

Etz Chaim Boys School

458 Bury New Road, Salford, Manchester M7 4LJ

Inspection date

13 July 2021

Overall outcome

The school is likely to meet the relevant independent school standards if the material changes relating to the school provision are implemented

Main inspection findings

Part 1. Quality of education provided

Paragraphs 2(1)–2(2)(b), 2(2)(d)–2(2)(e)(iii), 2(2)(h)–2(2)(i), 3–3(j), 4

- The school's approach to the curriculum is clearly set out in the curriculum policy. This explains that pupils will be taught kodesh (Jewish faith) learning each morning and chol (secular) each afternoon. The secular curriculum is designed to allow pupils to complete GCSE (or equivalent) programmes in up to 11 subjects by the time they reach the end of Year 10.
- The curriculum policy specifies, in general terms, what learning will be provided for any pupils who continue at the school beyond Year 10. However, leaders intend that the detail of the curriculum offered to individual pupils, particularly if they have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), will be bespoke. It will be designed to build on what they have already learned and what they need for the future.
- Leaders have prepared detailed schemes of work that set out the content of the curriculum in a suitably broad range of subjects. These are designed to support pupils' achievement in GCSE examinations or other national qualifications.
- Teachers build strong and positive relationships with pupils. These support pupils' learning. Pupils told the inspector that they learn a lot, particularly in their kodesh subjects.
- In addition to assessment for national qualifications, leaders have prepared a careful structure for assessing pupils' learning throughout their study. This is mainly based on teacher assessment for kodesh subjects. Staff set formal assessments twice each year for chol subjects.
- The school's personal, social and health education curriculum is mainly provided through kodesh learning. When issues that may be sensitive because they do not easily align with orthodox Jewish faith convictions arise, teachers discuss these individually with pupils. Teachers support pupils to develop age-appropriate understanding, for example about the range of different relationships, backgrounds and values that people have across the whole of modern British society. Leaders have introduced a commercial programme in order to add to the depth of pupils' learning in

this area. Leaders have also appointed a mentor recently to provide additional support to pupils.

- Leaders are committed to the school being non-selective. This means that some pupils have identified SEND or other needs. Leaders have developed a programme of additional, small-group teaching that runs in parallel to the main curriculum to support the achievement of such pupils.
- Leaders have built up a team of specialist teachers. This team includes staff with orthodox Jewish backgrounds, other Jewish backgrounds and non-Jewish backgrounds. Leaders consider the skill and expertise of new teachers in the subjects they will teach to be a key factor in whether they should be appointed to teach the chol curriculum.
- School leaders have ensured that the standards in this part are likely to be met should the Department for Education (DfE) approve the implementation of the material changes.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraphs 7–7(b), 32(1)(c)

- Leaders have prepared a safeguarding policy that provides information and advice to staff about the things to look out for, and the steps they need to take, to safeguard pupils. Leaders provide regular training to staff about safeguarding to ensure that everyone keeps their knowledge up to date.
- Leaders pay close attention to other aspects that support the safeguarding of pupils. For example, they liaise closely with the relevant local authority if they are concerned about risks to a pupil. They consider pupils' safety when appointing staff. Leaders maintain a record of safeguarding checks on staff. Leaders make these checks before staff are confirmed as suitable to work in the school.
- During the inspection, leaders made small changes to both the school's safeguarding policy and the school's record of pre-employment checks so that these met the relevant independent school standards (the standards).
- The school does not have a website. However, a paper copy of the school's safeguarding policy is available from the school for parents, carers and others.

Paragraphs 9–16(b)

- Leaders ensure that pupils' welfare, health and safety are supported by a set of suitable policies. Leaders ensure that these are systematically and effectively implemented. For example, pupils and staff are aware of the principles and approaches set out in the behaviour policy. Groups of pupils and staff told the inspector that pupils' behaviour has improved over time. The pupils spoken to by the inspector said that there is no bullying in the school, including between older and younger pupils.
- The school uses a commercially available electronic system to record key information about pupils. This includes their admission and attendance details and other significant records about, for example, their behaviour and support needs.

- The school's health and safety policy sets out an overall framework to allow leaders to ensure that the school is a safe place in which to work. This policy also explains how pupils will be taught about health and safety in the curriculum.
- The health and safety policy also includes written statements on the school's approach to risk assessment. Leaders undertake a suitable process to reduce risk across the full school activities. For example, they check fire safety arrangements and plans for school trips and visits.
- One of the requested material changes is to increase the number of pupils. If permitted, this would lead to a small increase in the school's average class size. However, class sizes will remain smaller than found in many schools. The relatively small class sizes allow staff to closely supervise pupils during learning. Suitable numbers of staff are available to check that pupils are safe and behaving properly during breaks and as they move around the premises.
- The main school building is a converted large, old, detached house. The building's age means that it is more challenging for leaders to keep well maintained than the school's other, modern, buildings. Parts of the main building are quite shabby and, in one or two areas, graffiti left by pupils has not been removed. However, leaders ensure that the building is maintained in a way that ensures that pupils are safe.
- School leaders have ensured that the standards in this part are likely to be met should the DfE approve the implementation of the material changes.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Paragraphs 23(1)–29(1)(b)

