

Beis Aharon School

83–95 Bethune Road, London N16 5ED

Inspection dates

2–4 July 2019

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Leaders and governors do not monitor and review the school improvement plan well enough. As a result, they are unable to articulate the full impact of their work.
- The curriculum in the secular subjects (Chol) is not well planned or sequenced.
- The systems for assessing pupils' progress are not embedded. As a result, leaders' evaluation of the impact of teachers' work lacks precision.
- Leaders do not consider pupils' progress sufficiently when evaluating the impact of their actions.
- Teachers do not routinely use assessment information to set work that stretches pupils and develops their reasoning skills. Teachers' questioning does not probe pupils' understanding in the secular subjects.
- Teachers of the secular subjects lack the knowledge and skills required to teach the curriculum in greater depth.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to practise their spelling, punctuation and grammar skills across the secular curriculum.
- Pupils do not read a wide enough range of whole texts that are suitable for their age. This limits their ability to learn the secular curriculum subjects in greater depth.
- Pupils' cultural development is not as strong as it could be because they do not learn in sufficient depth about faiths and cultures other than their own.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher is ambitious and has a clear vision for improvement. His determined leadership has ensured improvements in the quality of teaching of English and mathematics.
- The Kodesh curriculum (Jewish religious studies) is taught well and pupils make good progress in all year groups.
- Governors and the proprietor have ensured that all the independent school standards are met. Safeguarding is effective.
- Pupils show good manners and behave well.
- Parents and carers are very supportive of the school and speak positively about the quality of education it provides.

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, and therefore pupils' outcomes, by:
 - ensuring that teachers have the subject knowledge and skills required to teach all the secular subjects effectively
 - ensuring that assessment information is used by teachers to set work that stretches pupils' thinking, knowledge and skills
 - extending opportunities for pupils to secure good spelling, punctuation and grammar across the secular subjects
 - making sure that teachers' questioning probes pupils' deeper understanding in lessons
 - providing greater opportunities for pupils to read and enjoy a wider range of age-appropriate texts.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
 - ensuring that leaders and governors monitor and review the progress and impact of their plans more effectively so that improvements are more rapid
 - ensuring that sequences of learning in the secular curriculum subjects are well planned, to develop and deepen pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding
 - making sure that the systems for assessing pupils' progress and attainment are fully embedded
 - evaluating the impact on pupils' progress when monitoring the quality of teaching and the effectiveness of leaders' actions.
- Enhance pupils' personal and cultural development by providing them with planned opportunities to learn in greater depth about other faiths and different types of family life represented in Britain.
- Raise children's achievement in the early years by improving the quality and impact of teaching, learning and assessment in literacy and mathematics.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Since the school's previous inspection, the headteacher has focused on improving the quality of teaching and assessment in English and mathematics. Teachers have had professional development to improve their subject knowledge and teaching skills. Staff very much appreciate the support and guidance they now receive. As a result, teaching is improving, and pupils make better progress in these subjects than previously. However, the standards pupils reach in reading, writing and mathematics remain below those expected for pupils of that age in all year groups.
- Leaders' monitoring of their action plans lacks focus. Leaders have not given enough consideration to the impact of their initiatives on pupils' outcomes. Where new strategies have been introduced, they are not embedded or applied consistently throughout the school. This has resulted in too much variability in the quality of teaching and learning.
- Leaders' records of monitoring of lessons do not focus on the progress pupils are making over time. This makes it difficult for leaders to be certain how well both individuals and groups of pupils are achieving across the curriculum, over time, in the different classes. There is limited assessment information against which leaders can benchmark pupils' performance.
- The curriculum in English and mathematics has improved and most pupils are making stronger progress. More time is now allocated to teaching these subjects than was the case at the previous inspection. In other secular subjects, topics engage the pupils' interest and pupils enthusiastically talk about the activities they have done in class. However, they cannot accurately recount the subject content they should have learned or make links within a subject. This lack of depth in knowledge is evident in pupils' work and when they talk about a subject.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is promoted well and is a strong aspect of the school's work. For example, pupils frequently reflect on the factors that need to be considered when making important decisions, especially in Kodesh lessons. Pupils' cultural development, however, is not as strong. Although they know about and admire British values, pupils have limited opportunities to gain first-hand experience of wider British culture.
- Leadership of the Kodesh curriculum is effective. The different strands hang together well, supported by clarity about how pupils move through it and make good progress. Pupils retain their knowledge and build on their understanding over time. As a result, they make meaningful connections, for instance between biblical studies and Jewish law.
- The headteacher has an accurate view of the school's effectiveness and shares this openly. His commitment to addressing the legacy of weaknesses which have previously resulted in poor pupil achievement is changing the culture of the school.

