f), (g), and 4.

- At the time of the last inspection, the work pupils were set did not meet the needs of different ability groups. There was no framework in place to assess pupils' progress. Work seen in pupils' books was limited in range and of poor quality.
- The school included English in its curriculum planning for some year groups. However, younger pupils' knowledge and understanding of spoken and written English was poor.
- The headteacher for secular education has introduced a system of assessment for some aspects of English and mathematics. Children in the early years are assessed on their progress in some areas of learning. Leaders are now using this information to make decisions about how to develop the curriculum and improve the quality of teaching. However, leaders do not check pupils' learning frequently or extensively enough to gain sufficient understanding of their needs. For example, checks are made on pupils' understanding of some aspects of English grammar. However, there are very limited opportunities for pupils to write at length in English. As a result,



leaders and teachers cannot tell how well pupils can apply their skills to their own writing. Pupils' opportunities to learn in a wide range of subjects remains very limited. Commercial schemes of work and text books have been bought on the basis of some of the assessments which have been completed. However, many of them have not yet been put into use. As a result, leaders are unable to evaluate pupils' progress. This leaves pupils poorly prepared for the next stage of their education and for their future lives.

- The standards related to the quality of teaching continue to be unmet. Pupils' work in English and mathematics demonstrates that a more systematic approach is being taken to help pupils make progress. Some pupils benefit from written guidance on how to improve their work. Pupils who read to inspectors were able to pronounce words accurately and tackle unfamiliar words. However, this is not consistently the case across the whole school. Senior leaders are aware of these variations, but have had limited success in tackling them.
- Pupils' work seen by inspectors suggests that the range of themes and skills being taught is too restricted to meet the requirements of the standards. There is very little evidence of written work in subjects other than mathematics and English. Pupils are often given work of a similar type, regardless of their ability. Opportunities for the most able pupils to tackle more challenging work or apply their skills are rare.
- In the early years, children have restricted access to a limited range of resources. Books in particular are of a very limited range, and some are either damaged or inappropriately displayed. As a result, children do not benefit from a sufficient range of experiences to get off to a good start. The teaching of English in the early years is very limited. Teachers' roles during lessons are not sufficiently focused on supporting pupils with their learning.

### Paragraph 2(2)(d)(i), (ii)

- At the time of the last inspection, the school had introduced a policy for personal, social and health education. However, this policy was not implemented effectively. Pupils' understanding of democracy and individual liberty was limited by the narrowness of the curriculum. They were unable to demonstrate sufficient understanding of different faiths and beliefs. The proprietor and senior leaders where precluding any teaching of, or reference to, certain of the protected characteristics defined in the Equality Act 2010. Pupils were prevented from having access to images of everyday life in modern Britain. Their views about the roles of women and men indicated that the school was not preparing them for the reality of life in modern British society.
- The policy on personal, social and health education is now augmented by a scheme of work. This has only recently been introduced to pupils. Leaders have attempted to broaden the range of experiences offered to pupils. For example, the fire brigade recently visited the school, including a female firefighter. However, these opportunities remain too infrequent and limited in scope. Leaders have no systematic plan for developing and evaluating the impact of such experiences over time.
- Reading materials and other resources seen on inspection no longer show signs that pupils are being restricted in their access to images. However, the range and quality of books on offer does not enable pupils to obtain a broad and rounded view of life in wider British society. The most able pupils are not provided with a sufficiently challenging and diverse range of texts to extend their learning. The proprietor and senior leaders continue to insist that certain protected characteristics of people are not referred to or considered during lessons. They maintain that this would be



considered unacceptable in the community they serve. Pupils do not have opportunities to learn about different religions and faiths in detail. As a result, the standards related to pupils' personal, social and health education continue to be unmet.