- Leaders have ensured that the facilities provided in the school are suitable and sufficient for up to 250 pupils.
- Since the previous inspection, leaders have provided two new classroom blocks. These give additional whole-class and small-group teaching spaces, specialist facilities and a school hall, used as a synagogue. In addition, the school's outside spaces have been significantly improved with the installation of two caged and tarmacked areas for use during physical education (PE) lessons and for breaktime recreation, and the extension of a smaller area covered by artificial turf. Leaders have also extended the curriculum by developing a potentially unused area of the school grounds. This is being used for learning in the outdoors, with activities such as gardening, woodwork and, if current plans are concluded, keeping chickens.
- There are separate toilet facilities in the school for the sole use of pupils. While the toilet and washing facilities are generally suitable, during this inspection, some plumbing work was completed to resolve a problem with the cold water supply to the wash basins in one toilet area. Showers are available on site for pupils to use when needed, for example after PE lessons. Drinking water fountains for pupils' use are available in corridor areas.
- The school's reception office is suitably equipped to be used as a medical room in the event that this is required.

- Leaders seek to continually improve the premises. For example, they are part of the way through a project to install a lift on the outside of the school buildings to improve disabled access to the upper floors of the premises.
- School leaders have ensured that the standards in this part are likely to be met should the DfE approve the implementation of the material changes.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraph 34(1)–34(1)(c)

- Leaders are aware of the requirements set out in the standards. Having said that, minor improvements to a few documents and a small number of maintenance tasks were completed during the inspection.
- The proprietor and members of the school committee, who act as governors, know about the work of the school. They have a clear vision for how the school will serve pupils of all abilities from the local orthodox Jewish community. They work closely with leaders to ensure that this vision is reflected in the day-to-day work of the school.
- The proprietor has a sensible rationale for requesting the proposed material changes be approved by the DfE. Leaders have ensured that the buildings and curriculum are suitable for pupils if the material changes are approved.
- School leaders have ensured that the standards in this part are likely to be met should the DfE approve the implementation of the material changes.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school is likely to meet the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

School details

Unique reference number	131015
DfE registration number	352/6053
Inspection number	10201423

This inspection was carried out under section 162(4) of the Education Act 2002, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's likely compliance with the independent school standards relevant to the material changes that the school has applied to make.

Type of school	Jewish faith day school
School status	Independent school
Proprietor	Yonah Reich
Principal	Rabbi Dovi Roberts
Annual fees (day pupils)	Voluntary contributions
Telephone number	0161 740 0300
Website	None
Email address	manager@ec-school.org.uk
Date of previous standard inspection	12 to 14 September 2017

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal	Inspector's recommendation
Age range of pupils	11 to 17 (temporary permission from DfE)	11 to 17 (permanent change)	11 to 17 (permanent change)
Number of pupils on the school roll	209	250	250

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal
Gender of pupils	Boys	Boys

Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age	209	250
Number of part-time pupils	None	None
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	67	67
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	12	12
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	12	12

Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	33	33
Number of part-time teaching staff	17	17
Number of staff in the welfare provision	4	4

Information about this school

- The school provides education for boys from Orthodox Jewish families.
- The school currently has 209 pupils. This is above the school's permitted capacity of 200 pupils.
- The acting principal was appointed in September 2020. The proprietor took up this role in 2018.
- The school currently uses alternative provision at a local yeshiva (Jewish further education institution) for a small number of pupils. This arrangement is likely to continue should the material changes be approved by the DfE. The yeshiva is not registered with the DfE.
- The school's previous standard inspection took place in September 2017. This was followed by a material change inspection in November 2017.

- 'Get information about schools', the DfE's public record of information about schools, indicates that the school's location is in Manchester City Council's area. The school is actually in Salford City Council's area. Pupils from Bury, Manchester and Salford local authority areas attend the school.

Information about this inspection

- The proprietor has applied to the DfE for the school's registration to be changed to allow it to admit up to 250 pupils aged 11 to 17. The school's established age range is 11 to 16. In addition, the proprietor currently has temporary permission to allow the school to admit pupils aged 17.
- This inspection was commissioned by the DfE to determine whether the school was likely to continue to meet the standards, should the DfE permit the requested changes.
- This was the first material change inspection in respect of the proprietor's request to confirm the school's age range as 11 to 17 and to increase its permitted capacity to 250 pupils.
- The inspector held discussions with leaders about the school's likely compliance with the standards checked in this inspection, should the requested material changes be made. He held face-to-face meetings with the acting principal, the deputy headteacher in charge of the chol curriculum (DHT(C)) and other leaders. He held a meeting with members of the school committee, including the proprietor in school, and other members remotely. The inspector spoke with groups of staff and pupils.
- The inspector toured the school's premises accompanied by the acting principal.
- The inspector scrutinised policies and other documents, for example about safeguarding, the curriculum and pupils' welfare and health and safety. He visited lessons, accompanied by the DHT(C).

Inspection team

David Selby, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
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