

# Beis Hatalmud School

62 Wellington Street West, Broughton, Salford, Lancashire M7 2FD

## Inspection dates

6–8 June 2017

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Good</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Good</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- The principal and headteacher, well supported by the proprietor, have a strong, purposeful vision for this improving school. They are successful in ensuring that pupils leave the school well prepared for life in their Orthodox Jewish community, as well as being responsible citizens in modern Britain.
- As a result of good teaching over time, pupils make good progress in both their religious and secular studies.
- Pupils' behaviour and their attitudes to learning are excellent and they feel very safe. Relationships at all levels are outstanding.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school. This is evident in their excellent attendance and punctuality.
- The school provides a well-planned, interesting and engaging curriculum. Good cross-curricular links are made between the Kodesh (Jewish) studies and the secular curriculum.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is successfully promoted and pupils are fully aware of fundamental British values.
- Leaders have made sure that all the independent school standards are met.
- Safeguarding arrangements are effective. Leaders have established a strong culture where the safety of pupils is given the top priority. Staff provide a safe and secure environment where pupils feel comfortable about sharing any concerns.
- Assessment arrangements are too variable. At times, information about pupils' progress is not used well enough when planning future work. Consequently, tasks for pupils are not always set at the right level.
- Pupils' handwriting and the way they present their work are too variable.

### 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?**

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management and the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by ensuring that:
  - assessments of pupils' progress are carried out regularly and consistently by staff in all subjects
  - information collected is shared, easily accessed and used to plan future work
  - work set for pupils is at the right level.
- Improve pupils' outcomes by:
  - setting clear expectations for the quality of pupils' handwriting and presentation of work
  - checking that agreed expectations are delivered in practice in all subjects.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- Leaders and the proprietor have brought about many improvements since the last inspection. These include better teaching and learning, which have led to faster rates of progress made by pupils. They have ensured that the school now meets the independent school standards.
- Changes to the leadership team have added a new impetus to this improving school. There is a strong capacity within the school's leadership team to maintain this rate of improvement. The appointment of the principal and headteacher, who were both familiar with the school, has coincided with a renewed focus on teaching and learning. This has resulted in better teaching and outcomes for pupils in both Kodesh (Jewish) and national curriculum subjects.
- Leaders have high aspirations for every pupil and have been successful in translating the school's vision into practice. The aim is that every boy 'should be given the tools to enable him to reach his potential as a positive, self-confident, giving member of a Torah society'. This should be accompanied by 'achievement in Chol (secular subjects) at GCSE level'.
- Leaders have created an honest and open culture where everyone feels valued and respected. Staff spoke in glowing terms about the high-quality support that they receive and how recent professional development has helped to improve their teaching skills even further. For example, in-service training from a university-based consultant has provided staff with 'model' lessons and an opportunity to share best practice.
- Inspection observations, carried out jointly with school leaders, confirm the accuracy of leaders' judgements and their ability to provide staff with strong pointers for improvement. Evidence from past observations indicates that these suggestions are being taken on board enthusiastically, resulting in better teaching and stronger outcomes for pupils. Staff say that they welcome appraisal of their performance and that it has contributed to the improvements that they see in the school.
- The proprietor and leaders have an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The school development plan focuses on the right priorities and is very much a 'working document'. It explains how the school has successfully tackled the weaknesses identified at the last inspection and how it intends to tackle any gaps that are still there. For example, plans to ensure that pupils make even faster progress in English are well documented. Targets are set out within a realistic timescale and the text makes it clear how leaders will know that they have been successful. The plan also acknowledges that assessment arrangements and the tracking of pupils' progress need to be more precise and consistent.
- There have been major improvements in the curriculum since the school was last inspected. Although pupils leave the school at the end of Year 10, many take GCSE examinations in Year 9, two years earlier than most pupils nationally. The school has decided in future to enter pupils for their English GCSE at the end of Year 10, allowing them more time to develop their English skills. Based on current tracking information, it will also provide more opportunity for pupils to achieve higher grades.
- All the required areas of learning are taught. Pupils focus on religious subjects during the

morning sessions, with secular subjects taught during the afternoon sessions as part of an extended school day with lessons ending at around 6pm.

- Cross-curricular links are strong. Leaders have compiled a detailed curriculum map and this enables them to track where links are made between religious studies and the secular curriculum. For example, texts from scriptures are often used as a basis for discussions in history, geography and environmental studies.
- The promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The school prepares pupils well for life in modern Britain and strongly promotes fundamental British values as well as equality of opportunity and diversity.
- Pupils learn about different lifestyles, cultures and different faiths in modern Britain alongside their growing understanding of the values and customs of their tradition of Orthodox Judaism.
- The curriculum is enhanced by a good range of extra-curricular activities, including sporting opportunities and visits to local places of interest.
- Elections for Year 10 pupils are used successfully to provide pupils with insights into the democratic process. Older pupils take on additional responsibilities such as organising assemblies and fundraising for local and international charities.
- Visitors are welcomed to the school to share their experiences with pupils and explain what attributes and skills pupils will need to work in a particular field. This raises pupils' aspirations and increases their understanding of the world of work. For example, a paramedic spoke to pupils in Years 8, 9 and 10 as part of their careers guidance programme. He explained the qualities and qualifications that they might need to enter that profession, including 'good GCSE results' and a 'solid work ethic'.

