

Bnois Jerusalem Girls School

71, 75–81 Amhurst Park, London N16 5DL

Inspection date

1 March 2021

Overall outcome

The school does not meet all of the independent school standards that were checked during this inspection

Main inspection findings

Part 1. Quality of education provided

Paragraph 2(1), 2(1)(a), 2(2), 2(2)(b), 2(2)(f), 2(2)(i)

- The previous inspection found that the quality of curriculum planning was uneven across the school and the curriculum was narrow. Work on the foundation subjects was in the early stages and the range of physical education activities was limited. Leaders had limited the scope of the curriculum to fit with Orthodox Jewish teaching. Pupils did not take any qualifications at the end of key stage 4.
- This inspection found some improvements in the quality of curriculum planning. Curriculum advisers, who were new in post at the previous inspection, have added more detail to the schemes of work. For example, in history, units of work on the Victorians and the Second World War have been developed, based on the national curriculum. Overall, however, schemes of work are still patchy. They are not well developed in Years 1 to 3. In addition, the content of the secular curriculum remains narrow. A case in point is science, where teaching about the scientific theories behind the origins of life is completely omitted.
- Leaders are giving consideration to introducing recognised qualifications for pupils to take by the end of Year 11. However, they have been too slow to take action. As things stand, pupils continue to be disadvantaged by having a limited choice for further and higher education.

Paragraph 2(2)(d), 2(2)(d)(ii), 3, 3(f)

- The previous inspection found very few opportunities for pupils to learn about other cultures and faiths. Leaders had not made any changes since the previous inspection in June 2018 regarding issues of equality, diversity and the protected characteristics. The inspection also found that pupils read only a limited genre of fiction: they did not develop a love of literature.
- This inspection found that pupils continue to have limited opportunities to learn about other cultures and faiths. Much of this information is taught in the context of the

'Kodesh' (religious) curriculum and is usually superficial. Pupils are not given the opportunity to think more deeply about the beliefs held by others who are not of their faith.

- Leaders are rightly proud of the work they have done to highlight discrimination based on race and disability. Pupils told the inspector that this is an integral part of their personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education. However, the respect shown for these protected characteristics is not extended to others, in particular for same-sex relationships and gender reassignment. Pupils are not allowed to talk about these at any time. Indeed, these aspects do not feature in any part of the school's curriculum.
- A limited range of fiction books has been introduced in the library that pupils are only just beginning to access. Pupils are hesitant to talk about the wider implications of the stories they might have read. The promotion of reading for pleasure as an important educational concept remains in the very early stages of development.
- Almost all the independent school standards in this part remain unmet.

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

Paragraph 5, 5(a), 5(b), 5(b)(v), 5(b)(vi)

- The previous inspection found there were limited opportunities for pupils to learn about cultures and faiths other than their own. Leaders did not actively promote respect for all groups of people or pay regard to the full range of protected characteristics. During the previous inspection, leaders did not agree to inspectors talking to pupils. This was at the request of parents and carers.
- During this inspection, leaders made it clear that discussion with pupils must be strictly limited to exploring their views about safeguarding, behaviour and bullying. Leaders did not permit a discussion with pupils about the full range of protected characteristics and religions other than their own.
- Leaders have not made any progress in this area. Leaders have not changed the curriculum to give pupils a more rounded understanding of the range of protected characteristics. Teaching about other religions and faiths remains a narrow part of Kodesh studies and hence does not broaden pupils' minds.
- These independent school standards remain unmet.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraph 7, 7(a), 9, 9(b), 10

- During the last inspection, inspectors were not able to talk to pupils without another adult being present. It was not possible to elicit pupils' views about safeguarding, behaviour and bullying in the school.
- On this inspection, the inspector was able to talk to a group of primary and secondary pupils about safeguarding, behaviour and bullying without the presence of any other adult.

- The school has an up-to-date safeguarding and child protection policy that reflects the latest guidance issued by the Secretary of State. Leaders review safeguarding guidance from the local authority on a regular basis and are knowledgeable about the implementation of the policy. Pupils know whom their safeguarding leaders are and what to do if they have a concern. All identified their form teacher as the adult they really trust, and the first person they would turn to should the need ever arise.
- Pupils understand the key principles on which the behaviour policy is based, in particular the moral importance of abiding by agreed rules and procedures. Pupils confidently articulated the main rules and consequences, for instance the issuing of 'three orders' resulting in a detention.
- Pupils' knowledge of the anti-bullying policy was equally sound. For example, they could identify the forms that bullying can take and ways to tackle it. Pupils told the inspector that bullying in Bnois Jerusalem is a very rare occurrence. They said that they feel very safe in school and are confident that leaders would resolve any issue involving bullying should it arise.
- The independent school standards listed in this part are now met.

Part 6. Provision of information

Paragraph 32(1), 32(1)(g)

- During the last inspection, inspectors were not able to talk to pupils without another adult being present. It was not possible to elicit pupils' views about safeguarding, behaviour and bullying in the school.
- During this inspection, leaders and the proprietor body were very keen to cooperate with the inspection process. With parents' agreement, it was possible for the inspector to speak with a group of pupils without any adult being present. The inspector explored pupils' views about safeguarding and the implementation of the behaviour and anti-bullying policies. This evidence was critical to making judgements about the previously unmet standards related to the welfare, health and safety of pupils.
- These independent school standards are now met.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraph 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b), 34(1)(c)

- The previous inspection in December 2019 found that leaders have limited the scope of the curriculum. For example, pupils did not learn about the scientific explanations of the origins of life, and textbooks included redactions. Leaders did not agree to inspectors talking to pupils, because this was what parents had requested. The same issues were found in the standard inspection of June 2018.
- This inspection found that leaders are working to educate parents about the inspection process and the importance of pupils' views. That said, leaders have been very slow to make all the changes required as consistently recommended in previous inspections. For example, leaders have placed restrictions on what pupils can learn in the secular subjects. Despite the early signs of progress, the curriculum remains limited in scope.

