

Beth Jacob Grammar School for Girls

Stratford Road, Hendon, London NW4 2AT

Inspection dates

2–4 November 2016

Overall effectiveness	Inadequate
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Inadequate
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Inadequate
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Outstanding

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- The proprietor and senior leaders have not ensured that all the independent school standards are met.
- Leadership and management are inadequate. There are no formal systems for holding teachers to account for the quality of education.
- Arrangements for governance are not effective. The proprietor has not undertaken the required safeguarding training, and governors do not hold leaders to account effectively.
- Safeguarding arrangements are ineffective.
- Leaders' checking of pupils' progress and of the quality of teaching is not effective.
- Pupils are sometimes over-reliant on adults to support their learning.
- Teaching requires improvement. Teachers do not question pupils effectively or consistently follow the school's policy by giving them helpful advice on improving their work.
- Assessment information is not used to challenge pupils and speed up progress, particularly for the most able. As a result, pupils' outcomes require improvement.
- Pupils are not given adequate opportunities to learn about people who have different beliefs, characteristics and cultures from their own.
- Pupils do not receive good enough careers advice to enable them to make informed choices about their career options.

The school has the following strengths

- The school is a happy and harmonious community where pupils feel secure.
- Staff and pupils have formed positive relationships.
- The headteacher, senior team and staff are developing the capacity to improve the school's work.
- Pupils behave well and are polite to each other, to staff and to visitors.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and show great enthusiasm for learning.
- Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

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

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve leadership and management by ensuring that within clearly defined timescales:
 - all the independent school standards are met
 - safeguarding practice, safeguarding training and records of recruitment interviews meet statutory requirements
 - leaders collect, analyse and use information about teaching and pupils' progress to identify areas for improvement, and act effectively to address them
 - a performance management system is put in place that allows teachers and leaders to be held to account for pupils' progress
 - governors have formal systems that enable them to be accurately informed about the effectiveness of the school's work and so hold its leaders fully to account
 - the curriculum makes provision for pupils to learn more effectively about people of other faiths and those of none, and those with differing lifestyles
 - pupils have greater and more regular access to impartial and up-to-date information about a broad range of career options
 - the annual written reports to parents include information about each registered pupil's progress as well as their attainment.
- Improve pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, particularly in the Chol (secular) subjects, by ensuring that teachers:
 - question pupils more effectively
 - adapt their teaching, using assessment information, so that pupils of different abilities, including the most able, are challenged to achieve as well as possible.

The school must meet the following independent school standards

- The proprietor must ensure that the written policies, plans and schemes of work provide personal, social, health and economic education which reflects the school's aim and ethos and encourages respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010 (paragraph 2(2)(d), 2(2)(d)(i) and 2(2)(d)(ii)).
- The proprietor must ensure that pupils receiving secondary education have access to accurate, up-to-date careers guidance that is presented in an impartial manner so that they are able to make informed choices about a broad range of career options and that helps to encourage them to fulfil their potential (paragraph 2(2)(e), 2(2)(e)(i), 2(2)(e)(ii) and 2(2)(e)(iii)).
- The proprietor must ensure that the 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, 3(a)).

- The proprietor must ensure that teaching 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)).
- The proprietor must 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(g)).
- The proprietor must ensure that principles are actively promoted 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 (paragraphs 5 and 5(b)(v)).
- The proprietor must ensure that the proprietor promotes principles which encourage respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the Equalities Act 2010 (paragraphs 5 and 5(b)(vi)).
- The proprietor must 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)).
- The proprietor must ensure that they keep a register of staff recruitment checks which shows the required information referred to in sub-paragraphs (3) to (7) (paragraph 21(1)).
- The proprietor must ensure that an annual written report of each registered pupil's progress and attainment in the main subject areas taught is provided to the parents of that registered pupil, except that no report need be provided where the parent has agreed otherwise (paragraph 32(1)(f)).
- 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; and that they fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently (paragraphs 34(1), 34(1)(a) and 34(1)(b)).

