

# Inspection of Beis Chinuch Lebonos Girls School

Woodberry Down Centre, Woodberry Down, London N4 2SH

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Inspection dates: 25–27 February 2020

## **Overall effectiveness**

## **Requires improvement**

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The quality of education

**Requires improvement**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Good**

Personal development

**Good**

Leadership and management

**Requires improvement**

Early years provision

**Good**

Overall effectiveness at previous  
inspection

Inadequate

Does the school meet the independent  
school standards?

**No**

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

The quality of secular education has improved since the last inspection. Pupils talk excitedly about all the activities teachers give them, in and out of lessons. Inspectors saw lots of examples of work that captured pupils' imagination. However, this is not consistent across all subjects. Pupils do particularly well in mathematics where the work follows a logical order. In art, pupils' work is often of a high quality. The teaching of phonics starts well, but work in Year 2 does not deepen pupils' knowledge well enough. In some other subjects, planning is less strong and the work is jumbled. This makes it difficult for pupils to deepen their learning in all subjects.

Pupils gain a wide insight into British society. Visits to the Houses of Parliament and a mock election at school give pupils an insight into how British democracy works. Personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education promotes tolerance and respect for others. However, leaders are clear that they do not refer to all the protected characteristics identified by the Equality Act 2010.

Pupils learn about how to keep themselves safe online and on the streets. Work on anti-bullying and how to deal with feelings develops pupils' personal skills. Good manners are reinforced frequently.

Pupils' attitudes to school and learning are strong. They love school. Pupils say that this is because teachers are always there to help them with their work and make learning fun. Pupils are insistent that there is no bullying, but know that, if there was, staff would deal with it decisively. Pupils know who to turn to if they have a problem. They are well behaved. Lessons are rarely disrupted; pupils listen attentively and work hard. Leaders create a respectful and positive climate.

The small number of parents who responded to Ofsted's online survey were universally positive. Those who wrote comments praised the school for its educational achievements. They were especially positive about how well teachers care for and support their daughters.

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

Despite important improvements since the last inspection, some weaknesses remain. Pupils continue to be unaware of all the protected characteristics identified in the Equality Act 2010. Nonetheless, the school promotes most British values well. These include democracy, the rule of law, and tolerance and respect for others. Pupils learn about different religions and cultures through the carefully planned PSHE programme. The programme includes work on feelings and good manners, as well as how to use social media responsibly. Pupils learn about how to live healthily and how to keep themselves safe. There is a strong focus on showing respect to people who are different.

The curriculum in the early years reflects the areas of learning and children meet the early learning goals by the end of the Reception Year. There is a strong focus on

early reading and phonics. However, teachers use different approaches to reading. In Year 2, reading books do not match the sounds pupils learn in Year 1. This slows their learning.

Improvements to the secular programme have broadened pupils' experiences. For example, there are lessons in art, music and physical education from key stage 2 onwards. Most pupils study seven subjects at GCSE. All pupils study geography and do either textiles, art or music in key stages 3 and 4. Finance is offered in key stage 4 as an alternative to history. Leaders are planning to expand science so that pupils can study biology and physics at GCSE.

Some subjects are planned in a logical order so that pupils build their learning on the work they have done before. This is especially so in mathematics and PSHE. This helps pupils to connect learning from different topics.

However, in other subjects, pupils' learning is less joined up. This is because responsibility for coordinating subjects is split between too many teachers. Leaders recognise that getting the large number of part-time staff together to make changes is difficult. This is not helped by having subject responsibilities divided among many staff. It means that the link between what is taught in one key stage and the next is not always clear, and pupils do not build their learning as much as they should.

Leaders recognise that pupils could do better in English. Inspectors agree. While GCSE results in English are respectable, they should be as good as those in mathematics. Pupils have too few opportunities to write long pieces of work, especially in Year 9. This is because there is too much emphasis on practising GCSE questions.

Visits to places of interest, and after-school activities, help extend pupils' experiences. Pupils in Year 10 talked excitedly about the work on their grandparents' names. They researched how the names often reflect the country in which they were born. They also explained how they have compared Jewish and British history by making a timeline of events.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported well. The arrangements for identifying those who need extra help are effective. This means that pupils get the support they need, when they need it. Links with local services are maintained well. Leaders wisely follow up referrals where there are delays. The school's therapists add significantly to the support provided. Pupils with learning difficulties do well.

