

Peninim

27 Green Lane, Barnet, London NW4 2NL

Inspection dates

6–8 November 2018

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
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 school that requires improvement

- Governors do not challenge senior leaders to bring about swift improvements to the school.
- Planning for improvement, by leaders and governors, is not precise enough to ensure that all aspects of the school's work is good.
- Senior leaders have begun to evaluate the impact of their work on teaching, the curriculum and pupil outcomes. However, they do not use this information to hold teachers to account and secure improvements.
- Leaders do not train teachers well enough to use assessment information to plan for pupils' learning. As a result, pupils' progress in reading and writing is limited.
- Teaching is not consistently good. Some teaching, especially questioning, does not help pupils learn from mistakes or deepen their learning.
- Pupils' attainment in reading and writing, although improving, is still lower than the national average at Year 2. Pupils are not able to read fluently in English or to write at length.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher and leadership team have improved the school since the previous inspection. They have begun to evaluate the effectiveness of the school as they improve it further.
- Leaders have ensured that the school meets all the independent school standards.
- The curriculum provides a broad range of learning experiences for pupils. It promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.
- Parents and carers are pleased with the education provided by the school.
- Safeguarding arrangements are effective. Pupils feel happy and safe at school. They are respectful of others and behave well.
- Good leadership of the early years ensures that children make a good start. Targeted teaching and support enable children to make good progress in all areas of the early years curriculum.

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 by ensuring that:
 - governors and school leaders plan systematically to address weaknesses they identify in their self-evaluation, so they can bring about rapid improvement
 - effective systems are in place to enable governors to challenge and support leaders, holding them to account for the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes
 - there are effective systems for assessing, monitoring and evaluating the progress pupils make across the curriculum
 - teaching is good or better across year groups and subjects
 - teachers are trained how to use assessment information to plan activities that meet pupils' needs and their next steps in learning.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning by ensuring that teachers:
 - plan learning to meet pupils' needs more closely
 - use questioning and checks on learning to support pupils to deepen their knowledge and skills.
- Raise attainment in reading and writing by ensuring:
 - more opportunities are provided for pupils to read in English and to write at length.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Leaders are keen and enthusiastic to bring about school improvement. They have commissioned an education consultant to check the effectiveness of their actions. As a result, leaders are beginning to have a stronger understanding of how to bring about improvements by establishing whole-school systems.
- Senior leaders collect information on pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics. However, they do not hold teachers to account effectively with this information. Consequently, variability remains in outcomes and teaching, learning and assessment.
- Leaders' checks on the quality of teaching are infrequent, and identified weaknesses are not followed up promptly. Leaders have not yet provided sufficient training or support for teachers to improve.
- Leaders have started to develop teachers' skills by organising for them to visit other schools to learn from best practice. Leaders have undertaken discussions with teachers about how to develop their teaching and knowledge of the national curriculum. Teachers value these visits and meetings with leaders. It is too early to see an impact on pupils' outcomes.
- Leaders ensure pupils learn a range of subjects. Recently, the curriculum has been enhanced by the appointment of specialist physical education (PE) teacher. This has enabled cross-curricular links to be made with science about exercise and healthy lifestyles. Pupils and parents praised the work that the school has done in this area.
- A wide range of activities develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding, especially through the kodesh curriculum. For example, pupils learn about important women in Jewish history. The secular curriculum (chol) provides opportunities for pupils to talk about their work, for example on Remembrance Sunday, in English and history. After reflecting on what poppies meant for them individually, pupils went on to produce emotive poetry.
- Leaders ensure that pupils learn the importance of treating people fairly, whatever their background, including those with protected characteristics. Leaders ensure pupils develop a deeper understanding about themselves and their role within the Jewish community and British society. Pupils accept and demonstrate concepts such as tolerance, respect and the rule of law.
- In response to greater popularity and increased pupil numbers, leaders secured an additional site for the Nursery class, and the school is now on two sites. The youngest children in the school benefit from these improved facilities.
- Relationships with parents are strong. The school does not have a website, but all information is readily available from the school office. Parents said that every issue, no matter how small, is dealt with well, and any complaints are handled at the informal stage.
- Parents are happy with the reports they receive from the school about their child's progress in kodesh and chol.

Governance

- Although governors meet more regularly with leaders to receive information about the school, they do not have a strong understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. Governors do not hold school leaders to account for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, and pupils' outcomes.
- Governors work positively with leaders to ensure that pupils are well cared for, and that safeguarding is effective.
- Governors and leaders have ensured that the school complies with the independent school standards and associated regulations.
- The proprietor checked on the first cohort of leavers. He found that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) would have benefited from greater support. As a result, governors appointed a special educational needs coordinator (SENCo). In order to enhance pupils' physical health, governors appointed a specialist PE teacher.

