

Inspection of Yesodey Hatorah Girls School

153 Stamford Hill, London N16 5LG

Inspection dates: 5 to 7 October 2021

Overall effectiveness

Good

The quality of education

Good

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Good

Early years provision

Good

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Not previously inspected

Does the school meet the independent school standards?

Yes

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are very happy at this school. They enjoy their learning and school life. Adults are strong role models. They create a warm and calm atmosphere where pupils are safe and can thrive. Pupils said that they valued adults' care and kindness in the school's nurturing environment.

Parents and carers enthuse about the school's clear communication and combination of secular and Jewish studies, including in early years. Pupils receive a broad and balanced curriculum. They read a wide range of books. Staff place a strong emphasis on meeting the needs of individual pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils and parents appreciate the school's work to teach pupils about the wider world. The school's 'current affairs' themes are shared regularly with parents to keep them well informed.

Pupils' behaviour across the school is excellent. They are courteous and follow instructions, which helps ensure that lessons run smoothly. Pupils are helpful to each other. For instance, older pupils help younger ones move around the school. Pupils said that bullying at the school was very rare. If it were to occur, they trust the adults to deal with any issues immediately.

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

Pupils learn about their own Jewish faith and culture while also learning to respect people from other backgrounds. Leaders ensure that the school complies with all the independent school standards and the statutory requirements of the early years foundation stage.

Leaders prioritise reading. Staff are skilled at teaching reading. Children in Reception get off to a quick start in their early reading. Children learn initial letters and the sounds they make from the start. Children learn to blend and segment sounds from an early stage. Teachers regularly assess pupils' phonics knowledge and are quick to identify any pupils who need extra support. They read with enthusiasm and bring books to life during story times. This helps pupils to learn to read expressively when they read aloud. Phonics books match closely to the sounds that pupils have learned. Older pupils enjoy reading high-quality texts.

Leaders have designed an ambitious curriculum across a range of subjects. Subject planning is well thought-out. It allows pupils to build their knowledge and understanding in a coherent way. For example, regular practice in mathematics builds up pupils' strong mental arithmetic skills so that they develop fluency in mathematics. In art, curriculum planning is not as coherently sequenced and structured in all year groups. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 learn about the work of artists and then explore using different patterns, textures and toning techniques in their own artwork. However, the art curriculum is not as well planned in the rest of the school.

Subject leaders work effectively to oversee the curriculum in their areas of subject responsibility. They work closely with teachers, including in the early years. This helps children build up knowledge right from the start and prepares them for moving on to the next stage. Leaders establish strong links between Jewish studies and children's learning. For instance, children learning about Noah's Ark also learned about different types of homes.

Provision to support pupils with SEND is strong. Teachers receive regular support so that they meet the needs of all pupils in the school. They value the training and guidance they receive. Leaders draw upon external expertise and support to meet pupils' specific needs. Through updates and meetings, parents are kept well informed.

Adults guide and help pupils with their work. Assessments at regular intervals help teachers to identify pupils who require additional practice. Pupils' sensible behaviour enables learning to proceed without interruption. This helps all pupils to achieve well, including those pupils with SEND. Sometimes, adults, including those in the early years, do not receive the specific subject training they need to develop their knowledge beyond their areas of expertise. Consequently, some adults are not as skilled in deepening pupils' learning as they could be.

Leaders place a high importance on pupils' personal development. Adults encourage the pupils to develop their confidence, including through projects and activities. For example, pupils learn about looking after others which encourages pupils to become active citizens. The school's personal, social, health and economic curriculum is well thought-out. It promotes pupils' understanding across a range of areas. Pupils have many opportunities to take part in enrichment activities and wider learning. After-school clubs, including sports, the arts and dance, in Years 5 and 6 are popular and well planned. Pupils learn about the history and cultures in different countries. This helps foster pupils' deeper understanding of the world around them. For instance, pupils in Year 6 learn about apartheid in South Africa. They explore cultures different to their own, such as in Egypt and Ireland.

Governors are knowledgeable about their roles and responsibilities. They keep in regular contact with leaders. This helps them to identify key priorities, including in the development of the curriculum. Governors place a high importance on pupils' resilience and staff's well-being. They take an active role in checking health and safety regulations are met. Governors scrutinise the school's policies and procedures effectively. The school complies with schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and complies with the independent school standards and the statutory requirements of the early years foundation stage.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The school has a strong culture of safeguarding. Leaders understand their safeguarding responsibilities, including updating the school's safeguarding policy

reflecting latest statutory guidance. The policy is available to parents on request. Leaders liaise with external agencies should there be any concerns. Staff know what they are expected to do should any issues arise.

Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe, including online. They spoke highly of the school's 'worry boxes' and how quickly adults dealt with any concerns they had.

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

- The school's art curriculum is not coherently planned in all year groups. Leaders should build on the positive work in Years 3 and 4 and expand this to the rest of the school, so that pupils' achievement in art is rigorous and well sequenced in all year groups.
- The subject knowledge of some staff is not strong beyond their areas of expertise. As a result, pupils' learning is not equally well supported across all subjects. Leaders should ensure that all staff, including in the early years, have opportunities to develop their subject knowledge and expertise 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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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

Unique reference number	146748
DfE registration number	204/6018
Local authority	Hackney
Inspection number	10193521
Type of school	Other independent school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Girls
Number of pupils on the school roll	493
Proprietor	Rabbi Chaim Pinter
Headteacher	Rebecca Deutsch
Annual fees (day pupils)	£3,000
Telephone number	020 8800 8612
Website	None
Email address	office@yhsl.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Yesodey Hatorah Girls School serves the orthodox Jewish community in Stamford Hill. The school provides education for girls, from the early years to Year 6. Pupils study Jewish religious studies during the morning and secular subjects in the afternoons.
- The school's pre-registration inspection took place in April 2019. It was judged as unlikely to meet all the independent school standards. The school was registered as an independent school in March 2020.
- The school uses no alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors 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.

This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.

- The inspectors completed deep dives in the following subjects: reading, mathematics, history and geography. They visited lessons and looked at subject planning documents and pupils' work. They considered other subjects as part of this inspection.
- Inspectors met with school leaders, the proprietor, the chair of governors and members of the governing body. They also met with members of staff.
- Inspectors scrutinised a wide range of documents, including those related to health and safety, safeguarding, pupils' personal development and behaviour. They also checked the school's compliance with the independent school standards.
- Inspectors met with pupils across the school, formally and informally, to discuss their work and gather their views about behaviour and safety.

Inspection team

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