

Inspection of Bobov Primary Boys School

87–90 Egerton Road, London N16 6UE

Inspection dates: 9 to 11 November 2021

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

The quality of education

Inadequate

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Inadequate

Leadership and management

Inadequate

Early years provision

Inadequate

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Inadequate

Does the school meet the independent school standards?

No

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils study religious education for the vast majority of their time. The only secular subjects consistently available are English and mathematics. This means that pupils miss out on learning in a wide range of areas, including scientific, creative, technological and physical education. They also miss out on enrichment activities and clubs. Pupils in Year 8 study religious education only, before leaving to study at a yeshiva.

The pupils spoken to said that they like building friendships, earning vouchers they can spend at the tuck shop, and the reward trips. They said that leaders are quick to deal with any incidents of bullying. The school has high expectations of pupils' attitudes, behaviour and attendance. As a result, pupils work hard, behave well and attend very well. Inspectors were unable to confirm that pupils are safeguarded effectively because they were prevented from speaking to pupils freely. The school's recruitment process does not follow current guidance.

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

The school's secular curriculum is too narrow. A very small proportion of the day is devoted to secular education. Up until the end of Year 7, pupils study English and mathematics for a total of an hour and a half each day, on Mondays to Thursdays. Teachers teach both English and mathematics. They are not given the training they need to become subject specialists. Pupils experience aspects of some subjects, such as art and music, within the religious curriculum. Leaders do not ensure that these subjects are well planned. The quality of curriculum planning and assessment is too basic. Leaders have not fully considered, and do not understand, how to sequence learning to ensure that pupils learn well.

Teachers have to manage with limited resources, such as too few English reading books. There is also a lack of staff training in phonics. However, since the previous progress monitoring inspection, leaders have taken some steps to improve the teaching of reading in early years. More pupils are now able to read fluently in English. Leaders continue to develop early years provision by delivering more of the curriculum in English. Children's spoken English also continues to get better as a result. However, not all the areas of learning are covered in the Reception class. There are not enough resources in early years to support all areas of learning. Classrooms in general, especially in Reception, are tatty and cluttered. On the other hand, the special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) department is a much better environment in which to learn. Pupils with SEND get a great deal of effective support from the school's SEND staff and therapists.

Leaders do not provide pupils with enrichment opportunities. There is no time for extra-curricular clubs. Pupils said that if they want to pursue interests or talents in, for example, music, sport or creative arts, they have to do so privately outside school hours. This limits pupils' personal development. There are no arrangements to provide pupils of secondary age with impartial careers information, advice and

guidance. There is no provision for physical education, including changing accommodation or suitable, readily accessible showers.

Pupils are respectful, well mannered and eager to do well. They are encouraged to develop strong moral characters. They have very positive attitudes towards their learning, community and future lives. Pupils are taught about British values. They are taught to respect everybody. Pupils have some basic knowledge of different religions, cultures and faiths. However, they do not learn about the diversity of modern Britain. The school does not cover all the content required by relationships education. This limits the preparation of pupils for their future in modern society.

Leaders and the proprietor do not know the independent school standards (the standards) well enough. Many of the standards are not met. There are no formal arrangements for governance. However, the proprietor and new headteacher are committed to moving the school forward. They have the full support of the staff team. A basic action plan is in place, and external support has been arranged. The plan shows that leaders and the proprietor intend to prioritise improving the quality of secular education and to broaden the range of subjects available to pupils.

The school complies with schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

The school's system for recruiting staff does not pay regard to government guidance, including in relation to application forms, interviews and references. Employee files contain gaps and incomplete, unreliable documents. Leaders improved some of this during the inspection. For example, by the end of the inspection, leaders had drafted plans for a more robust interview process.

Inspectors were unable to speak freely with pupils of their choice. Instead, inspectors met with pupils chosen by leaders on the basis that their parents and carers had agreed in advance, and on the condition that the interpreter supporting the inspection would be present. This limited inspectors' ability to gather secure evidence to evaluate the school's safeguarding arrangements.

The school's safeguarding policy reflects the latest national guidance and is available from the school office.

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

- Safeguarding is not effective because the safer recruitment process lacks rigour. The proprietor and leaders should take action to improve safeguarding

arrangements. They must ensure that the recruitment process pays regard to the latest statutory guidance.

- The secular curriculum is too narrow. The proprietor and leaders should broaden the range of subjects offered to ensure that pupils in all year groups learn in all the required areas. They should ensure that a curriculum policy and suitable curriculum plans are in place.
- Teachers of the secular curriculum lack expertise in the subjects they teach. This is partly due to the lack of professional training available. Leaders should significantly increase the professional development offer for teachers to ensure that teachers have the required knowledge and skills to teach and assess pupils well.
- There is a lack of resources in the school, such as reading books in English. The proprietor and leaders should ensure that all subjects are well resourced, including all the new subjects that leaders intend to make available to pupils.
- The lack of curricular and extra-curricular provision for pupils to learn and to develop their talents and interests limits their personal development. There are no arrangements to provide pupils of secondary age with regular, impartial careers information, advice and guidance. As part of improving the curriculum, the proprietor and leaders should ensure that there are more opportunities to support pupils' personal development. They should ensure that pupils of secondary age access impartial careers information, advice and guidance.
- The school's relationships and sex education programme does not pay regard to guidance because it does not cover all the required content. Teaching about different religions, faiths and cultures is too limited. The proprietor and leaders should ensure that pupils are more suitably prepared for the diversity of modern British society.
- The proprietor and leaders have not ensured that the premises are compliant with the independent school standards. They should take action to ensure that physical education is made available to pupils, and changing and shower facilities are readily available in the main building for pupils of secondary age.
- Some of the independent school standards and early years foundation stage requirements are not met, as listed in the annex to this report. The proprietor and leaders should ensure that they know the independent school standards and take action to ensure that these are all met consistently.