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Inadequate

- Senior leaders and the proprietor have not ensured that all the independent school standards are met for leadership and management of the school's work, including those relating to safeguarding and child protection.
- The school does not have an effective system to record pupils' progress. As a result, leaders do not have a clear picture of how well pupils are doing or are expected to do. Staff do not have enough information to provide effective support and challenge for individual pupils to help them to make good progress.
- There is no formal system for the management of staff performance, including that of the headteacher. The quality of teaching is not checked consistently. Consequently, teachers are not held to account for the quality of their teaching and do not receive effective training and development to help them improve.
- The broad range of subjects offered by the school reflects the national curriculum, and includes subjects such as French and modern Hebrew. Pupils also have many opportunities to take part in a wide range of experiences outside the school day, including visits, competitions and making decisions about school council membership.
- The school's aims and curriculum reflect the values of the Orthodox Jewish community it serves. Leaders ensure that pupils are taught the importance of respecting and appreciating all people as part of their Jewish faith. However, pupils have very few opportunities to learn about, experience and gain an understanding of other faiths and cultures. Furthermore, pupils are not taught explicitly about issues such as sexual orientation. This restricts pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and does not promote equality of opportunity in ways that take account of differing lifestyles.
- Since her appointment in September 2014, the headteacher has overseen several improvements. For example, pupils' attendance, punctuality and behaviour have improved, new Kodesh (religious curriculum) courses have been added, key staff appointments have been made and lesson time has been increased. Despite these improvements, the headteacher acknowledges that the speed of change has not been as swift as it needs to be to ensure that pupils make good progress in all areas of the curriculum.
- Every pupil is offered the opportunity to sing in the choir and perform regularly in assemblies. In addition, girls who perform in the choir regularly attend a recording session in a professional music studio from which a compact disc is made and sold throughout the school.
- Leaders have ensured that British values are woven into the curriculum so that pupils gain some understanding of what it means to be a British citizen. For example, in June pupils took part in a European Union referendum debate where they gained first-hand experience of the issues surrounding democracy and civil law. More recently, pupils celebrated the Queen's anniversary as the longest reigning monarch and learned about British values and institutions. However, this does not make up for the lack of discussion about other lifestyles that people may follow in modern Britain.
- Although pupils receive some careers guidance, the range of outside speakers from the world of work and the variety of work experience placements are limited. Leaders

acknowledge this, and have plans to extend the range of careers provision so that pupils can make more informed choices about their career options.

- Parents who responded to the online Ofsted survey, Parent View, are very positive about the school's work. All who contributed said they would recommend the school to another parent. Almost all agreed that their children are happy, feel safe and are well looked after. However, the annual written reports to parents do not include information about each pupil's academic progress, but report only on their attainment and effort.

Governance

- Governance is not effective.
- The sole proprietor is also the chair of the governing body and leads a small group of governors. The proprietor cares passionately about the school and provides considerable financial support for it. Membership of the governing body is drawn from a wide field of professional expertise and experience, which includes business, education and law.
- The proprietor holds regular informal meetings with the headteacher. However, systems are not in place for governors to accurately judge the effectiveness of the school's work. For example, the school does not compile information on pupils' progress in subjects other than English and mathematics. This omission is a significant barrier in checking to see if pupils are on track to meet their targets so that additional support can be offered if they are falling behind.
- The proprietor has not ensured that arrangements are in place for the performance management of the headteacher and other staff. As a result, there is insufficient opportunity to provide challenge and hold leaders and teachers to account for the performance of the school.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.
- The proprietor and governors have not undertaken the statutory training in accordance with the Secretary of State's guidance 'Keeping children safe in education' (September 2016), including training on the proprietor's role and responsibility as a governor for safer recruitment.
- At the beginning of the inspection, although checks on the suitability of staff to work with children had been carried out, they had not been recorded on the single central record of staff pre-employment checks. The format in which records were kept was not consistent or clear. This was rectified during the inspection.
- Until very recently the school did not retain any records of recruitment interviews. Leaders were therefore unable to confirm that the appropriate safeguarding questions were asked, whether the candidates had undertaken the required safer recruitment training, and how satisfactory their answers were. Senior leaders have recently attended suitable training in safer recruitment and have begun to record candidates' responses to interview questions more rigorously.
- The school's safeguarding policy reflects the Secretary of State's most recent statutory guidance, published by the Department for Education: 'Keeping children safe in education' (September 2016), and 'Working together to safeguard children' (March 2015). All staff have received training relating to this guidance. As a result, staff can demonstrate the impact of training on their work. For example, they know the importance of getting early help for those who may need additional support, and the correct authorities to whom referrals should be made.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Teaching is not consistently good enough across all subject areas to enable all pupils to make at least good progress. This is particularly the case in the Chol subjects.
- Teachers' questioning is not effective in deepening pupils' knowledge and understanding. Teaching sometimes lacks challenge, particularly for the most able pupils. This is another reason why pupils do not achieve as well as they could.
- Leaders and teachers do not check or monitor pupils' progress closely enough across all subjects. Consequently, teachers are not able to use information about progress to adapt their teaching so that pupils of different abilities achieve well.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and often show an infectious enthusiasm for learning. This is the key reason why teaching does not lead to inadequate progress, despite the fact that it is not checked consistently by leaders.
- Pupils receive regular feedback on their work. However, this is sometimes about presentation, rather than academic quality. Staff do not consistently follow the school's expectations about feeding back to pupils on how to improve the content of their work.
- Teachers plan stimulating activities that ensure that pupils are engaged in their learning. Pupils' positive working relationships with staff enable them to feel safe and secure in seeking advice and guidance when they need them.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Inadequate