#### Paragraph e(i–iii)

- At the time of the last inspection, the proprietor had put in place a careers policy. However, senior leaders had not implemented it effectively.
- The headteacher for secular education is aware of the need for older pupils to receive careers guidance. He has recently begun to teach some careers lessons to older pupils. A forthcoming visit with a focus on careers guidance is planned. However, careers education is not being provided in a way which is coherent or extensive enough to meet the requirements of the standards. For example, there are no clear criteria for learning related to the planned visit with a careers focus.

#### Part 2. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

#### Paragraph 5, 5(a), (b)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi) and (vii)

- At the time of the last inspection, the school was not actively promoting fundamental British values. Pupils' social and cultural development was weak. Pupils demonstrated very limited understanding of faiths other than their own. Senior leaders insisted that no reference was made to certain of the protected characteristics as set out in the Equality Act 2010.
- The curriculum continues to be too narrow in scope to support pupils' social and cultural development adequately. Pupils are aware of some of the details related to British institutions. For example, pupils could tell inspectors the name of the Mayor of London and explain some aspects of his role. However, their deeper understanding of the wider community continues to be limited by decisions leaders have made about the scope of the curriculum.
- Pupils do not know enough about the way other people choose to live their lives to ensure that these aspects of the standards are met. A recent programme of assemblies has provided some starting points for pupils to explore spiritual and moral themes based on beliefs other than their own. However, these have not been followed up in sufficient depth. Leaders told inspectors that the programme of assemblies would continue. However, they had not prepared the next phase of the programme for the current term at the time of the inspection.

#### Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

#### Paragraph 7, 7(a), 7(b)

- At the time of the last inspection, the school's systems to safeguard pupils did not meet requirements. Not all of the appropriate checks were made on the suitability of staff and trustees. The school's procedures did not pay sufficient regard to the risk of children becoming missing from education. There was insufficient coverage of the 'Prevent' duty. The school's anti-bullying policy was limited in scope as it did not refer to prejudice-based bullying. In addition, too few members of staff in the early years setting had the required qualifications.
- Since the last inspection, the proprietor has completed the necessary checks on the suitability of staff and trustees. The safeguarding policy has been reviewed and now makes reference to the latest guidance issued by the Secretary of State. Teachers are expected to become familiar with this guidance and sign to say they have done



- so. Three new members of teaching staff have been recruited with the required qualifications for the early years setting.
- School leaders could provide evidence to indicate that members of staff have received training related to the 'Prevent' duty. This included an awareness of when and how to make a referral if a concern emerged. Leaders have, therefore, made some progress in sharpening their safeguarding arrangements since the last inspection.
- However, the implementation of the policy does not meet the requirements of the standards. The revised safeguarding policy contains mainly generic guidance which has not been sufficiently adapted to reflect the characteristics of pupils and the community the school serves. For example, the policy on children missing from education is not precise enough about how concerns should be followed up. The policy does not go far enough to explain how the curriculum will support the development of pupils' ability to recognise and minimise risks they may encounter in their current and future lives.
- Some of the information necessary to safeguard pupils contains errors, which potentially restrict leaders' ability to check on the welfare of pupils. For example, the admissions register examined during inspection was found to contain inaccurate information about some pupils. The register correctly indicates that the last pupil to be admitted to the school was in April 2016. School leaders told inspectors that this was accurate.

#### Paragraph 10

Pupils told inspectors that they feel safe and relationships within school are positive. The records kept by leaders about behaviour indicate that bullying and other discriminatory behaviour is uncommon. However, leaders continue to restrict the range of types of bullying which they are prepared to discuss in depth with pupils. In particular, they do not cover aspects of bullying related to some characteristics which are protected by law, such as homophobic bullying. As a result, the scope of the anti-bullying strategy is not broad or effective enough to meet the requirements of the independent school standards.

### Part 4. Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

#### Paragraph 18(2)(a)(b)(c)(d)(e), 18(3), 20(6)(b),(b)(iii)

- At the last inspection, although senior leaders had made improvements to record-keeping, not all the required pre-employment checks had been recorded. Checks on trustees were not included on the single central record.
- The necessary pre-employment checks are now recorded for all members of staff on the central record. This includes records related to members of staff who have been appointed since the last inspection.

