

Lubavitch Yeshiva Ketanah of London

Rear of 1117 Finchley Road NW11 0QB

Inspection dates

5–7 June 2018

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
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- Leaders have failed to fulfil their statutory responsibility to keep all pupils safe. Safeguarding is ineffective.
- Leaders and governors have not ensured that all the independent school standards are met. Their self-evaluation and school improvement planning are weak.
- The secular (Chol) curriculum is not sufficiently broad and balanced. As a result, pupils make inadequate progress. Limited opportunities are provided for pupils to practise their English reading, writing and comprehension skills.
- Scrutiny of pupils' work shows that teaching in the secular subjects has been weak over time.
- Teachers of secular subjects lack the subject knowledge and skills to enable pupils' strong progress.
- Assessment information is not accurate or used well to plan for effective learning.
- Pupils' understanding of other faiths and cultures is limited. Hence, they are not prepared well enough for life in British society.
- Governors do not use information about pupils' progress effectively to hold leaders to account.
- Leaders' observations of teaching do not focus sharply enough on pupils' progress.
- The most able pupils and those studying GCSE subjects are not challenged enough.

The school has the following strengths

- Parents, carers and staff are overwhelmingly supportive of the school.
- Leaders are committed to improving the school and have recently made a senior appointment to lead the secular curriculum.
- Pupils make strong progress in Kodesh (Jewish studies). This provides deep insight and challenge for all pupils.
- Pupils are well behaved, polite and display good manners at all times.

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?

- Strengthen the quality of leadership and management, including governance, by:
 - urgently informing the local authority about private fostering arrangements and ensuring that these pupils are safe
 - ensuring that teachers of secular subjects have the training and coaching they need to become more knowledgeable and skilful across the secular curriculum
 - governors holding leaders to account more effectively for pupils' progress
 - leaders' observations giving due consideration to the progress pupils make, leading to more constructive feedback for staff to help them improve
 - making sure that assessment information is accurate and takes account of the progress and standards shown in pupils' work
 - ensuring that the secular curriculum is sufficiently broad and well resourced, leading to consistently strong pupil outcomes
 - making sure that school improvement priorities are based on rigorous and accurate self-evaluation, linked to clear measures of success.
- Improve the quality of teaching by ensuring that:
 - teachers of secular subjects have high expectations of the standards that pupils can achieve
 - teachers use assessment more precisely to match work to pupils' abilities
 - the secular curriculum contains more opportunities for pupils to develop their reading comprehension, writing, and mathematical problem-solving skills
 - teachers set work that provides consistent stretch and challenge, so that the GCSE pupils and the most able make stronger progress.
- Improve pupils' cultural development by teaching pupils more systematically about the cultures, traditions and faiths represented in modern Britain.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Inadequate

- School leaders have not ensured that all the independent school standards are met.
- Leaders and governors have not ensured that all pupils are safe.
- The secular curriculum is narrow. It does not provide pupils with a rich learning experience in a wide range of subjects. Physics is the only science offered at GCSE, and a limited range of skills are taught in art and physical education. This, coupled with weak teaching, results in too many pupils making inadequate progress and achieving standards that are too low.
- The leadership of teaching in the secular curriculum is ineffective. Insufficient focus is placed on pupils' progress when leaders evaluate the quality of teaching. Likewise, feedback to staff about their teaching does not have enough emphasis on pupils' learning and progress. Consequently, teachers are unable to improve.
- The school's improvement plan is not built upon rigorous and accurate self-evaluation. This is the case for all aspects of the school's work, both in Kodesh and secular subjects.
- Information about current pupils' progress does not give a complete or accurate picture. In secular subjects, progress seen in pupils' books does not match up to the assessment information presented by leaders. Because the data is not checked against the weak progress over time seen in pupils' work, leaders' evaluation of pupil progress is inflated.
- The principal and other leaders have their own strong vision for the school and, within this context, provide a nurturing environment. This enables pupils, for instance, to develop ways of improving and self-regulating their own behaviour and well-being.
- The Kodesh curriculum promotes pupils' spiritual and moral development effectively. Pupils are constantly challenged to think and reason, and to draw on centuries of interpretation to support their arguments about how to live as a Jew in modern Britain. As a result, pupils gain in confidence and make strong progress in the Kodesh subjects.
- Leadership of the secular curriculum is now developing as a result of a recent leadership appointment. For example, early action has already been taken to improve the curriculum and associated systems for assessing and tracking pupils' progress. Consequently, the school's capacity to improve is stronger.

