

Beis Malka Belz Girls School

401 Bury New Road, Salford, Greater Manchester M7 2BT

Inspection dates

14–16 November 2017

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders, managers and governors, including the proprietor, share a common vision for excellence and work tirelessly to achieve this. Their vision drives continual improvement. They ensure that the independent standards are met.
- Teaching is good, from early years to the end of key stage 3. Pupils are now making good progress in mathematics and grammar and rapidly improving progress in writing and reading. Pupils are taught in Yiddish in the morning and in English in the afternoon. As a result, they become fluent in both languages.
- Pupils are proud of their school. They have a very good attitude to learning and their conduct around school and in lessons is excellent. Pupils are inquisitive and eager to learn.
- Children make a good start to their education in early years. Children settle quickly and easily in the nurturing environment of the Nursery and Reception classes.
- Pupils feel safe and secure in school because of the excellent relationships between adults and pupils. Systems to ensure that pupils are protected from risks and stay safe are strong.
- Awareness of British values and spiritual, moral, social and cultural values underpin secular and religious teaching throughout the day.
- Parents are highly supportive of the school and recommend it without reservation.
- The curriculum is developing continually because of the school's rapid expansion. There are now three classes in key stage 3. Resources for some subject areas are limited.
- The significant improvements in teaching and learning have not been in place long enough to raise the achievement of pupils at the end of key stage 2 in reading. There is some underachievement in science in the secondary classes.
- Each section of the school is well led and managed. However, the school does not currently have a permanent headteacher to ensure consistency across all areas of the school. Currently, assessment is very effective in primary years but underdeveloped in the secondary classes.

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 outcomes for all pupils by:
 - ensuring that teachers in key stages 1 and 2 provide pupils with sufficient support and opportunities to develop their skills in reading
 - improving provision for pupils to develop their practical and scientific skills.
- Improve the effectiveness of teaching and learning in the secondary classes by developing an effective system for accurately tracking pupils' progress and attainment.
- Improve the overall quality of leadership and management by securing the appointment of a permanent headteacher to improve the consistency of transition and assessment arrangements across the school.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders in all areas of the school inspire staff who go about their work with absolute determination and with high expectations of what pupils can achieve. Staff morale is high. Teachers and other adults are proud of the work they do and of their pupils.
- Leaders work closely as a team because they share the same vision to ensure that the school provides the best education it can. Leaders in early years and primary and secondary areas are forward thinking and competent, demonstrating skill, knowledge and leadership. They have secured improvements in the quality of teaching which are beginning to have a positive impact on outcomes for pupils.
- Self-evaluation is accurate across the school. Leaders know their school well and have effective, concise action plans to ensure that they move forward rapidly. For example, the primary leader has introduced a new system for accurately tracking pupils' progress from Years 1 to 6. This enables the school to measure the achievement of pupils against that of all pupils nationally.
- Secondary phase leaders are working to broaden the curriculum and to develop their own tracking system which will enable pupils' achievement to be measured against national standards. They are working to ensure that all pupils are well prepared for key stage 4.
- The special educational needs coordinator ensures that provision for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities is good.
- Training for staff is effective. Teachers appreciate the many opportunities which are available to help them to improve their practice. Leaders' evaluations of the quality of teaching and learning are accurate. An effective performance management system is in place which rewards the most effective teachers.
- Leaders put a very strong focus on pupils' personal development. Lessons in citizenship make pupils aware of different faiths and other lifestyles and equip them well for life in modern Britain. Pupils develop self-confidence, self-esteem and a sense of responsibility.
- Provision for pupils' moral, social and cultural development is strong, and ensures that pupils are aware of cultural differences, moral dilemmas and social ethics. The British values of tolerance and respect and the importance of democracy are promoted across the curriculum. Pupils have taken interest in the recent referendum and general election. Primary pupils wrote letters to the Prime Minister and to the Queen. Spiritual development is centred on understanding the Torah, religious education, prayer and understanding other faiths.
- Leaders, staff and pupils do not tolerate prejudiced behaviour. The school promotes equality of opportunity and diversity.
- The many parents who responded to the Ofsted questionnaire were unanimous in their approval. A parents' committee is taking the lead in helping the school to find larger and better equipped premises, needed because of the school's rapid expansion. Parents expressed great satisfaction with the quality of teaching and the nurturing and positive environment.
- Leaders have ensured that careers education is effective. There is a careers adviser in

school and a visiting external adviser.