### Paragraph 21(1), 21(2), 21(3), 21(6)

■ The proprietor has also ensured that checks made on trustees have been added to the central record. The standards related to the suitability of staff now meet requirements.



#### Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraph 34(1), 34(1)(a), (b), (c)

- At the time of the last inspection, the proprietor had not held senior leaders effectively to account. As a result, a significant number of the independent school standards remained unmet. Senior leaders did not demonstrate sufficient knowledge or understanding of the curriculum requirements of the standards to ensure that they were met.
- The knowledge and skills of senior leaders in relation to the independent school standards has improved since the last inspection. The decision to seek an external view of the school's effectiveness is a positive move. However, leaders have not used these improved skills to make sufficiently rapid or extensive improvements to the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, or the curriculum. The proprietor and senior leaders continue to insist that some aspects of the curriculum, necessary for the school to comply with the independent school standards, should not be taught. As a result, many of the independent school standards checked during this inspection continue to be unmet.

#### Statutory requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage

- At the time of the last inspection, there were insufficient teachers with the necessary qualifications to meet the statutory requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- The proprietor has now ensured that three additional teachers have been appointed to work in the early years. Checks made during the inspection on their qualifications confirm that the school now complies with this aspect of the statutory requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.



## **Compliance with regulatory requirements**

The school does not meet the requirements of the schedule to The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements that were checked during this inspection. This included the standards and requirements that the school was judged to not comply with at the previous inspection. Not all of the standards and associated requirements were checked during this inspection.

#### The school does not meet the following independent school standards

Standards that were not met at the previous inspection and remain un-met at this inspection:

- the proprietor ensures that a written policy on the curriculum, supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work, which provides for the matters specified in sub-paragraph (2) is drawn up and implemented effectively (Paragraph 2(1)(a))
- the proprietor ensures that the written policy, plans and schemes of work take into account the ages, aptitudes and needs of all pupils, including those pupils with an education, health and care plan (Paragraph 2(1)(b)(i))
- do not undermine 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 2(1)(b)(ii))
- the proprietor ensures that there is full-time supervised education for pupils of compulsory school age (construed in accordance with section 8 of the Education Act 1996), which gives pupils experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical and aesthetic and creative education (Paragraph 2(2)(a))
- the proprietor ensures that personal, social, health and economic education reflects the school's aim and ethos (Paragraph 2(2)(d)(i))
- the proprietor ensures that personal, social, health and economic education encourages respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Act (Paragraph 2(2)(d)(ii))
- the proprietor ensures that ,for pupils receiving secondary education, access to accurate, up-to-date careers guidance that is presented in an impartial manner (Paragraph 2(2)(e)(i))
- enables them to make informed choices about a broad range of career options (Paragraph 2(2)(e)(ii))
- helps to encourage them to fulfil their potential (Paragraph 2(2)(e)(iii))
- the proprietor ensures that, where the school has pupils below compulsory school age, a programme of activities which is appropriate to their educational needs in relation to personal, social, emotional and physical development and communication and language skills (Paragraph 2(2)(f))
- that all pupils have the opportunity to learn and make progress (Paragraph 2(2)(h))
- effective preparation of pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British society (Paragraph 2(2)(i))
- The proprietor ensures that teaching at the school enables pupils to acquire new knowledge and make good progress according to their ability so that they increase their understanding and develop their skills in the subjects taught (Paragraph 3(a))



