

# Inspection of Beis Malka Girls' School

93 Alkham Road, London N16 6XD

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Inspection dates: 4–6 February 2020

**Overall effectiveness** **Good**

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The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection Good

Does the school meet the independent school standards? **Yes**

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils enjoy school a great deal. They particularly like mathematics, English and science, as well as all the visits and events they attend. The curriculum gives pupils invaluable experiences. It is ambitious and planned well so that pupils deepen their learning and achieve well.

Nearly all pupils start school speaking only Yiddish. Teaching them to read and write in English begins early in Reception. By the time they go into Year 1, all are using letters and sounds. Pupils start slowly but as they move up the school, they get better and better at English. They reach high standards in their GCSE examinations at the age of 16.

Pupils told inspectors that they feel safe in school because there are always teachers and adults around to help them. They say that bullying is rare. The school makes sure that pupils know about life in Britain. It promotes respect for others, regardless of faith, gender, culture or lifestyle. Pupils are well behaved, polite and welcoming to visitors. They are thoughtful and reflective.

A small number of parents responded to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey. They all praise the school highly. They say that the school gives their children a good-quality education, keeps them safe and helps them to be confident.

## **What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?**

Leaders have made improvements since the last inspection. They have continued to develop the school's secular curriculum. It covers a broad range of subjects and deepens pupils' learning. As well as English and mathematics, pupils study science, history and geography to GCSE level. Art and cooking expand the curriculum. Planning is based firmly on the national curriculum and is suitably ambitious. Leaders' plans for broadening the curriculum further are well thought out and sensible.

The curriculum is taught in a logical order. This helps pupils build on their learning year-by-year. For example, in mathematics, planning shows teachers how to expand pupils' learning by recapping on previous work. Teachers are careful not to move pupils on to the next topic before mastering current work. In English, too, new learning builds on previous work so that pupils understand what they are doing and why. The English curriculum enables all pupils to become confident speakers and writers. The opportunity to repeat work on grammar and spelling means that they use English instinctively.

Leaders put a lot of emphasis on teaching pupils to read English fluently. Improving the quality of phonics teaching is rightly a priority. Early years teachers have received up-dated training. Children in the Reception class get lots of opportunities to practise and develop their phonics and reading skills. Staff make sure that the

books they read match the sounds they learn in phonics. As a result, pupils in key stage 1 read with increasing skill.

Pupils in key stage 2 enjoy reading and the weekly reading session in classes. Books are chosen for the richness of their language. However, these sessions are not a regular part of pupils' daily reading diet. By the end of key stage 2, reading is still behind where it should be. Pupils more than catch up in key stages 3 and 4. GCSE results in English are strong.

The curriculum promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Improvements to personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education mean that pupils are prepared well for life in Britain. The PSHE education curriculum develops pupils' learning year-on-year. It takes account of pupils' needs, such as learning about finance and budgeting. It also links to the Jewish year. For example, rights and responsibilities coincide with important Jewish holidays.

Visits to the Royal Courts and the Houses of Parliament help to promote British values. Field trips give pupils an understanding of modern Britain and its diverse population. Year 11 pupils organise a drama production each year. Every pupil is involved, each doing something to contribute. The results are impressive. Pupils learn to be independent and build their organisational skills.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) get a good deal. Staff identify pupils who need extra help. Specialist teachers and small groups mean that pupils get the help they need. As a result, all pupils deepen their learning.

Senior staff work effectively to help subject leaders develop their skills and expertise. Staff training focuses on improving teachers' subject expertise and understanding. This is proving successful. It is one of the reasons for the well-planned curriculum. However, there are a few variations across the school, mainly as a result of new staff or newly introduced subjects.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The security of the building remains a high priority for the school. Staff and leaders understand the safeguarding issues affecting the local community. They ensure that pupils learn how to keep themselves safe in different situations. However, staff go further by helping pupils to use their feelings to recognise vulnerable situations. Staff understand that anything is possible and that 'thinking the unthinkable' is a key part of safeguarding.

The leaders responsible for safeguarding are fully trained. They use their expertise to provide refresher training to all members of staff at least once each term. Governors also receive training. This ensures that everyone in the school knows about the latest guidance.

The systems for vetting staff meet requirements. Detailed records ensure that all staff are checked for their suitability before being employed. Appropriate checks are also made of governors.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and proprietor)**

- Much has been done to develop subject leadership. This supports subject planning and the introduction of additional subjects. There are, though, some inconsistencies. Leaders should ensure that subject leaders work together more formally so that further links are made between one key stage and another, and between subjects. Leaders should also ensure that best practice is shared more widely.
- Pupils are given lots of opportunities to develop their English language skills. However, leaders should ensure that reading daily in key stage 2 has a greater priority. This will help to improve pupils' literacy skills further.

## **How can I feed back my views?**

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the provider and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	100295
<b>DfE registration number</b>	204/6337
<b>Local authority</b>	Hackney
<b>Inspection number</b>	10123009
<b>Type of school</b>	Other Independent School
<b>School category</b>	Independent school
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2 to 16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Girls
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	583
<b>Proprietor</b>	Aaron Grossman
<b>Chair</b>	Aaron Grossman
<b>Headteacher</b>	Gita Wind
<b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>	£2,080
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8806 2070
<b>Website</b>	No website
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:mail@beismalka.com">mail@beismalka.com</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	25–27 April 2017

## Information about this school

- Beis Malka Girls' School is an independent strictly Orthodox Jewish school founded in 1980. It serves the Belz Chassidic community and is situated in the London Borough of Hackney.
- There are nine pupils who have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan.
- The school does not meet the requirements of its registration. It has an agreed capacity of 500 pupils but has 583 on roll.
- The school does not have a website, but all the required policies are available to parents on request.
- The school's last full standard inspection took place in April 2017, where its overall effectiveness was judged to be good.

## Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008. The purpose of the inspection is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

The school meets the independent school standards. These are the requirements set out in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

- Inspectors looked at the quality of the curriculum in reading, English, mathematics, geography and PSHE education. They also considered other subjects as part of looking at the quality of education.
- Inspectors spoke with leaders, including the deputy headteacher of the secondary school and the headteachers of the primary schools and the early years provision. They also spoke to teachers.
- The lead inspector met with governors and the chair of the proprietorial body. The inspector had a telephone call with an external adviser.
- Inspectors spoke to groups of pupils to explore their experiences of attending the school and their learning. They spoke to some pupils informally during lessons.
- Inspectors considered written policies, including documents relating to safeguarding, behaviour, complaints and the plans for assemblies, careers education and lessons. They toured both buildings and considered how the proprietorial body met the independent school standards.
- An interpreter was present on one day of the inspection to help inspectors understand lessons taught in Yiddish.

## Inspection team

Brian Oppenheim, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

David Lloyd

Ofsted Inspector

Alison Moore

Ofsted Inspector

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