Governance

- Governors are not effective in challenging leaders and holding the school to account. They have not been effective in ensuring that the school provides a good standard of education.
- Governors have limited knowledge about pupils' learning and progress in the secular subjects. They do not use information about pupils' progress effectively to hold leaders to account for the quality of teaching.
- The proprietor has ensured that the school building is fit for purpose by working carefully to implement all the independent school standards pertaining to premises. Further

improvements are planned for the summer, for example in the playground, so that pupils are able to play basketball as an additional sport.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.
- Leaders and governors have failed in their statutory responsibility to inform the local authority about the status of pupils who are being privately fostered. As a result, the local authority has not been able to carry out the appropriate safeguarding checks on the fosterers, thereby putting these pupils potentially at risk.
- The school's child protection policy meets statutory requirements. Staff receive appropriate safeguarding training, which includes training on the 'Prevent' duty and child sexual exploitation. All staff are assessed on their knowledge through regular testing.
- Staff are clear about how to make referrals if they are worried about a pupil. Several staff are first-aid trained, and leaders have completed training in safer recruitment. Appropriate vetting checks are made on newly recruited staff, and records relating to safeguarding are well organised.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Inadequate

- Scrutiny of pupils' work in the secular subjects indicates that, over time, teaching has inadequate impact on pupils' learning and progress.
- Assessment information is not used to select learning activities that meet the range of pupils' needs. In turn, this prevents them making strong progress. In addition, teachers do not have high enough expectations for pupils when they join the school.
- Teachers do not provide challenging enough work for the GCSE and most able pupils. Too often, their learning in the secular subjects is shallow, because teachers do not probe pupils' understanding and stimulate deeper thinking. Work in pupils' files shows that the curriculum provides only limited opportunities for them to practise their English reading, writing and comprehension skills across subjects.
- Many teachers do not have strong enough subject knowledge across the secular curriculum, including in English and mathematics. Teachers' ability to support pupils' progress is hampered by their lack of understanding about how to teach key skills. Their understanding of how knowledge is taught sequentially as part of a coherent subject programme is weak. Consequently, pupils are prevented from achieving higher standards.
- In English, pupils' work shows very limited development of writing skills over time beyond filling in missing words and phrases in text already provided. All pupils, including those capable of achieving high standards, make inadequate progress in literacy.
- Teachers of Kodesh subjects support individual pupils well. They check their understanding and ask questions to ensure that pupils' knowledge is secure. As a result, many make good progress, for example in their understanding of the legal and moral principles on which Jewish law is based.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Inadequate

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is inadequate. This is because school leaders have not ensured that all pupils are kept safe by sharing important information with the local authority.
- Opportunities for pupils to learn in greater depth about the main religions represented in Britain are limited. Consequently, they are not prepared for life in British society.
- Pupils have confidence in the adults who work with them and know who they would go to if they needed help. They say that bullying is rare. The school's records, which show very few instances of bullying, all of which were dealt with effectively, support this. Pupils are taught to be respectful of each other, and the principal and staff do all they can to encourage positive relationships.
- Pupils use very little technology in the school. Nevertheless, in the curriculum they learn about the benefits and dangers of social media. Pupils have had information about how to keep safe on the internet; they understand about how to do this by keeping passwords and other personal information secure.
- Pupils engage in self-reflection at several points during the day; this makes a strong contribution to their personal development. For instance, pupils ponder on the wider meaning and significance of life, sharing their thoughts with their peers and teachers.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils behave well in the playground, in lessons and as they move around the building. They are polite and respectful to staff and to each other. They are friendly and welcoming to visitors.
- Pupils have a mild-mannered way of resolving a dispute, should it arise – for example, while playing a game. This was seen in the playground and at Hampstead Heath, where the pupils go for part of their scheduled physical education.
- Pupils start early and finish late, purportedly to ensure appropriate coverage of the Kodesh and secular curriculum. Attendance is broadly average and pupils' punctuality in the morning is good.
- Pupils behave well, even when teaching fails to meet their needs. Low-level disruption in lessons is very rare, and no pupils have ever been excluded.

Outcomes for pupils

Inadequate

- The school introduced secular subjects 15 months ago. Currently, around one third of pupils are studying for GCSEs in English, mathematics, physics and geography. Pupils' standards are low, largely because many teachers do not have the skills and knowledge needed to teach pupils at greater depth.