- fosters in pupils self-motivation, the application of intellectual, physical and creative effort, interest in their work and the ability to think and learn for themselves (Paragraph 3(b))
- involves well planned lessons and effective teaching methods, activities and management of class time (Paragraph 3(c))
- shows a good understanding of the aptitudes, needs and prior attainments of the pupils, and ensures that these are taken into account in the planning of lessons (Paragraph 3(d))
- demonstrates good knowledge and understanding of the subject matter being taught (Paragraph 3(e))
- utilises effectively classroom resources of a good quality, quantity and range (Paragraph 3(f))
- demonstrates that a framework is in place to assess pupils' work regularly and thoroughly and use information from that assessment to plan teaching so that pupils can progress (Paragraph 3(g))
- the standard in this paragraph is met where the proprietor ensures that a framework for pupil performance to be evaluated, by reference to the school's own aims as provided to parents or national norms, or to both, is in place (Paragraph 4)
- the proprietor 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(a))
- the proprietor ensures that principles are actively promoted which (Paragraph 5(b)) enable pupils to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence (Paragraph 5(b)(i))
- enable pupils to distinguish right from wrong and to respect the civil and criminal law of England (Paragraph 5(b)(ii))
- encourage pupils to accept responsibility for their behaviour, show initiative and understand how they can contribute positively to the lives of those living and working in the locality in which the school is situated and to society more widely (Paragraph 5 (b)(iii))
- enable pupils to acquire a broad general knowledge of and respect for public institutions and services in England (Paragraph 5(b)(iv))
- 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(b)(v))
- encourage respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Act (Paragraph 5(b)(vi))
- encourage respect for democracy and support for participation in the democratic process, including respect for the basis on which the law is made and applied in England (Paragraph 5(b)(vii))
- the proprietor ensures that— (Paragraph 7)
- arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school (Paragraph 7(a))
- such arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State (Paragraph 7(b))
- the proprietor ensures that bullying at the school is prevented in so far as reasonably practicable, by the drawing up and implementation of an effective anti-bullying strategy (Paragraph 10)



- the proprietor ensures 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))
- the proprietor ensures 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))
- the proprietor ensures that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school actively promote the well-being of pupils (Paragraph 34(1)(c)).

#### The school now meets the following independent school standards:

- no such person is barred from regulated activity relating to children in accordance with section 3(2) of the 2006 Act where that person is or will be engaging in activity which is regulated activity within the meaning of Part 1 of Schedule 4 to that Act (Paragraph 18(2)(a))
- no such person carries out work, or intends to carry out work, at the school in contravention of a prohibition order, an interim prohibition order, or any direction made under section 128 of the 2008 Act or section 142 of the 2002 Act, or any disqualification, prohibition or restriction which takes effect as if contained in either such direction (Paragraph 18(2)(b))
- the proprietor carries out appropriate checks to confirm in respect of each such person (Paragraph 18(2)(c))
- the person's identity (Paragraph 18(2)(c)(i))
- the person's medical fitness (Paragraph 18(2)(c)(ii))
- the person's right to work in the United Kingdom (Paragraph 18(2)(c)(iii))
- where appropriate, the person's qualifications (Paragraph 18(2)(c)(iv))
- the proprietor ensures that, where relevant to any such person, an enhanced criminal record check is made in respect of that person and an enhanced criminal record certificate is obtained before or as soon as practicable after that person's appointment (Paragraph 18(2)(d))
- in the case of any person for whom, by reason of that person living or having lived outside the United Kingdom, obtaining such a certificate is not sufficient to establish the person's suitability to work in a school, such further checks are made as the proprietor considers appropriate, having regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State (Paragraph 18(2)(e))
- The checks referred to in sub-paragraphs (2)(c) and (except where sub-paragraph (4) applies) (2)(e) must be completed before a person's appointment (paragraph 18(3))
- subject to sub-paragraphs (7) to (8), the chair of the school makes the following checks relating to MB (Paragraph 20(6)(b))
- where, by reason of MB's living or having lived outside the United Kingdom, obtaining an enhanced criminal record certificate is not sufficient to establish MB's suitability to work in a school, such further checks as the chair of the school considers appropriate, having regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State (Paragraph 20(6)(b)(iii))
- The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor keeps a register which shows such of the information referred to in sub-paragraphs (3) to (7) as is applicable to the school in question (Paragraph 21(1))



