

Manchester Junior Girls' School

64 Upper Park Road, Salford, Lancashire M7 4JA

Inspection dates

12 to 14 March 2019

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	Good
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, trustees and proprietors share a common vision for excellence. The school's values of self-discipline and respect are amply demonstrated in the life of the school.
- Teaching, learning and assessment are good. Teachers plan lessons to build pupils' confidence in tackling challenging questions. However, sometimes pupils do not have enough time to develop their answers and correct misconceptions.
- All pupils make good progress in a range of subjects. Pupils achieve above average outcomes in mathematics and in grammar by the end of Year 6. They match the national average in reading. Pupils' attainment in writing is improving but remains below average.
- Children in the early years make a positive and happy start to their learning because they enjoy school and feel safe and secure.
- Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They are polite and courteous and treat everyone with respect. They have very positive attitudes to learning. Attendance is above average because pupils enjoy school. They feel safe and valued.
- The enhanced personal, social and health education curriculum enables pupils to develop the understanding and tolerance which lie at the heart of British values.
- The proprietor and senior leaders have acted promptly to address the issues raised at the previous inspection. They make regular checks to ensure that the independent school standards are consistently met.
- Although there is evidence in pupils' writing books of them using a range of genres, there is limited stimulus across the school to excite or challenge pupils.

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?

- Further improve the quality of teaching and learning by:
 - giving pupils more time to reflect on their work and develop their answers, as required by the school's assessment and feedback policy
 - tackling misconceptions as they arise in order to deepen pupils' understanding.
- Further enhance the curriculum by offering a wider range of experiences to encourage and support pupils' creative writing.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteachers, leaders and proprietors have ambitious aims for the school. Their work and vision have a very positive influence on every aspect of the school's work, and this drives continual improvement. They have ensured that all the independent standards are met.
- Leaders have responded promptly and effectively to areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection. Pupils' progress in writing is improving, the curriculum has been enhanced and documents now reflect the full range of protected characteristics and legal duties with regard to the Equalities Act.
- Leaders set high expectations for pupils and staff. The heads of religious studies (Kodesh) and secular studies (Chol) support the development of staff very effectively. They provide training, advice and guidance to ensure that teaching and learning are consistently strong. The proprietor conducts a balanced, fair and supportive performance management system. All staff are included. Targets are agreed and set with regular appraisals, which depending on the quality of performance, may lead to salary progression.
- The curriculum is constantly evolving. An enhanced personal, social and health education programme is ensuring that pupils are more fully aware of life in modern Britain. Although pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development includes an understanding and celebration of a wide range of Jewish festivals and celebrations, it also includes learning about other faiths and cultures. Pupils learn about national events, such as Remembrance Day, Brexit, general and local elections and royal celebrations. Within the Kodesh curriculum there is a strong emphasis on the importance of respect and tolerance toward all people, whatever their background.
- There is a limited range of extra-curricular activities, such as visits to parks, the zoo and museums.
- Staff morale is very high. The 18 staff who responded to the online questionnaire offered only praise for the way the school is managed and of the quality of support they receive. They used phrases such as 'forward-thinking', 'excellent', 'caring' and 'fabulous' in describing the school. Some commented positively on the fact that pupils are now taught much more about the different kinds of people who live in modern Britain.
- Parents and carers are virtually unanimous in their appreciation of all aspects of the school's work. They praised the staff for being such good role-models, the leaders for taking such good care of their children and the school's overall high academic standards. Parents say the school always responds quickly to any concerns they might have. Comments such as 'there is always help for any child having difficulties' and 'my daughters have the gift of a beautiful childhood thanks in part to this school' are typical of the many comments received.

Governance

- Governance is the responsibility of the two proprietors and two trustees. Together, they ensure that the school is on a secure financial footing and all the independent school

standards are met.

- One of the proprietors is in the school for most of the time and so is fully aware of the school's strengths and areas which can be further improved. She oversees the performance management system and works with the senior leadership team to monitor every aspect of the school's work.
- The proprietors and senior staff ensure that all the required policies and procedures are up to date and available for anyone to view in school. The school does not have a website. Parents may see the policies at any time, including those related to safeguarding.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Safeguarding has the highest priority and is the concern of all adults in school. Staff training is regular and up-to-date. Staff agree that they are well informed and would know how to act if concerned about any aspect of safeguarding.
- The single central record meets requirements.
- The child protection and safeguarding policies are comprehensive and include all the most recent government requirements.
- The school works with parents and the local community and so is aware of any local issues or factors affecting the well-being of pupils.
- The school has secure filters to make sure that any use of the internet is protected.
- The school site is well-maintained and secure. Access is only through locked gates, once a person has been identified.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Learning is effective because teachers plan lessons with pace, variety and structure. Lessons are often planned to address previously identified weaknesses. However, occasionally opportunities are missed to address misconceptions.
- Very positive relationships, based on mutual respect, exist between teachers and pupils. Adults are kindly, caring and full of encouragement towards their pupils. Pupils have excellent attitudes to learning. They concentrate in lessons and are eager and well-motivated.
- The morning Kodesh curriculum (religious studies) is well taught and makes a significant contribution to pupils' overall development of knowledge and skills. For example, pupils in Year 3 were writing play scripts and later performing them, thus supporting progress in writing and communication.
- Progress in writing and a lack of opportunities to write at greater length were identified as weaker areas at the previous inspection. Teachers are helping pupils to improve their writing skills by a strong focus on spelling, punctuation and grammar. A scrutiny of books showed that pupils are developing their literacy skills in subjects such as geography, history and science, as well as in their English work. The remaining weakness is the lack