- The curriculum is somewhat restricted because of the very limited use of technology in the Chassidic community. Furthermore, in secondary sciences, there is not enough opportunity for pupils to conduct practical work, which slows progress.

Governance

- Governance is effective.
- Governors and the proprietor are working closely with parents to seek better premises as the school continues to expand.
- Governors monitor the quality of teaching and learning and the progress made by pupils. They ensure that the performance management system is fair.
- Governors recently commissioned an external review, not only of governance, but of leadership and management across the school, to see how improvements could be made. Many of the recommendations have already been implemented. Improvements are evident in the leadership of early years and primary and secondary years.
- The school is currently advertising for a headteacher to take overall responsibility for the whole school and to bring even greater consistency to the different areas.
- Governors and the proprietor, as well as school leaders, ensure that the independent school standards are met.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The school does not have a website, but all safeguarding policies and procedures are up to date and available on request to parents. The safeguarding policy takes account of all current guidelines and is reviewed annually.
- The proprietor and governors ensure that there is rigorous and meticulous checking of the suitability of adults working with children at the school. Effective procedures are in place to deal with any concerns. The school works well with other agencies when it is necessary. Senior leaders and all staff ensure that the child protection and safeguarding policies are implemented consistently. Regular training is offered to staff. All health and safety requirements to ensure that the premises are fit for purpose are met. Comprehensive risk assessments are made for any activities or individuals who require them.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The enthusiasm and commitment of staff make pupils motivated to learn and to do well. Classroom management is highly effective, and as a result, pupils focus well and concentrate hard on their work.
- Teachers ensure that pupils are fully involved and engaged in their learning, so that they know exactly what they are to learn and how they will know if they have succeeded.
- Teachers and other adults use questioning effectively to extend and develop learning.

Pupils are given time to reflect on their learning and to consolidate it. Teachers plan for the different levels of ability in the classes they teach.