- Pupils do not make enough progress in their learning, because work is not challenging enough in the secular subjects. Pupils often do work that is too easy and do not move quickly enough onto the harder work. The most able pupils are not challenged enough to deepen their knowledge and understanding.
- Pupils' English reading skills are not developed effectively. Pupils studying GCSE have limited access to great works of literature for learning to enjoy reading and sharpen their comprehension skills.
- Pupils' English writing skills are not well developed. Scrutiny of work indicates that the curriculum does not contain sufficient opportunities to write at length across the different subjects. For example, in English, key stage 3 and GCSE pupils wrote sentences about figures of speech, but did not apply their learning to longer pieces of writing.
- The school has insufficient resources to develop pupils' deeper understanding of science. As a result, too many pupils make weak progress over time. Scrutiny of pupils' mathematics books indicates limited opportunities for consolidating problem-solving and reasoning skills. Pupils often state the answer to problems in their books without explaining how they got there and why.
- Pupils have good speaking and listening skills in English. Most are articulate and provide thoughtful verbal responses, when given the opportunity.
- In the daily cooperative study session, pairs of pupils actively discuss legal principles, based on their understanding of the Talmudic text. Pupils at a lower stage in their understanding benefit from engaging with pupils at a higher level; both deepen their learning as a result.
- Pupils make good progress in the Kodesh subjects, including Hebrew language. For example, they sharpen their inference skills through reading, analysing and discussing the religious text. Many pupils are skilled in annotating the different interpretations of the text and summarising their views after thinking things through.

School details

Unique reference number	144727
DfE registration number	302/6012
Inspection number	10041411

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	Orthodox Jewish day school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	13 to 16
Gender of pupils	Boys
Number of pupils on the school roll	22
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Chabad Lubavitch Uk Ltd
Chair	Rabbi Yitzchok Sufrin
Principal	Rabbi Moishe Zavdi
Annual fees (day pupils)	£4,500
Telephone number	020 3409 1853
Website	None at current time
Email address	office@mechina.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school was founded in the 1960s, when it was known as 'The Mechina'. It is an independent, one-form entry Chareidi Jewish School for boys, and has been operating in the London borough of Barnet since 2010.
- The school had its third pre-registration inspection on 8 February 2017. At that time, it was operating without registration, but was deemed likely to meet all the independent school standards. The school is now registered for up to 60 pupils of compulsory school age.

- The school currently provides full-time education for 22 boys aged between 13 and 16 for six days each week, from 8.00am to 6.15pm on Sunday to Thursday, and from 8.00am to 12 noon on Friday. The school serves pupils from the immediate Orthodox Jewish community and further afield.
- The school is owned by Chabad Lubavitch UK Ltd, which is the proprietor.
- The school is founded on the ethos of Chabad Lubavitch, and aims to provide pupils with an education that includes a solid grounding in Jewish studies (Kodesh) and a broad general knowledge (Chol, or the secular curriculum). Pupils are expected to develop an awareness of the teachings of Chasidic Judaism and follow the model of 'outreach, communal responsibility and adherence to Torah teachings', in accordance with the guidance of the Lubavitcher Rebbe.
- Timetabled lessons are provided for the discrete teaching of Kodesh studies and the chol curriculum, which is known as general studies.
- There are no pupils identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- The school does not have a website, but policies and other information are detailed in the school prospectus. All policies are available on request.
- This is the school's first standard independent school inspection.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector held meetings with the principal, the head of general studies and the school administrator, who comprise the leadership team.
- The inspector observed teaching and learning in Kodesh studies and the secular subjects. A few sessions were observed jointly with the principal.
- A meeting was held with two proprietors and a member of the governing body. Separate meetings were held with a group of staff and a group of pupils.
- The inspector carried out scrutiny of pupils' work in a range of subjects. He also considered the 10 responses from parents to Ofsted's online questionnaire, and 10 responses from staff.
- The inspector looked at a number of documents, including: the school improvement plan; analysis of the school's performance data; information relating to the attendance and behaviour of pupils; safeguarding and child protection records; and the school's admissions register and risk assessment documentation.

Inspection team

Nasim Butt, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex. Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school must meet the following independent school standards

Part 1. Quality of education provided

- 2(1) The standard in this paragraph is met if–
 - 2(2)(h) all pupils have the opportunity to learn and make progress; and
 - 2(2)(i) [there is] effective preparation of pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British society.
- 3 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that the teaching at the school–
 - 3(a) 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;
 - 3(c) involves well planned lessons and effective teaching methods, activities and management of class time;
 - 3(d) 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;
 - 3(e) demonstrates good knowledge and understanding of the subject matter being taught;
 - 3(f) utilises effectively classroom resources of a good quality, quantity and range;

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 7 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that–
 - 7(a) arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school; and
 - 7(b) such arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

- 34(1) The standard about the quality of leadership and management is met if the proprietor ensures that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school–
 - 34(1)(a) demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school standards are met consistently;
 - 34(1)(b) fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently;

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