Safeguarding

- Arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Strong teamwork ensures that a culture for safeguarding is emphasised throughout the school. Leaders organise suitable training for staff. This training allows staff to understand their responsibilities, and to be confident to respond to any concerns should the need arise. Staff are clear that safeguarding pupils is a key priority in the school.
- There are effective procedures to ensure safer recruitment to protect pupils from coming into contact with unsuitable adults.
- The school's safeguarding policy is available for parents or others on request to the school office. This policy is detailed and up to date.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Teachers do not routinely plan activities that ensure pupils make good progress.
- Occasionally, teachers do not notice when pupils complete their work inaccurately. As a result, pupils fall behind.
- The curriculum plans for English and mathematics provide a sequence of work to develop pupils' knowledge and skills. However, teachers sometimes pass over opportunities for pupils to produce extended writing. This limits pupils' practice of writing at length, and slows pupils' progress.
- Teaching does not consistently meet the needs of the most able pupils. Current work shows that, in mathematics, there is appropriate coverage of knowledge and skills. However, the most able pupils progress easily through repetitive work. This work does not require pupils to use reasoning skills, or apply their mathematical thinking. As a result, pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable.
- Teachers do not regularly provide pupils with models of high-quality writing. Therefore, pupils do not have the opportunity to see examples of good-quality written English that would help improve their work.

- Leaders and teachers have introduced rigorous approaches to assessing pupils in English and mathematics, which leads to relevant testing in these areas. Nevertheless, teachers do not use the information they gather to plan appropriate work. This assessment practice is not yet developed in other subjects across the curriculum.
- Leaders have begun to focus on the teaching of spelling. Pupils are increasing the amount and variety of words that they spell correctly, and they say they enjoy spelling. They talked positively about how the school spelling competition, 'Spellathon', encouraged them to learn how to spell more advanced vocabulary.
- When high expectations of achievement are communicated, pupils try very hard and have an accurate focus on learning. They enjoy having their work frequently checked.
- There are identifiable improvements in the presentation of pupils' written work in exercise books and homework. Pupils take pride in their learning. This is as a result of high expectations of presentation set by their teachers.
- When teachers' subject knowledge is strong and modelled to pupils, pupils quickly use technical vocabulary well. In geography, terms such as 'source', 'meander' and 'mouth' were discussed confidently, and pupils showed a good understanding of river formation.
- Some teaching makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development. For example, pupils reflect and think deeply about their feelings, such as when discussing caring for a parent with a disability.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- The school encourages pupils to have an informed, but respectful, approach towards others beyond the school. Pupils discuss how equality between people who are different, is essential. Opportunities are provided for pupils to develop links with the wider community through charitable and performance activities. Positive friendships and social skills are developed through games and activities, for example in construction clubs and circle time.
- Pupils say they are excited to come to school: 'There is not one day when we don't have something fun to do at school.'
- Pupils develop leadership skills when they organise events. For example, pupils are excited about the reintroduction of the school library, and pupils are indexing a range of new books that can be borrowed by the rest of the school.
- Parents value the high levels of supervision that the school provides to keep pupils secure. Pupils say they feel safe and have someone to talk to. They know that any concerns placed in the 'Post box of worries' are followed up promptly. The school is introducing a safeguarding programme, originating from a crisis centre for religious women and children in Israel, on how children can keep themselves safe.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.

- The school is calm and respectful. The inspector saw pupils behaving well in lessons and during their social time. They have good manners and act sensibly. Parents value the supportive calm atmosphere of the school, and are pleased that they have managed to secure a place for their child.
- Visitors are greeted with warmth and hospitality. Pupils are courteous and helpful to each other and staff. They show respect and politeness. They are positive about their school, and understand its high expectations of their conduct. Pupils were keen to share their experiences of school with the inspector.
- Pupils are always smartly dressed, and wear their uniform with pride. They are well supervised during breaktimes and at lunch. Pupils say they sometimes have arguments. They comment that these disagreements are resolved sensitively and quickly, with the support of teachers. Pupils say they have not known any cases of bullying, and school records confirm this.
- Pupils value their education. This is demonstrated through the improvement in their attendance since the previous inspection. Leaders ensure that they have immediate contact with the family of any pupil who is unexpectedly absent from school. They do this by calling parents on the first day of a pupil's absence. Leaders have also introduced an absence request form to prevent long-term absences.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- During the last academic year, the school had no pupils in Year 6. Pupils in Year 2 attained lower scores in reading and writing than the national averages. In mathematics, pupils attained broadly the same as pupils nationally.
- Leaders have invested in resources to develop literacy skills. Early indications are that these resources are having a positive effect on improving pupils' outcomes in reading.
- Inspection evidence shows that pupils make slightly better progress in mathematics than in reading and writing. Work in books confirms recent improvements in geography and science. For example, pupils use scientific enquiry skills to investigate how long teeth take to rot.
- Most-able pupils do not make as much progress as they could. This is because their specific needs are not always recognised by staff. Often, they are given the same work as other pupils, without extended challenge. This limits the progress they make.
- The school currently has no Year 1 pupils. The phonics programme is beginning to improve outcomes by the end of Year 2. Pupils use phonics knowledge well to help them read.
- The recently appointed SENCo knows the pupils well. A register is kept of pupils with SEND. The progress of pupils with SEND is strong because leaders ensure that therapists and outside agencies are used effectively to provide carefully planned and targeted activities. Effective programmes are devised that include construction and cooking activities to support pupils with SEND. The pupils on these programmes meet their targets.