of creative and imaginative writing in some pupils' work.

- Spelling, punctuation and grammar are very well taught. Pupils achieve well above average results in national tests. Pupils gain a firm grasp of English grammar, spell accurately and develop wide vocabularies for their age. Teachers regularly emphasise the importance of clear, well-formed and legible handwriting.
- In mathematics, progress is rapid, and standards are above average. Teachers set very high expectations for what pupils can achieve. Mastery is evident in the way in which pupils tackle mathematical concepts from different approaches and so gain deeper understanding before moving on to new work. For example, pupils in Year 5 were adept in manipulating decimals and fractions in several different ways.
- Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) learn well. Their progress is carefully checked by two coordinators of the provision for pupils with SEND. They have detailed information on the pupils in their care, which enables them to plan effective strategies to support these pupils.
- Teaching assistants are well briefed and provide unobtrusive support in class. Sometimes they teach small groups of pupils separately to help with work they find difficult or topics they have missed. This contributes well to pupils making good progress.
- Teachers generally use questioning well to extend learning. However, sometimes not enough time is given for pupils to develop their answers and so deepen their understanding.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils of all ages have very positive attitudes to learning. They are enthusiastic about school, wear their uniform with pride and appreciate all that their teachers do for them.
- Most pupils have good communication skills, which enables them to speak confidently and politely. Some pupils are shy, but the school helps them to overcome this by building their self-confidence, for example by performing in plays and poetry competitions.
- The Kodesh curriculum enables pupils to learn how to behave correctly in different circumstances, with dignity and good manners. For example, in circle time in Year 1, pupils were role playing how to behave when giving or receiving gifts. They also considered how to behave when receiving a gift not to their taste.
- Pupils report that they feel extremely safe in school and cared for well. They insist that there is no bullying, and that any arguments between pupils are quickly settled. The school counsellor is available to support any pupils who are worried in any way. There is a confidential 'worry box' into which pupils can place a request for help or support.
- Pupils learn about different hazards, such as safety on the road, the damage done by abuse of drugs or alcohol and basic awareness of the dangers of the internet. Pupils do not use the internet in school. All computers on the site have secure systems to ensure that there is no inappropriate use.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is threaded through the entire

curriculum. Pupils have a strong sense of identity and respect for all people.

- The school is addressing the challenge of teaching aspects of personal, social and health education which are outside the Jewish faith and traditionally would not be taught. These include some of the protected characteristics. However, the school has made great strides forward so that pupils are becoming more aware of the many different kinds of people who live in Britain, including those with the protected characteristics.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils' behaviour in class and around the school is exemplary. Pupils are proud of their school and they help to keep the environment clean and attractive and free from litter and graffiti. When asked to sum up their school in one word, pupils suggested 'safe', 'caring', 'friendly' and 'amazing'.
- Pupils across the school demonstrate good manners in all circumstances.
- Attendance is consistently above the national average. No pupils are persistently absent.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Across the school, pupils in all classes make good progress. This is evident in the work in pupils' books and in their test results in a range of subjects.
- Outcomes for pupils at the end of Year 1 in the national phonics screening check have been steadily rising and are consistently above average. Pupils use their understanding of phonics well in both Hebrew and English lessons.
- Outcomes at the end of key stage 1 are above average in mathematics, reading and grammar. Pupils in key stage 1 are lively, confident and very keen to learn.
- The school's new guided reading strategy is helping to increase pupils' enjoyment of reading and to raise standards so that most pupils read fluently. All rooms have a class library, so pupils have access to a wider range of books than previously. There is also a library of Jewish books for young readers.
- Pupils at the end of Year 6 achieve well above the national average in spelling, punctuation and grammar tests. Their skills in extended, creative and imaginative writing are less well developed. Pupils have completed some good-quality writing in subjects such as history, geography and science.
- Pupils make strong progress in mathematics, and standards are well above average by the end of Year 6. Pupils are confident and discuss their work in depth. Pupils say they enjoy mathematics, and they respond well to the high expectations of teachers.
- Pupils' work in science is good. Their books show that they are developing skills in conducting experiments and investigations. They are learning how to form hypotheses and identify ways of testing them.
- The most able pupils make good progress because of the extra challenge teachers provide across all subjects. The proportion of pupils at the end of Year 6 achieving greater depth is above the national average in both mathematics and spelling,

punctuation and grammar, and is average in reading.

