

Bnei Zion Community School

49a Ravensdale Road, London N16 6TJ

Inspection dates

6–8 December 2016

Overall effectiveness	Inadequate
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Inadequate
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Inadequate
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Inadequate
Outcomes for pupils	Inadequate
Early years provision	Inadequate
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- Leaders and governors have not ensured that all the independent school standards are met. This includes the statutory requirements for the early years foundation stage.
- The quality of teaching of secular subjects is inadequate. Standards are too low. Too many pupils underachieve and make inadequate progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The checks made on the quality of teaching are not rigorous enough. Teachers do not have a clear view about how to help pupils make faster progress.
- Assessment information is not used to inform learning and teaching. This results in poor provision, particularly for the most able pupils.
- Pupils have insufficient opportunities to practise their writing skills in English and reasoning skills in mathematics.
- Provision for the early years is inadequate. It does not establish children's starting points accurately enough or build on them sufficiently well.
- Pupils are not given opportunities to learn about people of other faiths or those of none, or about different lifestyles and values.
- Self-evaluation and improvement planning are poor. Leaders and governors have an inaccurate view of the strengths and weaknesses of the school.

The school has the following strengths

- Parents are very supportive of the school and value the education their child receives.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. Their moral development is strong, as reflected in a well-developed understanding of right and wrong.
- Considerable improvements have been made to pupils' welfare, health and safety since the previous inspection. Pupils are happy at school and feel safe and secure.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

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

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - implementing a development plan that accurately identifies the areas for improvement
 - including measurable targets and precise timescales in the school development plan to enable improvements to be tracked and to allow the governors to challenge leaders and hold them to account
 - assessing pupils' knowledge and skills when they start school and measuring their progress more precisely as they move through each year group
 - ensuring that assessment information is used to identify and address any underperformance swiftly
 - providing sharply focused feedback to teachers following lesson observations so that they have a better understanding of how they can improve their teaching
 - improving monitoring systems to enable school leaders and those responsible for governance to accurately analyse the school's performance
 - ensuring that governors are equipped with the skills to use information about pupils' progress to hold leaders to account
 - making sure the curriculum provides for pupils to learn explicitly about people of other faiths and those of none.

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and, as a result, accelerate pupils' progress, by:
 - ensuring that all teachers use questioning effectively to probe pupils' understanding
 - ensuring that teachers use the information about what pupils already know and can do to prepare lessons that provide enough support and challenge for pupils
 - providing pupils with opportunities to practise their grammar, punctuation and spelling skills in longer pieces of writing
 - embedding reasoning and problem-solving skills in the teaching of mathematics
 - making sure that teachers are alert to how well pupils are progressing within lessons and move them on to more challenging work as soon as they are ready.

- Improve the quality of the early years provision by:
 - more rigorously establishing what each child knows and can do when they start at the school and then using this information to check progress and plan their next steps in learning
 - making sure that children are provided with better access to play
 - providing greater opportunities to develop children's language and communication skills.

- The school must meet the following independent school standards.
 - Ensure that the curriculum policy, plans and schemes of work 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 (paragraphs 2(1)(a), 2(1) and 2(1)(b)(ii)).
 - Ensure that the written policy, plans and schemes of work take into account the ages, aptitudes and needs of all pupils (paragraph 2(1)(b)(i)).
 - Ensure that the curriculum policy is implemented effectively and pupils acquire speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills (paragraph 2(2)(b)).
 - Ensure that the school's policies and schemes of work relating to personal, social, health and economic education encourage respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010 (paragraphs 2(2) and 2(2)(d)(ii)).

- Ensure that the school’s programme of activities for pupils below compulsory school age is appropriate to their educational needs in relation to personal, social, emotional and physical development, and communication and language skills (paragraphs 2(2) and 2(2)(f)).
- Ensure that the school prepares pupils effectively for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British society (paragraph 2(2)(i)).
- Ensure that the proprietor ensures 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 (paragraphs 3 and 3(a)).
- Ensure that the proprietor ensures that the teaching at the school involves well planned lessons and effective teaching methods, activities and management of class time (paragraphs 3 and 3(c)).
- Ensure that the proprietor ensures that the teaching at the school 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 (paragraphs 3 and 3(d)).
- Ensure that the proprietor ensures that the teaching at the school demonstrates good knowledge and understanding of the subject matter being taught (paragraphs 3 and 3(e)).
- Ensure that the proprietor ensures that the teaching at the school utilises effectively classroom resources of a good quality, quantity and range (paragraphs 3 and 3(f)).
- Ensure that the proprietor ensures that the teaching at the school 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 (paragraphs 3 and 3(g)).
- Ensure that the proprietor ensures that the teaching at the school does 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 (paragraphs 3 and 3(i)); and does not discriminate against pupils contrary to Part 6 of the 2010 Act (paragraphs 3 and 3(j)).
- Ensure that 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 (paragraphs 5 and 5(a)).
- Ensure that the proprietor promotes 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)).
- 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)).
- Ensure that 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; and that they fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently (paragraphs 34, 34(1)(a) and 34(1)(b)).
- Ensure that the proprietor implements the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage as described in the statutory framework: Paragraphs 1.3–1.12.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Inadequate