Governance

- Governors provide challenge as well as support to the headteacher on behalf of the proprietor. Governors keep a close eye on aspects of the school's performance through external reviews carried out by their improvement partner. However, the focus of their

scrutiny has been on English and mathematics and not enough on all other areas of the secular curriculum.

- Governors are successful in securing additional funds for the school. They have been instrumental in providing a good quality of education in Kodesh studies that is valued by parents.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders carry out checks on all staff before they join to make sure that they are suitable to work with children. All staff attend safeguarding training as part of their induction. Leaders make sure that staff are familiar with the school's safeguarding policy and procedures. Staff attend regular training to make sure that they are aware of potential risks to pupils and their responsibilities.
- Staff develop good relationships with pupils, so they feel confident to share any worries or concerns. Staff make sure that they report any concerns promptly to the designated safeguarding lead. This lead works well with external partners to make sure that pupils and their families get the help and support they need.
- Staff help pupils to know how to keep themselves safe and what to do if things go wrong. Pupils and parents agree that pupils are well cared for and safe at the school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Although the teaching of English and mathematics has improved, it is not strong enough to secure good progress for pupils. Too often, teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are not high enough and work is not pitched accurately enough to meet pupils' needs. This is because teachers are not using assessment information effectively to plan learning that appropriately challenges pupils.
- The teaching of most secular subjects is not thorough enough to ensure that there is clear progression of skills and knowledge. This hinders pupils in developing secure understanding in these subjects and making links within subjects. For example, pupils do not have a clear understanding of how the practical and theoretical elements in subjects such as science and geography are related.
- Teachers use questioning, but this does not sufficiently check pupils' understanding or help move their learning on effectively. This is particularly the case in those subjects where teachers' subject knowledge is less secure.
- Teachers record pupils' attainment and check on progress in English and mathematics. However, leaders have not set out clearly their measures of how much progress pupils are expected to make. Leaders have set up an assessment tracking tool to give them the information they need. Currently, there is not enough data available in the new system to provide staff with any meaningful information.
- Teachers often provide useful one-to-one support for pupils by checking on the progress they are making on tasks and providing timely advice. This is especially true for English and mathematics, where the biggest improvements are evident in teaching, learning and assessment.

- The quality of support provided for pupils with special educational needs is improving. This is because staff have a better understanding of their needs and leaders have built in more time and resource to provide additional targeted support.
- In Kodesh, teachers have high expectations of their pupils. They make effective use of assessment to ensure that learning is accurately pitched so that it is focused on pupils' next steps. Teachers ensure that pupils are given clear guidance to help them to improve, and they address pupils' misconceptions effectively. This enables pupils to make strong progress.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- Pupils learn about other cultures from time to time, for instance Chinese cuisine and how people dress in that part of the world. Pupils have basic knowledge and understanding of Islam and Christianity, gained from their biblical studies and input from the occasional visitor. However, pupils' knowledge and understanding about faiths and cultures other than their own is not sufficiently extensive.
- The headteacher has worked hard at raising parents' awareness of the importance of protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010. He has engaged governors and parents in looking at the characteristics in the context of age appropriateness. On the basis of this consultation, a strategy has been crafted that reflects the age range of the pupils in the school. Although this is a clear step forward, pupils do not have enough understanding of the wide range of family life represented in modern Britain.
- Pupils learn about different forms of bullying and are taught to respect the beliefs and views of others. 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 to develop pupils' personal skills are used well to promote the school's vision and ethos and to create a strong sense of community. Pupils respectfully participate in the acts of collective worship, taking time for reflection and prayer.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- The school is calm and peaceful. Inspectors saw pupils behaving well in lessons and during their social time during the school day. Pupils move about the school with consideration so as not to disturb others. They are positive about their school and understand its expectations about their conduct. Pupils are courteous, considerate and helpful to each other, to visitors and staff.
- On occasion, when teaching is not demanding enough, some pupils lose concentration in lessons and therefore become inattentive. In lessons where teachers' expectations are high, pupils try hard and focus on learning.
- Pupils attend school regularly and attendance rates are above those found in many schools. This reflects pupils' keenness to be in school as well as the close contact staff