## **Governance**

- Governance is effective. Governors are well led by the proprietor, who was, until recently, also the principal of the school. He is extending the role of governors by creating a board of trustees to include parent representatives.
- Governors have a good understanding of the school and its effectiveness. Well supported by an external consultant, governors hold leaders to account for the performance of pupils and systematically monitor the progress that pupils make, both socially and academically. Their scrutiny is having a positive impact on the outcomes for pupils.
- Governors make valuable contributions to the school's self-evaluation. The document provides a rigorous and accurate analysis of the current position and offers an honest appraisal of where improvements are needed.

## **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- There is no school website but all the required information is readily available for parents, including the arrangements for safeguarding. Pupils say that they feel safe and parents agree. Governors have well-established systems to deal with any concerns that are raised.
- Governors take all the necessary actions to ensure that keeping pupils safe is given the

highest priority. This includes deploying a full-time security guard outside the school.

- Arrangements to safeguard pupils meet all the latest advice and guidance provided to schools, including training for staff in protecting pupils from radicalisation and extremism.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

**Good**

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good. As a result, pupils make good progress in their learning from different starting points.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are excellent. Pupils' behaviour is impeccable and staff are consistent in the high expectations that they set for behaviour. Classrooms are orderly places to learn, pupils are eager to please and work exceptionally hard. In fact, pupils' determination to complete tasks quickly sometimes means that their handwriting and presentation of work suffers. This makes some of their writing hard to decipher. Staff are not consistent enough in their demands or expectations in this area of pupils' work.
- Detailed schemes of work in all subjects, support teaching well and help to improve the consistency of teaching and learning. Teachers have good subject knowledge, which they use well to challenge pupils' thinking in lessons and extend their levels of understanding. They ask probing questions and will not settle for the first answer, drilling down to check on pupils' levels of understanding. For example, in religious studies lessons, teachers often base their discussions around a piece of scripture. They skilfully link these themes to problems pupils might face in their lives today such as debating the rights and responsibilities of the employer and employee.
- Pupils' English and mathematical skills are developed well. Pupils are given regular opportunities to use and apply these key skills in other parts of the curriculum. In a series of Year 10 Kodesh lessons, pupils successfully applied their mathematical skills to plan and then measure to scale a complex design for the tabernacle, based on information that they gleaned from the Aramaic text.
- Pupils value the efforts made by staff on their behalf. They shared with inspectors the view that staff 'help us every step of the way'. Pupils receive regular feedback on their work, both written and oral, and this helps them to improve.
- Parents are overwhelmingly positive in their comments about the quality of the school's work. They say that the teaching is good, staff are accessible and the structure of the school day offers pupils good access to a wide curriculum. Regular, written reports keep parents informed about their children's effort and achievements.
- Although regular homework consolidates and deepens pupils' learning, staff are sensitive to the needs of the pupils at the end of a long school day. This is reflected in the limited number of tasks that pupils are required to complete.
- Leaders and teachers have worked hard to improve the accuracy of the school's assessment information. Pupils' knowledge and skills are measured and recorded when they arrive at Beis Hatalmud. An accurate picture of pupils' year-on-year progress from this starting point is checked through end-of-year tests. However, the rigour of interim assessments and the way in which they are used varies between subjects and teachers. The information collected is not precise enough or readily accessible. Occasionally, work set in lessons is too hard or too easy for pupils. This is because assessment information is

not always used well enough to plan future work.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are exceptionally good and pupils appreciate the supportive learning environment provided by the school.
- Adults provide excellent levels of care and do all they can to help pupils settle and learn effectively. Pupils' self-confidence and self-awareness show rapid improvement as they adapt to the school routines.
- Pupils are confident to respond in lessons and eager to get on with the tasks that are set. This enthusiasm sometimes results in work in their books being unkempt and hard to read. Many pupils admit that this is something they would like to improve.
- Leaders take immediate and effective action when they identify any potential risks to pupils' physical or emotional well-being.
- Pupils have an excellent understanding of how they can keep themselves safe, both in school and in the community. Although there is no internet access in school, pupils can describe the risks associated with internet use and how to avoid any potential dangers.
- Pupils say that they are unable to recall any incidents of bullying, a fact confirmed by the incident log. Should it occur, they are confident that it would be dealt with swiftly.
- Few parents responded to the Ofsted online survey, Parent View. However, a large number completed the survey and returned paper versions to the inspectors. These confirmed that parents are overwhelmingly positive about the high-quality care and support that the school offers their sons. 'This is a wonderful school and I couldn't be happier with what it offers my son', is typical of the comments made to the inspectors.
- Pupils receive a varied careers programme that includes presentations from outside speakers and support from an external, independent consultant who can offer impartial advice to pupils. This ensures that pupils are well informed about choices that they have available for the next stage of their education.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is impeccable and they demonstrate great self-discipline and control.
- Pupils display high levels of respect and cooperate very well with each other, both in and out of lessons.
- Pupils are proud of their achievements and of their school. They recognise the link between hard work and success as a learner. Their attitudes to learning are very positive and they show great concentration and resilience as they tackle the challenges of the religious and secular curriculum.
- Expectations of how pupils should behave are agreed and understood by all. Adults rarely

need to intervene to remind pupils about these expectations. Consequently, classrooms and play areas are calm, orderly places where effective learning takes place.