- Leaders and governors have not ensured that all the independent school standards relating to the quality of pupils' education are met. They have not ensured that teaching is consistently good enough to allow all pupils to make good progress and reach the standards of which they are capable.
- The actions taken to ensure that teachers use assessment information for helping them to plan for pupils of different abilities have been too slow in their implementation. Moreover, any actions taken have also been ineffective due to a lack of understanding of what good assessment entails.
- Leaders and governors do not have an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses because self-evaluation is ineffective and of poor quality. This means that school improvement planning is not systematic or rigorous. Although leaders can identify weaknesses that need to be addressed, these issues are not brought together in a coherent way. For example, there are no timescales for their work or any measurable way of checking if their actions have had an impact on pupils' outcomes.
- The checks made on the quality of teaching are not followed up thoroughly to ensure that teachers know precisely how to improve. In addition, leaders do not focus sharply enough on pupils' learning and progress when evaluating the quality of teaching. As a result, they have an inflated view of the quality of teaching and lack a sense of urgency about improving it.
- Leaders have only recently begun to collect useful information about pupils' attainment in reading and mathematics. However, leaders do not use this information to check how much progress pupils are making from their starting points. As a result, leaders and governors cannot diagnose or prioritise precise areas for improvement.
- The curriculum reflects the aims of this orthodox Jewish community. The Kodesh (religious) curriculum is successful in developing pupils' literacy skills in Hebrew and Yiddish. Moreover, it provides opportunities to make useful connections with other areas of learning, for example mathematics and geography. However, the Chol (secular) curriculum is too narrow and does not equip pupils with the skills and knowledge they need to become successful citizens of Great Britain. This includes a lack of opportunities for writing and problem solving in mathematics.
- The school actively promotes pupils' spiritual and moral development and they have a well-developed notion of right and wrong. On the other hand, pupils are not given opportunities to develop their understanding of the wide range of faiths and cultures represented in British society.
- The headteacher has focused his attention on ensuring that the policies and procedures for keeping children safe are in place and followed consistently. This work has been successful. Staff have a sound understanding of the procedures for keeping children safe, including from the dangers associated with radicalisation and extremism. Good links with the local hospital (in particular the support from the paediatrics department), coupled with active supervision at all times, have created an environment in which pupils feel cared for and respected.
- Parents are very supportive of the school. The quality of education provided meets the expectations of the majority of parents, in particular the Kodesh curriculum.
- As part of this inspection, the Department for Education asked inspectors to consider whether the school is likely to meet relevant independent school standards if it makes a material change to the school's registration. The school has applied to be registered to increase its age range and overall capacity. At the time of inspection, the school had already increased its pupil roll to 124, the majority in Years 1 to 5. It is the judgement of the inspectors that the school is highly unlikely to meet the relevant standards. There are significant weaknesses in the quality of teaching, coupled with the provision of a curriculum that is not sufficiently broad and balanced and which fails to meet the requirements of the Equality Act of 2010.

Governance

- The governance of the school is inadequate.
- The governors (including the proprietor, who is the chair) do not have an accurate view of the progress that

pupils make and the standards that they reach. This is because they do not receive enough information from the school leaders. They do not provide appropriate levels of challenge to the headteacher.