Early years provision

Good

- The effective work between leaders and teachers ensures that the new Reception class is well led. It also ensures good-quality provision in the Nursery class in the Park Road building.
- The curriculum is carefully planned across all seven areas of learning. Leaders have a clear understanding of the needs of all children. They have put in place a wide range of learning opportunities to meet these needs. Good use is made of the information gained from parents about their children. This information is used carefully to plan the weekly provision of activities for each child. As a result, learning is targeted more effectively in the early years than in other areas of the school.
- Adults support children through play, and model language well, helping them to learn how to share toys for example.
- Adults provide children with opportunities to play with different equipment, such as using shaving foam to develop children's fine motor skills. As a result, children maintain interest and enjoyment, focusing for extended periods of time during play sessions.
- Strong relationships and regular routines ensure that children, including recent arrivals, settle in quickly. Children enjoy learning, and talk confidently with adults. Children showed sheer delight when they recognised their names on plant pots they have been decorating.
- Children demonstrate good behaviour in the early years. They behave sensibly and are clear about teachers' expectations of them. Children are well supported during mealtimes and have healthy snacks that they can access easily.
- Children's achievement, since their baseline assessment in September 2018, shows that they have made good progress.
- Children in Reception are beginning to develop their phonics knowledge. They can group pictures that start with the same sounds correctly. Adults use phonics knowledge well to model unfamiliar sounds to children.
- The use of assessment to check children's progress is at an early stage of development. Leaders are getting to grips with how to determine a good level of development for the new Reception class.
- Safeguarding in the early years is effective, and safeguarding systems are secure. Leaders have ensured that the setting meets all the statutory requirements for the early years.

School details

Unique reference number	137502
DfE registration number	302/6001
Inspection number	10055403

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	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Girls
Number of pupils on the school roll	77
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Rabbi Isaac Brief
Chair	Rabbi Issac Brief
Headteacher	Sarah Grunfeld
Annual fees (day pupils)	Nursery: £4,210 School: £3,636
Telephone number	020 8004 2224
Website	No website
Email address	peninimschool@gmail.com
Date of previous inspection	18–20 July 2017

Information about this school

- Peninim is an independent Jewish Orthodox primary school for girls. There are 77 pupils on roll, taught in two Nursery classes, Reception and Years 2, 3, 4 and 6.
- Since the previous inspection, the school has a new site for one of the Nursery classes; 26 children attend on this site, aged between two and three years old. Older pupils also walk to this site for PE lessons.
- The aim of the school is to provide 'a quality learning experience; a first-class kodesh

education, coupled with a high level of secular studies based on the national curriculum.'

- The school does not use any other alternative providers and there is no off-site provision.
- There are a small number of pupils on the school's register for special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- No pupils who currently attend the school have an education, health and care plan, and no pupils are disadvantaged.
- All pupils are from the Jewish Orthodox community. Most pupils speak English as an additional language, with Yiddish as their first language.
- The sole proprietor is the chair of governors.
- The last standard inspection took place in July 2017.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector and the headteacher jointly visited lessons across both sites. Work in pupils' books was scrutinised, and the inspector listened to pupils read and discussed their reading with them.
- The inspector met with the proprietor, leaders and teachers, and took account of the feedback from four staff questionnaires.
- Large numbers of pupils were spoken to in several meetings, at lunchtimes and in lessons.
- The inspector accompanied the headteacher for a tour of the school sites to check compliance with the independent school standards. The inspector examined records on the premises, including risk assessments and fire safety records.
- A range of school documents were scrutinised, including leaders' self-evaluation of the school's effectiveness; curriculum policies and schemes of work; the school's assessment information; minutes of leaders' meetings with governors and teachers, and plans for improvement. Analysis of attendance and behaviour records, and documentation relating to how the school keeps children safe, was also undertaken.
- The inspector spoke with parents at both sites, and took account of the 27 responses to the Ofsted online parent questionnaire, Parent View, and the 27 free-text comments.

Inspection team

Rebekah Iiyambo, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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