Teachers say that they get lots of help to improve their practice. In mathematics, for example, there is strong support from the subject leader. Teachers feel that their workload is manageable. Senior leaders help them to balance work with their home life.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Safeguarding arrangements are much improved. The process for vetting staff for their suitability now meets requirements. This includes getting two references before a member of staff is employed. Governors' suitability is also checked. The safeguarding policy is up to date and makes clear reference to the most recent statutory guidance. It is available to parents on request.

Pupils are safe in school. Staff and leaders ensure that pupils learn how to keep themselves safe in different situations. Pupils know about personal safety. Although they do not use the internet in school, they are taught about the potential risks of social media.

Training is comprehensive. Staff responsible for safeguarding are fully trained to an appropriate level. They use their expertise to provide refresher training for all members of staff, including those new to the school. All staff have received the latest guidance.

## What does the school need to do to improve? (Information for the school and proprietor)

- Subject leadership is effective in some subjects, especially in mathematics and PSHE. This helps to ensure that subject planning is logically structured and sequenced, enabling pupils to deepen their learning. However, responsibility for coordinating subjects is often split between too many teachers. As a result, coordination between key stages is not always strong enough. Leaders should consider reducing the number of curriculum leaders so that better links are made between key stages.
- The development of phonics in the early years and in Year 1 is making a positive impact on pupils' English skills. However, the use of different schemes means that the programme is not coherent enough. In Year 2, the use of Ladybird books does not build sufficiently on pupils' phonics knowledge. Leaders should consolidate phonics teaching and ensure that the books pupils read in Year 2 match the sounds they have learned in Reception and Year 1.
- In key stages 3 and 4, pupils are given good opportunities to develop their English skills further. Achievement at GCSE is improving. However, in Year 9 there is too much focus on examination questions at the expense of extended writing. Leaders need to ensure that pupils' learning in English is not constrained by too much focus on GCSE in Year 9.

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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>	102171
<b>DfE registration number</b>	204/6399
<b>Local authority</b>	Hackney
<b>Inspection number</b>	10115244
<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>	707
<b>Proprietor</b>	Mr Abraham Schechter
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Leah Klein
<b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>	£2080
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8809 7737
<b>Website</b>	No website
<b>Email address</b>	bursar@bclschool.org.uk
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	26–28 June 2018

## Information about this school

- Beis Chinuch Lebonos Girls School is an independent day school with an Orthodox Jewish ethos. Most pupils speak Yiddish as their first language. The school operates from one site. It is in the Stamford Hill area of north London.
- The school is registered to provide education for girls between the ages of two and 16. However, provision for two-year-olds has ceased. The school has 12 pupils with education, health and care plans.
- There are currently 706 pupils on roll. The school is registered for 720 pupils and thus meets its registration agreement. However, the school has applied for a material change to increase the roll to 850. This inspection considered this change and agrees that the school premises are suitable for this additional number on roll.
- The school's most recent standard inspection was in June 2018.

- The school does not make use of any alternative or off-site provision.

## 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 has failed to meet the independent school standards. These are the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

- Inspectors looked at the quality of the curriculum in early reading, English, mathematics, science, geography and PSHE education. They also considered other subjects as part of looking at the quality of education.
- Inspectors spoke with leaders, including the four headteachers of the secondary and 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 related 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
Andrew Rigby	Ofsted Inspector
Alison Moore	Ofsted Inspector

## **Annex. Compliance with regulatory requirements**

### **The school failed to meet the following independent school standards**

#### **Part 1. Quality of education provided**

- 2(2) For the purposes of paragraph (2)(1)(a), the matters are-
  - 2(2)(d)(ii) encourages respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Act[9].

#### **Part 2. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils**

- 5 The standard about the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils at the school is met if the proprietor-
  - 5(b) ensures that principles are actively promoted which-
  - 5(b)(vi) encourage respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Act.

#### **Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools**

- 34(1) The standard about the quality of leadership and management is met if the proprietor ensures that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school-
  - 34(1)(a) demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school standards are met consistently;
  - 34(1)(b) fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently.



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