- The governors do not have any systems in place to find out for themselves about the work of the school. They are too reliant on the information that they receive from the headteacher about the quality of teaching, which he judges to be far better than it actually is.
- Governors are supportive of the school and its aims, and are ambitious for the school to improve. The school relies on charitable donations, voluntary contributions from parents and fund-raising to fund its activities. Governors manage the available resources well. They fulfil their responsibilities with regard to safeguarding and the upkeep of the premises.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The independent school standards pertaining to welfare, health and safety that were not met at the material change inspection in March 2016 are now in place. For example, risk assessments have improved considerably and make a strong contribution towards embedding a culture of safeguarding in the school.
- Staff have a clear understanding of what to do if they are worried about a child's well-being, and records show that any such concerns are rigorously followed up by members of staff with responsibility for safeguarding. This thorough approach has also ensured that good partnerships have been established with external agencies. Thorough checks are made on staff and governors to ensure that they are suitable people to work with children.
- Although the school does not maintain a website, all safeguarding information is accessible to parents on request. The safeguarding policy takes account of the recent guidance from the Department for Education.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Inadequate

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is inadequate overall because it does not meet the needs, aptitudes and abilities of all the pupils in the school. As a result, pupils do not reach the levels expected for their age, particularly in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Teachers do not use assessment information to inform their planning. As a result, the tasks that teachers set usually suit only the least able pupils and are too easy for the average-ability pupils and the most able pupils.
- Teachers are not ambitious enough about what the most able pupils can achieve. All too often, questioning does not probe the understanding of these pupils and the work provided does not stretch their thinking. As a result, over time, the most able pupils' progress is inadequate in the Chol (secular) subjects, including reading, writing and mathematics.
- Teachers understand the progress that pupils make in lessons. There are not enough checks on pupils' depth of understanding or use of this information to plan the next steps in teaching. Consequently, learning in the Chol subjects is often too shallow.
- Teachers' verbal responses in lessons do not always show pupils where they have gone wrong and what they need to do to improve their learning to make quicker progress. This is partly the reason why pupils often lack clarity about their next steps in learning and how they will achieve them.
- The teaching of English and mathematics is weak. Pupils' workbooks show that they have few opportunities to apply their spelling, grammar and punctuation skills to writing for different purposes. Equally, problem solving in mathematics is not modelled well enough for pupils to gain a deeper understanding of how to use tools and strategies to solve real-life problems.
- The teaching of early reading is improving. Year 1 and 2 staff have been trained to teach phonics. Younger pupils are beginning to learn their sounds and develop confidence to have a go at new and unfamiliar words.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Inadequate

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is inadequate.
- Leaders have not ensured that all the independent school standards relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are met. For example, pupils do not have knowledge and understanding of other religions represented in Great Britain as this is not a feature of either the Kodesh or Chol curriculum.
- Pupils demonstrate their sense of care and compassion for those less fortunate than themselves by raising money during charitable events organised by the school. Pupils also visit the elderly in the local area to help ease the latter's sense of isolation.
- Older pupils have a strong commitment to their own faith and culture. They also understand, in general terms, that showing respect for others is in itself a very important British value. However, pupils are not able to discuss different people's views and values in any specific way, thus further limiting their personal development.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils move around the corridors calmly; they are courteous and respectful to all. Older pupils look out for the younger ones, and throughout the school there is a sense of happiness and belonging.
- Pupils attend school well. Transitions between lessons are smooth and pupils are quick to settle down to learning. School routines are well understood and pupils are swift to respond to teachers' instructions.
- When occasional disputes occur, they are resolved quickly. Acceptable boundaries for behaviour are clear, and there is good trust between pupils and adults that leads to an acceptance of these boundaries. Exclusions happen very rarely.
- Sometimes, when teachers ask questions, many pupils shout out their response. This limits the participation of those pupils who want to think and reflect before responding.

Outcomes for pupils

Inadequate

- Too few pupils in Years 1 to 5 are at or above the standards expected for their age in reading, writing and mathematics. Standards are too low in other Chol subjects too, for example in science. As a result, pupils are not well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Pupils have too few opportunities to apply their reading and writing skills in English lessons and across other areas of their learning. The headteacher has introduced a new scheme in mathematics, but this has yet to have an impact. Consequently, pupils' progress is slow and too many underachieve in the Chol subjects.
- Pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics is not tracked and monitored accurately. Leaders do not know with precision which pupils need to catch up because they have not been rigorously assessed.
- The school does not carry out its own assessments to establish pupils' attainment on entry to the school. This means that leaders lack important information for setting appropriate targets for pupils' progress. Scrutiny of work in pupils' books shows that too many are not acquiring knowledge and understanding at the level needed to make good progress across the curriculum.
- Across the school there is insufficient provision made for the most able pupils. As a result, these pupils routinely underachieve. In lessons, the most able pupils are not given enough opportunities to apply their thinking and reasoning skills to solve real-life problems.
- Similarly, pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities do not make sufficient progress in the Chol subjects. In lessons, these pupils are not routinely provided with the tools and resources they need to access the learning and make good progress.