Consequently, leaders have not ensured that the independent school standards are met consistently.

- Leaders have developed suitable systems to check on the implementation of the safeguarding, behaviour and anti-bullying policies. They act on any weaknesses they find to keep pupils safe.
- Most of the independent school standards in this part remain unmet.

Statutory requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage

- The previous inspection found that phonics was not taught in Reception. Hence, children in early years were not prepared for Year 1. The provision for two-year-olds was described as meagre.
- This inspection found that the teaching of phonics started in Reception two months ago. Leaders have ensured that the same programme of letters and sounds taught in Year 1 is now taught in Reception. However, children learn phonics for only one lesson a week and all focus on the same sound. The current provision is insufficient for children to develop and consolidate their early reading skills at a reasonable pace.
- Leaders have refurbished the room for two-year-olds and purchased a suitable range of resources appropriate for these children. For example, children engage in messy play as adults talk to them about what they are doing. The leader of the setting has prioritised health and safety, and this consideration informs the activities planned for the children.
- The learning and development requirements of the early years foundation stage remain unmet.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school does not meet the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements that were checked during this inspection, as set out in the annex of this report. This included the standards and requirements that the school was judged to not comply with at the previous inspection. Not all of the standards and associated requirements were checked during this inspection.

School details

Unique reference number	100291
DfE registration number	204/6242
Inspection number	10177183

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 status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	2 to 16
Gender of pupils	Girls
Number of pupils on the school roll	810
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Bnois Jerusalem School
Chair	Judah Wider
Headteacher	Mrs M Landau
Annual fees (day pupils)	Paid on a voluntary basis
Telephone number	020 8800 5781
Website	The school does not have a website
Email address	admin@bnoisschool.co.uk
Date of previous standard inspection	10–12 December 2019

Information about this school

- Bnois Jerusalem Girls School is an independent Orthodox Jewish day school in the London Borough of Hackney. The school caters for girls aged two to 16. The school consists of early years, infant, junior and senior departments.
- The school's last standard inspection took place in December 2019, when the school was judged inadequate. Independent school standards in Parts 1, 2, 3, 6 and 8 were unmet. The school was issued with a Warning Notice by the Department for Education in September 2020.

- Since the last inspection, curriculum advisers have continued to work alongside the headteachers in the separate school departments.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out at the request of the registration authority for independent schools. The purpose of the inspection was to monitor the progress the school has made in meeting the independent school standards and other requirements that it was judged to not comply with at its previous inspection.
- The inspection was carried out without notice.
- This is the first monitoring inspection since the school was judged to be inadequate in December 2019. The focus of the inspection was to check whether the school complied with particular requirements within Parts 1, 2, 3, 6 and 8 of the independent school standards and the requirements of the 'Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage'.
- The school submitted an action plan to Ofsted to address the unmet standards. This was evaluated in November 2020 and deemed to be not acceptable.
- I held meetings with the headteacher, the school's consultant and two members of the governing body, including the chair. I also met with some curriculum leaders and a group of six pupils from Years 5 to 11.
- I reviewed curriculum plans, the school's safeguarding policy, and a range of documentation about pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Inspection team

Nasim Butt, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex. Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school does not meet the following independent school standards

Standards that were not met at the previous inspection and remain unmet at this inspection

Part 1. Quality of education provided

- 2(1) The standard in this paragraph is met if–
 - 2(1)(a) the proprietor ensures that a written policy on the curriculum, supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work, which provides for the matters specified in sub-paragraph (2) is drawn up and implemented effectively.
- 2(2) For the purposes of paragraph (2)(1)(a), the matters are–
 - 2(2)(b) that pupils acquire speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills;
 - 2(2)(d) personal, social, health and economic education which–
 - 2(2)(d)(ii) encourages respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Act[9];
 - 2(2)(i) effective preparation of pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British society.
- 3 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that the teaching at the school–
 - 3(f) utilises effectively classroom resources of a good quality, quantity and range;

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(a) actively promotes the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs;
 - 5(b) ensures that principles are actively promoted which–
 - 5(b)(v) further tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions by enabling pupils to acquire an appreciation of and respect for their own and other cultures;
 - 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.

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children read and understand simple sentences. They use phonic knowledge to decode regular words and read them aloud accurately. They also read some common irregular words. They demonstrate understanding when talking with others about what they have read (1.12).

The school now meets the following requirements of the independent school standards

- 2(2)(f) Where the school has pupils below compulsory school age, a programme of activities which is appropriate to their educational needs in relation to personal, social, emotional and physical development and communication and language skills.
- 7, 7(a) The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school.
- 9, 9(b) The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor promotes good behaviour amongst pupils by ensuring that the policy behaviour policy is implemented effectively.
- 10 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that bullying at the school is prevented in so far as reasonably practicable, by the drawing up and implementation of an effective anti-bullying strategy.
- 32(1), 32(1)(g) Any information reasonably requested in connection with an inspection under section 109 of the 2008 Act which is required for the purposes of the inspection is provided to the body conducting the inspection and that body is given access to the school's admission and attendance registers.
- 34(1)(c) 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 actively promote the well-being of pupils.

Early Years Foundation Stage

Providers must have regard to the government's statutory guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015' and to the 'Prevent duty guidance for England and Wales 2015'. All schools are required to have regard to the Government's 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' statutory guidance, and other childcare providers may also find it helpful to refer to this guidance. If providers have concerns about children's safety or welfare, they must notify agencies with statutory responsibilities without delay. This means the local children's social care services and, in emergencies, the police (3.7).

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