- Pupils with SEND make the same good progress as others because they are very well supported. Pupils who require extra help are identified quickly. The school uses the expertise of outside agencies where necessary, such as occupational therapists.
- Pupils' enthusiasm for learning, positive attitudes and above average standards in some subjects ensure they are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Early years provision

Good

- Children in the early years are happy, confident, keen and enthusiastic. They are comfortable with adults and enjoy talking about their learning.
- The quality of teaching and learning are good. Learning is well planned to provide a good balance between adult-led activities and times when children can choose their own learning activities. All adults use questioning well to encourage children to talk and think about what they are doing. Some areas are set up for role play. For example, the children in Nursery class were playing pretending to be at weddings. They were choosing clothes and setting the festive table. Other children then decided to recreate a Bar Mitzvah, with children making speeches.
- Teachers and teaching assistants are well trained and use the assessment system well to capture moments of children's learning. The staff work together as a strong team. There is frequent communication about planning to ensure that children's interests are built on and encouraged.
- Children enter the Nursery class with skills typical for their age. Outcomes at the end of the Reception Year are steadily rising, although the proportion of children achieving a good level of development remains below average. Leaders, working alongside the local authority staff, have identified that some of the gaps are in children's skills in early writing. Teachers are now looking much more closely at children's learning profiles to identify gaps earlier and address them. As a result, the school predicts that a much higher proportion will achieve well in the current year.
- The early years accommodation is well resourced and children learn in a busy, active environment both indoors and out. Children particularly enjoy learning outdoors.
- There is regular communication with parents, who are kept fully informed about their children's progress and about what is happening in school.
- Leadership is highly effective. All children have a key worker who provides stability and familiarity. Staff know children well, plan next steps in learning and carefully evaluate how successful they are. Leaders ensure that all the welfare requirements are met. They make daily risk assessments to keep children safe.

School details

Unique reference number	106003
DfE registration number	355/6027
Inspection number	10067882

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 11
Gender of pupils	Girls
Number of pupils on the school roll	238
Proprietor	Mr Aryeh Ehrentreu and Mrs Hannah Ehrentreu
Headteacher	Mrs Esther Lieberman
Annual fees (day pupils)	Voluntary contributions
Telephone number	0161 740 0566
Website	None
Email address	office@bchschool.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	7 to 9 February and 7 March 2017

Information about this school

- Manchester Junior Girls' School is an independent primary day school in Salford. It opened in 1993 to provide education for girls from Orthodox Jewish families. Within the local community it is known as Beis Chinuch.
- The school previously provided education for girls up to the age of 13. However, since the opening of Beis Chinuch High School in 2015, the school now has no pupils in Years 7 and 8, and girls move on from the school at the end of Year 6.
- The school aims to 'equip girls with the academic skills needed to move confidently into British Jewish seminaries and to develop in each girl a deep appreciation for, and a joy in the practice of, the Jewish religion, as laid down by the Torah.'

- The proportion of pupils with SEND is broadly average.
- The school does not receive additional government funding to support disadvantaged pupils.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in all classes in a range of subjects. They looked at pupils' work in books and the records of their progress.
- Inspectors listened to pupils reading and held discussions with two groups of pupils. They talked informally with pupils around the school, at playtimes and in lessons.
- Inspectors took account of the 98 parental questionnaires and letters written in response to Parent View.
- Inspectors gained the views of staff by talking with members of staff and reviewing the 18 responses to the Ofsted staff survey.
- Meetings were held with the proprietors and one trustee, the headteacher, assistant headteacher, the head of religious studies (Kodesh), the head of secular studies (Chol) and the leaders responsible for children in the early years and for pupils with SEND. They also met with a group of staff.
- The lead inspector toured the school to check that the premises were suitable.
- Inspectors examined a range of documents to check compliance with the independent school standards. They also looked at the school's self-evaluation and development plans, records of leaders' checks on the quality of teaching and outcomes for pupils, the school's assessment information and all school policies.
- Inspectors scrutinised the school's safeguarding documents, policies and procedures, including attendance and behaviour records.

Inspection team

Judith Straw, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Sue Eastwood

Her Majesty's Inspector

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