- Pupils make better progress in the Kodesh (religious) subjects. This is because pupils' home language is used effectively to analyse and synthesise information from key Hebrew texts. Older pupils in particular are confident in reading different interpretations and discussing their significance with their peers and their teachers.

Early years provision

Inadequate

- Leadership and management of the early years provision is inadequate. Leaders do not have a clear understanding of how to track children's progress and use the outcomes to support learning. No records have been kept of children's learning and progress across the seven areas of learning.
- Most of the learning is in children's home language, Yiddish. Nevertheless, by the end of Reception very few children have acquired the literacy skills expected for children of that age. Progress is particularly weak in the development of children's language and communication skills. As a result, children are not well prepared to commence Year 1.
- Children's knowledge and understanding are not routinely assessed when they start school and progress in the different areas of learning is not systematically checked against a clear starting point. Self-evaluation is therefore weak as leaders do not have the information they need to identify clear strengths and weaknesses in provision.
- Children rarely get the opportunity for purposeful play. As a result, children make slow progress in their physical development. Moreover, this lack of resource limits the opportunities children have for purposeful interaction.
- The indoor areas of learning are reasonably well organised, providing children with suitable activities to make links in their learning and stimulate creativity. This is more evident in the Nursery class than it is in Reception. In addition, adults in the Nursery setting are more skilful in capturing children's learning and providing a reasonable record of the journey of each child.
- Relationships between the children and staff are a strength. This enables children to have confidence in an environment where they feel safe and secure.
- Behaviour is good, supported by a lot of positive interaction between children, and between children and adults. Adults often join children in some of the indoor games and this reinforces the sense of trust and confidence they develop.
- The safety of children is good. Adults are appropriately trained in all aspects of keeping children safe. They watch children carefully and know how to report any concerns they may have.
- Parents are pleased with the education their children are receiving. They welcome the opportunities they have to talk with staff about their child's progress.

School details

Unique reference number	137318
DfE registration number	204/6001
Inspection number	10012792

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	Jewish faith school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	3–5
Gender of pupils	Boys
Number of pupils on the school roll	124
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Benzion Rudzinski
Chair	Benzion Rudzinski
Headteacher	Rabbi Yonah Silverstein
Annual fees (day pupils)	£0:00
Telephone number	07824510435
Website	The school does not maintain a website
Email address	sencobobv51@gmail.com
Date of previous inspection	4–5 July 2012

Information about this school

- Bnei Zion Community School is an orthodox Jewish primary school for boys which is currently registered to provide education for boys aged three to five. It is located in the Stamford Hill area of North London.
- The school opened in May 2011. It is located in renovated premises on two floors of a building in a residential area.
- The school aims to provide a 'friendly, welcoming and positive atmosphere' and to help 'every learner reach his potential'. It is popular with the Chasidic community, many of whom live in the vicinity.
- There are no pupils with a statement of special educational needs or an education, care and health plan. A very small minority of pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- The school is registered to take 60 pupils aged three to five. At the time of the material change inspection (18 March 2016), the proprietor was providing education to 111 pupils, of whom 51 were over the age of

five. Many requirements were judged as not met, including those relating to safeguarding, the protected characteristics as identified in the Equality Act 2010 and the quality of education.

- The school submitted an action plan in June 2016 which was subsequently rejected by the DfE.
- The acting headteacher (head of secular studies) was in charge during the inspection as the substantive headteacher was abroad and could not be present.
- The school does not maintain a website for religious reasons.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection was carried out with one day's notice.
- Learning was observed in 23 part lessons; the majority of these were joint observations with a school leader.
- Samples of pupils' work were scrutinised. The school's information about pupils' progress was also checked.
- Inspectors spoke to teachers, the acting headteacher, and three members of the governing body, including the proprietor. There was also a discussion with a group of pupils.
- Inspectors took account of the 46 responses to Ofsted's questionnaire for parents, and the six responses to the questionnaire for staff.
- Documentation and policies were checked for compliance with the independent school standards.
- The school has made a request to the DfE to increase its age range and overall capacity. The current inspection therefore incorporates a material change inspection at the same time.

Inspection team

Nasim Butt, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Joanna Jones	Ofsted Inspector
David Radomsky	Ofsted Inspector

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