- Pupils rarely miss a day in school and attendance levels are very high. Pupils arrive punctually and are well prepared to start their lessons.

## Outcomes for pupils

**Good**

- Pupils in all year groups make good progress from their starting points in both their Kodesh studies and their secular subjects, culminating in successful, external examination outcomes in Year 9.
- There are small numbers of pupils in each year group and this makes it difficult to make comparisons with national figures. Additionally, it is an important consideration that pupils generally take their GCSE examinations in Year 9. This is two years earlier than their counterparts nationally. The school has decided, in consultation with parents, that current Year 9 pupils will take their external examinations in English one year later, when they are in Year 10.
- In 2016, examination results in mathematics and science were well above the national average. This included 36% of pupils achieving A\* or A in their mathematics examination.
- English results have been historically lower but there has been year-on-year improvement since the last inspection, including in 2016. Improving results in English has been a priority for the school. Evidence from looking at learning over time in pupils' books, assessment information and predictions for the current Year 9 cohort, who will now be taking their English GCSE examination in 2018, indicate that pupils are now performing at close to or above national averages.
- Pupils who have special education needs and/or disabilities make good progress from their starting points because adults provide well-targeted support that is designed to meet their specific needs. For example, an additional teacher was deployed to support Year 7 mathematics groups because some pupils struggled with calculating area and volume of different shapes.
- Pupils' good rates of progress are also evident across a range of different subjects that are taught in a cross-curricular way, including design and technology, art, history, geography and physical education.
- Throughout the school pupils read regularly and widely. They are fluent and confident speakers and enjoy debating current affairs.
- The most able pupils achieve well due to the good teaching they receive. These pupils often work on tasks that extend and challenge them, for example through problem-solving in mathematics.
- Pupils' success in their personal development and in their Kodesh and secular subjects leaves them very well prepared for the next stage of their education. They leave the school at the end of Year 10. In the last two years, all pupils have gained entry to the school of their choice.

## School details

Unique reference number	135168
DfE registration number	355/6054
Inspection number	10034027

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 boys' day school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Boys
Number of pupils on the school roll	81
Number of part-time pupils	None
Proprietor	Rabbi Lionel Ganz
Principal	Rabbi Emanuel
Headteacher	Rabbi Pinczewski
Annual fees (day pupils)	£7,800
Telephone number	0161 708 0400
Website	None
Email address	<a href="mailto:admin@beishatalmud.co.uk">admin@beishatalmud.co.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	16–18 June 2015

## Information about this school

- Beis Hatalmud is an Orthodox Jewish independent day school for boys aged 11 to 16.
- The school opened in August 2006.
- The school is located in the Broughton area of West Salford, which is about two miles northeast of Salford City Centre.
- There are 81 pupils on roll, all of whom live close to the school.
- No pupils have a statement of special educational needs and/or disabilities or an education, health and care plan.



- The school is open for six days per week. The majority of each school day is given over to the Kodesh curriculum (Jewish studies), with Chol (the secular curriculum) in the afternoon.
- The school received a standard inspection in June 2015 and was judged to require improvement. The school was judged not to be meeting the independent school standards.
- The school received an additional inspection in June 2016 and was judged not to be meeting the independent school standards.
- An action plan evaluation was carried out in November 2016 and the school was judged unlikely to meet all of the independent school standards.
- A progress monitoring inspection was carried out in March 2017. The school was judged to have met all the independent school standards that were checked during the inspection.
- All pupils are educated on the school site.
- The school aims to provide an education for pupils aspiring to become Talmudic scholars and develop pupils so that they become caring, discerning, secure and well-balanced individuals.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed pupils' learning in lessons, some of which were jointly visited with the principal or the headteacher.
- The inspectors spoke with pupils, looked at their work and scrutinised the school's records of their progress.
- The inspectors held meetings with, or were in contact by telephone with, the proprietor, an external consultant who supports the school, school leaders, staff, pupils and parents.
- There were three responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire. In addition, there were 53 paper copies of the questionnaire returned by parents.
- The inspectors took into account 13 Ofsted questionnaires that were completed by staff.
- The inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation provided by the school.
- The inspectors checked the school's compliance with the appropriate regulations for independent schools.

## Inspection team

Mike Hewlett, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Sue Lomas

Ofsted Inspector

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