

# Beis Soroh Schneirer

Arbiter House, Wilberforce Road, West Hendon NW9 6AX

## Inspection dates

18–20 June 2019

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
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

- The Chol (secular) curriculum is not well balanced. It lacks the required depth in key areas of learning, in particular science, history and geography. As a result, pupils do not make sufficient progress in these subjects.
- Teachers do not have the subject knowledge or skills to teach all of the secular subjects effectively. The learning in some subjects is not well sequenced or coherent.
- Pupils generally, but especially the most able, are not challenged as much as they should be in secular subjects other than in English and mathematics.
- Pupils do not get enough opportunities to apply their writing and mathematical skills across the secular curriculum. This limits the amount of progress they are capable of making.

### The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher has an ambitious vision for the school. By creating a strong leadership team and through systematic approaches, she has brought about rapid improvement.
- Pupils make good progress in English, mathematics and Kodesh subjects. Good professional development ensures that teachers have the skills and knowledge to teach these subjects effectively.
- Children in the early years get off to a good start to school life. They thrive in a stimulating, safe and nurturing environment.
- Governors have been instrumental in raising the funds required to provide quality training programmes for staff and external support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is consistently good. Pupils mix well, care for each other and are polite to visitors.
- Welfare arrangements are strong and safeguarding has a high priority. As a result, pupils feel well cared for and safe.

### 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 quality of teaching, learning and assessment by ensuring that:
  - teachers have the subject knowledge and skills required to teach all of the secular subjects effectively, in particular science, history and geography
  - assessment information is used more effectively to plan activities that stretch and challenge pupils, especially the most able, in secular subjects other than mathematics and English
  - pupils are given greater opportunities to practise their writing and mathematical skills across the secular curriculum.
- Improve the school's secular curriculum, by ensuring that sequences of learning are well thought out, to develop and deepen pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- Since the last inspection, leaders have implemented an effective plan of action to address weaknesses in provision. While there is more to be done, the impact of this work is evident across the school. Leaders and governors are clear that the provision must reflect the highest expectations for every child. They have ensured that all the independent school standards are met.
- Leaders show determination to improve outcomes for pupils. They know the school's strengths and understand which areas need further development. They work effectively with staff to strengthen teaching. This has sharply improved the standard of pupils' reading, writing and mathematics in key stages 1 and 2. These vital steps forward show that the school is well placed to improve further.
- Recent developments at middle leadership level mean that these members of staff are able to identify the strengths in their subjects. They check the impact of their work in improving teaching and learning and what needs to be done to improve pupils' outcomes further.
- Professional development is being used to enhance the quality of teaching and learning across the school. For example, language development and practical mathematics training have been implemented recently. As a result of this training, the skills of staff are improving.
- Leaders of Kodesh have designed a curriculum that ignites pupils' passion and enthusiasm for learning. They have clearly identified the knowledge, skills and understanding they want pupils to acquire. The curriculum makes it clear that learning opportunities build progressively on pupils' prior knowledge. As a result, pupils' progress is consistently strong in all year groups.
- Leaders of the secular curriculum have made clear improvements since the previous inspection. The texts introduced in the curriculum for literacy have been well thought through and inspire in pupils a desire to read for pleasure. Stronger schemes of learning have been developed in a few other subjects, for example art and physical education. However, the planning of some subjects is not sequential and therefore does not build well enough on prior learning over time. As a result, learning is not always being remembered or applied. This is especially true for science and humanities (history and geography).
- Leaders have not done enough to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in science and humanities. Teachers knowledge of the curriculum in these subjects and how to teach it is not as strong as it is in English and mathematics. Consequently, pupils make insufficient progress in science and humanities in both key stages.

### Governance

- Governors know the school well. They visit the school regularly and ensure that they receive the information that they need to hold leaders to account. They are aware of

where the school needs to improve. This is helping governors to understand the effect that leaders' work has on pupils' outcomes and the quality of teaching and learning.

- Governors bring a range of appropriate professional skills and experience to the school that enhance their effectiveness and impact. Sometimes, governors do not challenge and question the work of leaders as much as they should. This is particularly the case with regards to the quality and impact of the wider curriculum, which require further improvement.
- Governors monitor finances well, ensuring that funding is well used to provide focused professional development for teachers and leaders.

## Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders ensure that all safeguarding processes and procedures are fit for purpose. For example, the pre-employment checks that the school carries out on new staff meet requirements fully. The designated lead for safeguarding has received training in safer recruitment to better inform her role. Leaders and governors have established a strong safeguarding culture within the school.
- Staff receive training for safeguarding during their induction into the school. This is followed up by regular updates for all staff. They have a good awareness of the statutory guidance for keeping pupils safe and an informed understanding of the local risks to pupils. Staff are vigilant. Pupils clearly describe how the care that staff show them positively enhances their well-being.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

## Requires improvement

- The school provides a limited curriculum for science and humanities in key stages 1 and 2. Pupils' books indicate that teachers do not have sufficient skills and knowledge to teach these subjects effectively. As a result, the standards that pupils reach are often below what is expected for pupils of that age.
- Teachers do not provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to practise their writing and mathematical skills across the curriculum. For example, pupils who produce well-written extended pieces of writing in English often show lower standards of literacy in other subjects. Pupils' technical vocabulary in curriculum subjects such as science and humanities is not well developed.
- Teachers routinely take account of pupils' assessment information and prior learning when setting tasks for the most able pupils in English and mathematics. However, assessment information is not used well enough to plan for pupils' learning in most other secular curriculum subjects.
- In reading, teachers provide pupils with worthwhile opportunities to hone their skills. In key stage 2, pupils' books show an improved focus on developing inference skills before moving on to other aspects of comprehension. In Year 1, a more consistent approach to the teaching of phonics has ensured that pupils are confident in tackling unfamiliar words.
- In mathematics, the work in pupils' books reflects the professional development that staff

have received on sequencing the curriculum. Pupils use the calculation skills that they have learned previously to solve increasingly complex mathematical problems. Staff are adept at addressing misconceptions in pupils' understanding.

- The pupils with SEND are well supported by an individual learning programme and additional teaching from a teaching assistant. This support enables them to access the curriculum and achieve well alongside their peers.
- In Kodesh subjects, pupils rise to the challenge of high staff expectations. There is a culture of collaboration and exploration in lessons. Pupils want to do well. Staff use questioning well to elicit detailed responses from pupils and address misconceptions. Inspectors saw examples of staff using questioning skilfully to develop pupils' knowledge and 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 flourish in a caring and nurturing environment which values each pupil's individuality. Positive relationships fostered within the school are strong. Pupils feel cared for and valued. They are confident that there will always be someone to share their concerns with if they have any worries.
- Pupils work successfully with one another and on their own. They engage well in a wide range of activities at the school. Pupils develop confidence in their own abilities to learn and to succeed.
- Pupils are kind and considerate to each other and respectful to their peers and other adults. Pupils say that bullying does not happen in their school; this is supported by the school's records, which show no instances of any type of bullying.
- Assembly themes and the curriculum successfully promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, pupils respectfully participate in the acts of collective worship, taking time for reflection and prayer.
- Pupils learn about people and cultures that are different from their own and the critical importance of values such as democracy. Leaders have suitable plans in place to develop this aspect of the school's work further.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils focus well on their learning. Their thoughtful behaviour has a notably positive effect on the progress that they make. Pupils are attentive and say that disruption to lessons is rare.
- Pupils' conduct in and around the school is good. At playtimes, older pupils act as excellent role models for younger children by leading activities.
- Pupils are proud of their school, and this is reflected in their good attendance. Pupils are punctual and well organised to start learning in the morning and after transition points

throughout the day.