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	
DfE registration number	204/6385
Local authority	Hackney
Inspection number	10204269
Type of school	Orthodox Jewish day school for boys
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	2 to 13
Gender of pupils	Boys
Number of pupils on the school roll	226
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Boruch Halberstam
Headteacher	Joseph Elzas
Annual fees (day pupils)	None
Telephone number	020 8809 1025
Website	None
Email address	admin@bobovprimary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	15 to 17 May 2018

Information about this school

- Bobov Primary Boys School is a day school for boys of Orthodox Jewish faith.
- The school caters for pupils aged two to 13. Pupils study religious education in Yiddish for the vast majority of the school day. Up until the end of Year 7, pupils are taught English and mathematics in English for a total of an hour and a half a day, in the afternoons. From Year 8, pupils study religious education only, after which they leave to study at a yeshiva.
- The school has a sole proprietor. There are no governors. The substantive headteacher joined the school in October 2021. He leads the secular curriculum. There is also a senior leader responsible for the religious curriculum.
- The school's most recent inspection was a progress monitoring inspection in February 2019, which followed the school's most recent standard inspection in May 2018.
- The school operates across two sites. The main site at 90 Egerton Road caters for pupils in Reception Year up to Year 8. The premises for Nursery children are located at 87 Egerton Road, which is opposite the main site.
- Leaders make no use of 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 has failed to meet the independent school standards. These are the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

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

- This full standard inspection was conducted with one day's notice.
- Inspectors met with the substantive headteacher and the head of religious education. Inspectors also met with the proprietor.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, English, mathematics and personal, social, health and economic education. For each deep dive, inspectors visited lessons, spoke to pupils about their learning, spoke to teachers and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors spoke with the school's curriculum adviser. Inspectors listened to pupils read.
- Inspectors met with the school's safeguarding leaders and reviewed a range of related documentation, including employee files and vetting checks on staff.

- Inspectors were unable to meet unsupervised with pupils of their choosing. Instead, inspectors met with pupils chosen by leaders on the basis that their parents had agreed in advance, and on the condition that the interpreter supporting the inspection was present. Inspectors met with these pupils to discuss their learning, safety, personal development and behaviour. In line with the school's request, inspectors did not ask pupils questions about lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender relationships.
- Inspectors considered responses from parents to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and letters received from parents. There were no responses to the online staff or pupil surveys.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of evidence to check compliance with the independent school standards.

Inspection team

James Waite, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Tim McLoughlin

Ofsted Inspector

Annex. Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school failed to meet the following independent school standards

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; and
 - 2(1)(b) the written policy, plans and schemes of work–
 - 2(1)(b)(i) take into account the ages, aptitudes and needs of all pupils, including those pupils with an EHC plan.

- 2(2) For the purposes of paragraph (2)(1)(a), the matters are–
 - 2(2)(a) full-time supervised education for pupils of compulsory school age (construed in accordance with section 8 of the Education Act 1996), which gives pupils experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical and aesthetic and creative education.
 - 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.
 - 2(2)(e) for pupils receiving secondary education, access to accurate, up-to-date careers guidance that–
 - 2(2)(e)(i) is presented in an impartial manner;
 - 2(2)(e)(ii) enables them to make informed choices about a broad range of career options; and
 - 2(2)(e)(iii) helps to encourage them to fulfil their potential.
 - 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.
 - 2(2)(h) that all pupils have the opportunity to learn and make progress.
 - 2(2)(i) effective preparation of pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British society.

- 2A(1) The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor–
 - 2A(1)(d) in making arrangements for the purposes of paragraphs (a), (b) or (c), has regard to any guidance under section 80A of the Education Act 2002 that applies in relation to the provision of education by maintained schools.

- 3 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that the teaching at the school–
 - 3(a) enables pupils to acquire new knowledge and make good progress according to their ability so that they increase their understanding and develop their skills in the subjects taught;
 - 3(b) fosters in pupils self-motivation, the application of intellectual, physical and creative effort, interest in their work and the ability to think and learn for themselves;
 - 3(c) involves well planned lessons and effective teaching methods, activities and management of class time;
 - 3(d) shows a good understanding of the aptitudes, needs and prior attainments of the pupils, and ensures that these are taken into account in the planning of lessons;
 - 3(e) demonstrates good knowledge and understanding of the subject matter being taught;
 - 3(f) utilises effectively classroom resources of a good quality, quantity and range;
 - 3(g) demonstrates that a framework is in place to assess pupils’ work regularly and thoroughly and use information from that assessment to plan teaching so that pupils can progress.

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 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 7 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that–
 - 7(a) arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school; and
 - 7(b) such arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

- 23(1) Subject to sub-paragraph (2), the standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that–
 - 23(1)(c) suitable changing accommodation and showers are provided for pupils aged 11 years or over at the start of the school year who receive physical education.

Part 6. Provision of information

- 32(3) The information specified in this sub-paragraph is–
 - 32(3)(c) particulars of the policy referred to in paragraph 2.

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; and
 - 34(1)(c) actively promote the well-being of pupils.

The school failed to meet the following early years learning and development requirements

- 1.3 Deliver a programme of learning that is shaped by the three prime areas of learning:
 - communication and language;
 - physical development;
 - personal, social and emotional development.
- 1.4 Support children in their learning and development in the four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied. The specific areas are:
 - literacy;
 - mathematics;
 - understanding the world;
 - expressive arts and design.
- 1.5 Provide educational programmes which involve activities and experiences for children in the prime and specific areas.

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