- The register referred to in sub-paragraph (1) may be kept in electronic form, provided that the information so recorded is capable of being reproduced in legible form (Paragraph 21(2))
- The information referred to in this sub-paragraph is— (Paragraph 21(3))
- in relation to each member of staff ('S') appointed on or after 1 May 2007, whether (Paragraph 21(3)(a))
- S's identity was checked (Paragraph 21(3)(a)(i))
- a check was made to establish whether S is barred from regulated activity relating to children in accordance with section 3(2) of the 2006 Act (Paragraph 21(3)(a)(ii))
- a check was made to establish whether S is subject to any direction made under section 128 of the 2008 Act or section 142 of the 2002 Act or any disqualification, prohibition or restriction which takes effect as if contained in such a direction (Paragraph 21(3)(a)(iii))
- checks were made to ensure, where appropriate, that S had the relevant qualifications (Paragraph 21(3)(a)(iv))
- an enhanced criminal record certificate was obtained in respect of S (Paragraph 21(3)(a)(v))
- checks were made pursuant to paragraph 18(2)(d) (Paragraph 21(3)(a)(vi))
- a check of S's right to work in the United Kingdom was made (Paragraph 21(3)(a)(vii))
- checks were made pursuant to paragraph 18(2)(e) including the date on which each such check was completed or the certificate obtained (Paragraph 21(3)(a)(viii))
- in relation to each member of staff ("S"), whether a check was made to establish whether S is subject to a prohibition order or an interim prohibition order, including the date on which such check was completed. (Paragraph 21(3)(b))
- The information referred to in this sub-paragraph is, in relation each member ("MB") of a body of persons named as the proprietor appointed on or after 1 May 2007, whether the checks referred to in paragraph 20(6)(b) were made, the date they were made and the date on which the resulting certificate was obtained (Paragraph 21(6)).



#### **School details**

Unique reference number	131170
DfE registration number	204/6398
Inspection number	10022773

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.

Type of school	Independent Jewish day school for boys
School status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	3–13
Gender of pupils	Boys
Number of pupils on the school roll	357
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Mr J Lipschitz
Chair	Mr J Lipschitz
Headteacher	Rabbi Twerski
Annual fees (day pupils)	£2,860
Telephone number	020 8800 7368
Website	The school has no website
Email address	dbl@ttbal.plus.com
Date of previous standard inspection	18-20 November 2014

#### Information about this school

- Beis Aharon is an independent Orthodox Jewish day school for boys. It is situated in the Stoke Newington area of North London.
- The school is owned by Mr J Lipschitz. It opened in 1981 and moved to its current site in 2009.
- The school is registered for pupils aged between three and 13 years. There are currently 357 pupils on roll. The school's leaders say that they have not admitted any further pupils since April 2016.
- The early years setting is in a separate building opposite the main school. Children in the Nursery class attend on a full-time basis.
- Most pupils speak Yiddish as their first language. The school is open for six days a week, from Sunday to Friday afternoon. Most of the school day is devoted to Jewish religious studies. This is taught in Yiddish.



- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average.
- At the time of the last progress monitoring inspection in January 2016, a large number of the independent school standards remained unmet. An additional inspection was conducted in May 2016 to check if the school's admission and attendance arrangements met requirements. The school's last full inspection was conducted in November 2014.



### Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out at the request of the registration authority for independent schools. The purpose of the inspection was to monitor the progress the school has made in meeting the independent school standards and other requirements that it was judged to not comply with at its previous inspection.
- The inspection was carried out with no notice.
- During the inspection, records and policies related to safeguarding, admissions and attendance were examined.
- Inspectors conducted a tour of the early years and the main school, observing learning, sampling pupils' work and hearing pupils read.
- Inspectors held meetings with senior leaders and a group of pupils.
- A range of documents related to the curriculum and the monitoring of standards was examined.
- Inspectors considered the school's own information about pupils' progress in English and mathematics.

#### **Inspection team**

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Claire Majunder

Her Majesty's Inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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