- The teaching of phonics, which was an issue at the last inspection, is now strong and effective. This improvement in the effectiveness of teaching led to a significant improvement in outcomes in the Year 1 phonics check in 2017.
- Staff have responded very well to additional training in mathematics and have developed new skills and increased subject knowledge. As a result, outcomes in mathematics are now improving strongly.
- The teaching of writing has improved and teachers are now providing pupils with more well-structured opportunities to practise and develop their writing skills. However, progress in reading is slower. This is partly because of weaker teaching of phonics in the past.
- The very positive relationships between staff and pupils mean that pupils are not afraid to take risks with their answers, and the constant verbal feedback they receive from adults supports learning well. Pupils act upon the advice they receive from teachers when marking their books.
- Very effective management and classroom support ensure that pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities, and those who speak English as an additional language, make good progress. There is a good partnership between teachers and teaching assistants, who are well directed and well used to support individual pupils.
- In secondary science lessons, there is only limited opportunity for practical work and for pupils to conduct investigations.
- Lack of use of technology stifles creativity and reduces understanding. For example, pupils were trying to imagine a volcanic eruption merely from a line drawing.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are friendly, polite, considerate and respectful. They value the excellent relationships they have with all the adults in the school. They recognise and appreciate the hard work of their teachers.
- The ethos of the school enables pupils to develop self-awareness and self-confidence. Pupils understand what they need to do to be successful learners. For example, they show resilience when faced with difficulties in their learning and try even harder.
- Pupils say that they feel entirely free from bullying and able to trust their teachers. Very rare instances of bullying are acted upon swiftly by teachers and are stopped. Pupils say that there is no unpleasant name-calling or any other kind of harassment. They are taught to respect different kinds of people and racism is not tolerated.
- Pupils are able to identify and explain the teaching they have received on staying safe and free from harm in different risky situations. They understand the possible dangers of the internet, even though use of information technology in school is very limited.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils across the school display highly positive attitudes to learning. This is seen in their enthusiasm for learning, the concentration they show in lessons and in the pride they take in their workbooks. Lessons are not disrupted by lack of attention or poor behaviour and pupils respond at once to teachers' requests and instructions.
- At break- and lunchtimes, pupils play well together and enjoy activities such as skipping, ball games and chatting. At the end of breaktimes, they line up in silence to re-enter the school building and at once are ready to work and concentrate.
- Pupils are intensely proud of their school. They wear their uniform with pride and take care of the environment, even though some areas are shabby and in need of refurbishing. They demonstrate their care for others by fund-raising work to contribute to the Jewish Relief Fund, the Red Cross and many local charities.
- Attendance is well above average in the primary classes and just above average in the secondary classes. Any pupil who has lower attendance is carefully monitored and school data shows very strong improvement for these few individuals. Pupils are punctual to school because they enjoy it.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- By the end of key stage 2, pupils are achieving national expectations in mathematics and spelling and grammar, but lag behind in reading and writing. Pupils in later key stage 2 classes have not had the benefit of the improvements in the effectiveness of teaching in early years and key stage 1.
- Standards in reading, writing and mathematics in key stage 1 were below the national averages in 2017. Outcomes require improvement overall because pupils' achievement in key stages 1 and 2, over time, has not been consistently good enough.
- Evidence in pupils' work and the school's current tracking information indicate that progress is rapidly improving as a result of leaders' successful work to improve teaching. There are positive signs of improvement across key stage 1, and in reading and writing in key stage 2.
- The primary phase leader took decisive action to improve the teaching of phonics. This has been highly effective, and as a result, the proportion of Year 1 pupils achieving the expected level increased from well below average in 2016 to broadly average in 2017.
- Leaders have also reorganised guided reading lessons to assist pupils to read for inference and meaning. New strategies are helping pupils to improve their skills in writing fluently by providing opportunities for them to write more frequently and at greater length.
- Pupils are making good progress in key stage 3, but the current assessment system does not yet enable teachers to compare the outcomes for these pupils with national data for all pupils. The work in books shows good progress in the current academic year. However, progress in science is less strong because pupils have too few opportunities to carry out practical work and investigations.

- The school identifies the most able pupils and most teachers provide adequate challenge to accelerate their learning.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make good progress because of the high-quality support that they receive.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language make good progress in a range of subjects.
- All pupils have Yiddish lessons in the morning, following a religious education curriculum ('Kodesh'), while secular subjects ('Chol') are taught in the afternoon. This means that there is less time available for secular studies. However, leaders are starting to timetable more time for secular subjects in the secondary classes. Pupils' achievement in Yiddish is good.
- Outcomes are improving in the current academic year. Better teaching, more accurate assessment and secure tracking information are all having a positive impact. As a result, pupils are becoming increasingly well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Early years provision