have with parents if pupils are not in school as expected.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Although pupils' progress in English and mathematics has improved, it is not strong enough to secure good outcomes. This is because the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is too variable in both key stages.
- Pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is below average by the end of key stages 1 and 2. Scrutiny of pupils' work shows that they are not working at the level expected for pupils of that age. The curriculum does not cater well enough for the needs of many pupils who are clearly capable of learning in greater depth.
- Inspectors found evidence of very little work in other curriculum subjects, such as science, history, geography and art. What was there was not well planned or sequenced. As a result, pupils have gaps in their subject-specific knowledge and skills. This is particularly evident when talking to pupils about their work in the secular subjects.
- The opportunities for pupils to practise their spelling, punctuation and grammar skills in English has improved since the previous inspection. However, insufficient opportunities are provided in other curriculum subjects, which limits the progress pupils make over time. Leaders continue to review the curriculum time allocated to the secular subjects.
- Pupils' early reading skills are improving due to better teaching of phonics. Pupils are beginning to read books that are appropriate for their stage of development. However, for older pupils, the selection of books in the school is currently very limited and pupils are not encouraged to read whole texts. Consequently, pupils do not develop a love and passion for reading that goes beyond the life of the school.
- Pupils make good progress in Kodesh studies, especially Jewish law and biblical Hebrew. Pupils read the Aramaic text and learn about the explanations of what they are reading in Hebrew. Teachers are skilful at developing pupils' speaking, listening, reading and writing skills at each stage.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- Children in the main start in the early years with skills and knowledge at a stage of development lower than is typical for their age, particularly in speech and language. Over time, the proportion of children leaving the Reception Year with a good level of development is below the national average. Consequently, children are not always well equipped for key stage 1, especially in literacy and mathematics. The attainment of this year's cohort, from a low starting point, shows a similar gap to previous years, with some children needing to catch up quickly to be fully ready for key stage 1.
- Although staff assess children regularly, their confidence in, and accuracy of, carrying out the assessments are not yet secure. This means that staff do not routinely plan well enough to meet children's learning needs, which limits their progress.
- On entry to the school, children quickly adapt to a mixed-age class and are happy, motivated and ready to learn. Children have good relationships with adults as well as with each other. The classroom and outside areas provide inviting places to learn and play.
- Children's speaking and listening skills are developed well by the majority of staff. Staff

engage children in conversations and model the correct use of language. Staff also encourage children to have good manners, and insist that children say 'please' and 'thank you' when appropriate. This creates a positive learning environment where children socialise well with one another and show respect to staff.

- Children behave well both in the classroom and in the outside area. Children cooperate well with each other and explain what they are doing as they play. They are confident to share their experiences with visitors. Inspection evidence shows that children make the strongest progress in their personal, social and emotional development as well as their understanding of the world.
- Transition arrangements are good. The welfare and safety requirements in the early years are met. Children's personal and health needs are met well by an effective and vigilant early years leader.

School details

Unique reference number	131170
DfE registration number	204/6398
Inspection number	10092522

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 13
Gender of pupils	Boys
Number of pupils on the school roll	243
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Joseph Lipschitz
Chair	Aaron Hoffman
Headteacher	Menashe Moishe Gotlieb
Annual fees (day pupils)	£2,860
Telephone number	020 8809 9444
Website	The school does not have a website
Email address	hfrankl@ttbal.plus.com
Date of previous inspection	15–17 May 2018

Information about this school

- This is an independent Orthodox Jewish day school for boys in the London Borough of Hackney.
- The school occupies a purpose-built building in a residential area of Hackney. The early years section is housed in a separate building directly opposite the main school. Since January 2019, the school has been admitting nursery-aged children as a part of its early years provision.
- The school is registered for pupils between the ages of three and 13. All pupils speak Yiddish as a first language and Hebrew as a second language. Pupils speak English as an

additional language.

- The school does not use any off-site educational provision for pupils.
- The school has a small number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including pupils with an education, health and care plan.
- Pupils study Kodesh (Jewish religious studies) in the morning and for a brief period after lunch. This is taught in Yiddish. Pupils also learn Hebrew. The secular curriculum is taught in English in the afternoon.
- The headteacher has been in post since September 2017.
- The school's previous standard inspection took place in May 2018 when the school was judged to require improvement.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection was carried out with one day's notice.
- Inspectors visited classes in all year groups, including the early years provision. Most of these visits were made jointly with senior leaders. Inspectors also scrutinised pupils' work in a range of subjects.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, the compliance manager, leaders of the secular and Kodesh curriculums, the SENCo, and the designated safeguarding lead to discuss the impact of their work. A brief conversation was also held with the school's external consultant, who is undertaking work with the school.
- The lead inspector met with a group of governors, including the chair of governors, representing the proprietor.
- Inspectors held separate meetings with six teachers and a group of 12 pupils, to find out about their views of the school.
- Inspectors looked at a number of documents, including: a wide range of policies; the school's self-evaluation form and improvement plan; information relating to the attendance and behaviour of pupils; safeguarding and child protection records; and the school's admissions register and risk assessment documentation.
- Inspectors considered the 42 parental responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View. There was a nil return to the Ofsted online surveys for pupils and staff.

Inspection team

Nasim Butt, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

James Robinson

Ofsted Inspector

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