## Outcomes for pupils

## Requires improvement

- Pupils do not make enough progress in some secular subjects, in particular science, history and geography. Pupils' books show that the key ideas in these subjects are not taught in sufficient depth; as a result, learning over time is too shallow.
- Pupils do not routinely apply their writing and mathematical skills across the secular curriculum. This limits the quality and depth of their analysis and evaluation of important ideas in the subject. Pupils capable of learning in greater depth are particularly disadvantaged by this lack of opportunity.
- Most-able pupils achieve well in English, mathematics and the Kodesh subjects. This is because learning is suitably challenging, requiring them to think hard to solve a wide range of problems. However, staff do not have high-enough expectations of what most-able pupils are capable of achieving in some secular subjects. As a result, in these subjects, they make insufficient progress over time.
- Teachers select appropriate reading books to challenge pupils' reading skills. This, together with their phonetic decoding skills, helps most pupils to become confident and independent readers by the end of key stage 1.
- The school's latest assessment information and work in pupils' books across all classes indicate good outcomes for current pupils in English and mathematics. In mathematics, for instance, pupils are increasingly adept at applying their reasoning skills to solve problems, especially in key stage 2. In addition, there are good examples of work in art, and evidence of pupils' skills in this subject are improving over time.
- Assessment information, supported by scrutiny of work, shows that pupils with SEND make good progress from their starting points. This is because of the well-targeted support they receive and the effective systems in place to make relevant checks of their learning.
- Pupils achieve good outcomes in Kodesh subjects. This is partly because the background knowledge required to understand the Hebrew text is taught well. Pupils frequently discuss the interpretation of different stories and explain it to each other well.

## Early years provision

## Good

- The early years leader has a detailed understanding of the effectiveness of the provision. She keeps detailed records and ensures that children, at the very earliest stages, have their needs met well. As a result, children make good progress and are well prepared for their transition into Year 1. By the end of the Reception year, most children achieve a good level of development.
- The small number of two-year-old children progress well and start to develop early communication quickly. When needed, communication systems for those who are yet to use words are identified and implemented well.
- Children come into the school often with skills and knowledge below that expected for their age. Staff are quick to assess each child's ability to communicate and engage with

learning, in order to provide an effective baseline. All children are assessed within the first six weeks of starting at the school. This means that the provision is effective in making best use of their time at the earliest stages of learning.

- Teachers have a clear understanding about where the children are in terms of their development. Systems are embedded to ensure that this understanding is regularly updated.
- The teaching of phonics is good. Children learn the basic skills of reading and apply the sounds they have learned to their spelling. Older children use these skills to write lists and simple instructions.
- The teaching of mathematics is focused on acquiring early number skills; children use concrete apparatus to help them move on to simple recording. They can reliably count and identify missing numbers.
- Children behave well, both in the classroom and the outside area. Children cooperate well with each other and engage in lively chatter as they work and play, sharing their ideas with each other.
- Safeguarding procedures are effective and welfare requirements are met fully. All adults share the responsibility of keeping children safe and communicate effectively across the provision in order to do so.

## School details

Unique reference number	131026
DfE registration number	302/6104
Inspection number	10092466

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 day school
School category	Other Independent school
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Girls
Number of pupils on the school roll	283
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Mr Anthony Adler
Chair	Mr Mordecai Waldman
Headteachers	Dr Hadassah Ryde and Mrs Sonia Mossberg
Annual fees (day pupils)	£4,800
Telephone number	020 8201 7771
Website	The school does not have a website
Email address	bssschool@btconnect.com
Date of previous inspection	7 June 2018

## Information about this school

- Beis Soroh Schneirer is an independent day school for girls of Jewish faith, aged from two to 11 years. There are currently 283 girls on roll.
- The school opened in 1996 and serves the Jewish Orthodox community of north-west London.
- The school is led by two co-headteachers who work collaboratively: the head of the Jewish Kodesh curriculum and the head of Chol (secular) subjects.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is below the national average. There are no pupils



who have an education, health and care plan.

- After the previous progress monitoring inspection in June 2018, the school was granted permission to register some two-year-old children into its early years setting.
- The school does not have a website. Parents and carers are made aware that policies are available from the school office on request.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors held meetings with the two co-headteachers, the early years lead and two governors, including the chair of the governing body.
- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in many lessons, in both Kodesh and secular subjects. Several lessons were observed jointly with the headteachers.
- Separate meetings were held with six teachers and with a group of 12 pupils.
- Inspectors carried out scrutiny of pupils' work in a range of subjects, including some artwork that pupils had produced.
- There were insufficient responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, for analysis. Inspectors took account of the 62 responses to the paper questionnaire that the school sent to parents. No responses were returned to Ofsted's online questionnaires for staff and pupils.
- Inspectors looked at a number of documents, including: a wide range of policies; information relating to the attendance and behaviour of pupils; safeguarding and child protection records; the school's admissions register; and risk assessment documentation.

## Inspection team

Nasim Butt, lead inspector

Paul Wagstaff

Her Majesty's Inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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