Good

- Children join the Nursery in the term in which they are three years old. They are assessed on entry and most start with skills which are broadly typical for their age, but well below in spoken English. Children make strong progress in all areas of learning and particularly in spoken English and Yiddish. The proportion who achieved a good level of development in 2017 was in line with the national average.
- Children are taught in Yiddish for religious education lessons in the morning and switch effortlessly to English in the afternoons for secular studies.
- Children achieve particularly well in listening and communication, understanding, making relationships and managing their feelings and behaviour. Progress is slower in early reading and writing.
- Teachers plan activities which are fun and which children enjoy. For example, children in Reception have been looking at different types of fabric and learning about national costumes across the world. Children in both the Nursery and Reception classes very much enjoy singing together in both Kodesh and Chol sessions.
- Children enjoy the new colourful and practical resources in mathematics which enable them to work at many different challenges and solve problems. Mathematics lessons are a hive of activity and enjoyment. Children's progress in phonics is much stronger because teaching now starts in Nursery.
- Teaching is good. Children's learning and progress are tracked effectively in a daily record. A special focus is put on individual children when they are chosen as 'child of the week'. Tracking information is used well to inform future planning that meets the needs of individual children. Teachers make a photo record of all activities undertaken by the child to record small steps in learning. Each child has this opportunity approximately every four weeks.
- The learning environment is bright and vibrant, with many examples of children's work. The school makes the best use of the outdoor areas, providing learning opportunities for

all the areas of the curriculum, including children's physical development.

- Children behave exceptionally well. They develop social skills quickly and work and play happily together. They share resources and make sure that no one is left out. Children respond very promptly to adults and show resilience in completing tasks. They develop self-confidence and learn how to do things for themselves.
- Children are safe and well cared for. Adults are well trained, experienced and vigilant. All the welfare requirements are met. Transition arrangements for moving into Year 1 are effective.
- Leadership in early years is good. Areas for improvement at the previous inspection have been fully addressed. Parents are very happy with the progress of their children and the nurturing environment in which they learn. Parents receive a weekly newsletter and regular updates on the progress their children make. Leaders ensure that the independent school standards are met.

School details

Unique reference number	136117
DfE registration number	355/6006
Inspection number	10034031

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	Other independent school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	3 to 15
Gender of pupils	Girls
Number of pupils on the school roll	253
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Mr Yitzi Luftig
Chair	Mr Yeshaya Leitner
Acting Headteacher	Mrs Frieda Lampin
Annual fees (day pupils)	Voluntary contributions
Telephone number	0161 792 2323
Website	N/A
Email address	admin@beismalka.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	8–10 July 2014

Information about this school

- Beis Malka Belz Girls School is registered as an independent day school for Jewish Orthodox girls from the ages of three to 15. The school has an early years foundation stage, primary classes in key stages 1 and 2 and secondary classes in key stage 3, Years 7 to 9.
- Pupils study Kodesh studies in the morning and Chol studies in the afternoon. Kodesh lessons are taught in Yiddish and Chol lessons in English.
- Approximately one in 9 pupils speak English as an additional language, which is below the national average. However, most pupils speak both English and Yiddish at home.

- The proportion of pupils who have identified SEN and/or disabilities is broadly average. A very small minority of pupils have an education, health and care plan.
- The school plays an important role in meeting the needs of the Chassidic community in Salford. It is intended that pupils develop an understanding of the foundation upon which Jewish life is structured through the school's Kodesh curriculum. Both the Kodesh and Chol curricula aim to develop good character traits in pupils and foster their spiritual, social, emotional and cultural development.
- The school does not use alternative providers.
- Since the previous inspection, the school has opened a secondary phase department which includes girls in Years 7, 8 and 9. Experienced leaders manage early years, the primary, secondary phases, and religious education. The school is in the process of recruiting for a headteacher to take responsibility for the whole school. There is currently an acting headteacher in this role.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in all areas of the school across a range of subjects. Some of these observations were carried out jointly with senior leaders.
- Inspectors examined pupils' work in English, mathematics, science, art and the humanities subjects and listened to pupils read. They attended assemblies and observed pupils at break- and lunchtimes.
- They scrutinised school records and policies, particularly those relating to safeguarding.
- The inspectors held meetings with senior staff, governors, pupils, the proprietor and a representative of the parents.
- They took account of the 65 responses to the parent questionnaire.
- They gained the views of staff from discussions and from the 22 responses to the Ofsted staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Judith Straw, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Derek Kitchin

Ofsted Inspector

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