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is inadequate. The school has not put suitably robust systems in place to safeguard pupils.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to learn about people who have different beliefs, characteristics and cultures from their own. They have limited understanding of the different lifestyles and partnerships that individuals choose in present-day society.
- Despite this, pupils reported that they feel very safe in school because of the security measures they believe staff have provided.
- Pupils know how to stay safe online and the potential risks of social media. They have a good understanding of how to stay safe outdoors and when using public transport. Some pupils reported that they have attended self-defence classes to help them feel more confident when travelling in London.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. It is not outstanding because pupils are sometimes too reliant on adults to support and guide their learning.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school. Over the last two years, attendance has improved and is now above national averages. This is because of higher expectations and greater rigour in following up any absence that has not been authorised.
- Pupils who spoke to the inspector reported that bullying is very rare. Specific work is carried out to address issues such as friendship disputes. Parents are very appreciative of this approach and pupils often develop long-lasting friendships because of it.

- Pupils enjoy very positive relationships with adults and appreciate the wide mix of age and life experiences that staff bring to their work. Pupils are polite to staff, visitors and each other. One reported that school 'is a nice place to be' and that 'teachers help us to learn'.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Apart from in English and mathematics, staff do not check pupils' previous attainment accurately enough when they arrive at the school. As a result, leaders and teachers do not know precisely whether pupils are making the progress they expect of them across all subjects, in all years. Staff do not know enough about the progress of different groups of pupils. The emphasis is much more on attainment than it is on progress.
- The school's information on pupils' starting points for English and mathematics indicates that pupils enter the school with broadly expected levels of skills and attainment in these subjects. In 2016, over half of pupils achieved five or more GCSE examination passes at grade C or above, including English and mathematics. This represents broadly expected progress, given what is known about pupils' starting points.
- Work seen during the inspection, in lessons and in books, showed that pupils' progress was not inadequate, but neither was it of consistent enough quality to be judged good. Leaders are aware of the need to ensure that all pupils, including lower-ability pupils and the most able, and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, make better progress.
- In 2016, pupils who were entered early for A-level examinations reached average levels of attainment from average starting points. However, this was a small cohort. Leaders were not able to tell inspectors how much progress students had made, whether they achieved their target grades, or whether students had benefited from sitting their examinations early.
- All Year 11 and 12 students who left the school last summer went on to seminaries or further education.

School details

Unique reference number	101388
DfE registration number	302/6092
Inspection number	10020771

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 girls' day school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	11 to 17
Gender of pupils	Girls
Number of pupils on the school roll	246
Number of part-time pupils	None
Proprietor	Beth Jacob Grammar School For Girls Ltd
Chair	Mr B Freshwater
Headteacher	Michele Gluck
Annual fees (day pupils)	£6,195
Telephone number	020 8203 4322
Website	No website
Email address	rrd@bjgs.org
Date of previous inspection	23–24 October 2012

Information about this school

- The Beth Jacob Grammar School (BJGS) provides education for girls from 11 to 17 years of age. At the time of the inspection 246 pupils were on roll.
- The BJGS is run as a non-profit organisation. The school opened in 1980 and moved to its current purpose-built site in 1997. At the time of the last inspection in October 2012, its overall effectiveness was judged to be outstanding.
- Beth Jacob Grammar School serves a strictly observant Jewish community in Hendon, north-west London. It aims to ensure that 'pupils grow into productive and successful adults, developing their academic, spiritual, physical and emotional skills, while remaining true to the teachings of the Torah to become honest and respectful citizens'. For these

reasons, around 60% of curriculum time is devoted to the teaching of Chol subjects and around 40% to the Kodesh curriculum. Although there is an entrance examination, the school takes pupils of all academic abilities.

- Almost all students go on to seminaries, either at the age of 16 or one year later aged 17. As a result, only a small number of students remain in the school until the end of Year 12 and are taught by the same staff as those in the main school. The impact of leadership and management on Year 12 students is the same as that identified in the main school.
- The school does not use off-site training or other provision.
- The school enters some pupils early for public examinations. All A-level courses are completed within one year.
- The school does not have a website but all the required policies are available to parents on request from the school office.
- A small minority of pupils have been identified as having special educational needs. There are no girls with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care (EHC) plan.
- The current headteacher joined the school in September 2014.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection took place with one day's notice.
- The inspectors observed teaching and learning in 15 lessons or parts of lessons, all of which were jointly observed with senior leaders. Inspectors held discussions with two groups of pupils.
- There were 71 responses to the Ofsted online survey (Parent View) and 26 written responses to the Ofsted free text service.
- Inspectors held discussions with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders, and the proprietor.
- Inspectors reviewed key documents, including a range of required policies in order to assess the school's compliance with the independent school standards. They also checked documentation related to safeguarding, and scrutinised pupils' files and the school's information about pupils' attainment and progress.

Inspection team

David Scott, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Milan Stevanovic	Ofsted Inspector

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