

Inspection of Edgware Jewish Girls - Beis Chinuch

296 Hale Lane, Edgware, Middlesex HA8 8NP

Inspection dates: 10 to 12 May 2022

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Requires improvement

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Good

Does the school meet the independent school standards?

Yes

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils really enjoy coming to this caring school. All parents and carers who responded to Ofsted Parent View said that they would recommend this school to others. Pupils are proud of their school and feel part of a community. Pupils take part enthusiastically in their lessons and try hard. They are eager to talk about and reflect on their learning.

Pupils like studying the wide range of subjects on offer. However, the secular curriculum, while broad, is not well developed. This prevents pupils from achieving well and remembering knowledge in the long term in some subjects.

Pupils enjoy the many opportunities they have to take on responsibility and help others, both in and out of school. For example, pupils elect class members for their school council who put forward ideas about school life. Others have helped to develop the 'reading shed' or raised money for charity. Pupils learn about the part they can play in wider society and are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Pupils get along very well with each other. Their behaviour is exemplary. Leaders promote and celebrate pupils' successes in the school's weekly newsletter. Pupils learn about what bullying means. They said bullying very rarely happens. If pupils have any concerns, staff are there to support them and sort out issues quickly.

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

Leaders have planned a secular curriculum which covers all the national curriculum subjects. Pupils enjoy studying a wide range of subjects and plans provide a broad outline of what pupils will be taught. However, pupils' learning, including in the early years, is better in some subjects than others. This is because leaders' curricular thinking does not provide for suitable breadth and depth in pupils' learning. Expectations for how pupils will increase and deepen their knowledge over time lack clarity. While pupils have regular lessons in each subject, in some, limited consideration has been given to how pupils should practise and improve their knowledge and skills.

Leaders are currently revisiting their curriculum thinking. They want to make sure that the aims for each subject are suitably ambitious and demanding for all. However, this work is at an early stage in many subjects.

Pupils enjoy the books that staff read to them in class. In Reception, adults support children to develop their language, for instance by sharing stories and songs. Leaders have also introduced a range of approaches to promote pupils' growing love of reading. Older pupils spoke enthusiastically about the books they are able to choose from the school library. However, leaders have not ensured that there is a well-established and consistent approach to teaching early reading and phonics across the school. For some pupils, particularly those who find reading difficult, this inconsistent approach holds back their progression in reading. The books that pupils

read do not always match the sounds that they have been learning during their phonics lessons. This means that they do not have a wide range of opportunities to practise these sounds.

Because leaders' curriculum thinking is still developing, teaching does not routinely enable pupils to build well on their prior learning. For example, in science, teaching does not support pupils to recap and remember what they have already learned. This means that when new scientific concepts are introduced, pupils sometimes find it hard to understand them. Apart from mathematics and reading, leaders' expectations for how teachers should check pupils' knowledge are also still being developed.

Leaders' recent work is starting to make a positive difference to pupils' learning in some subjects. In mathematics, for example, the curriculum is well structured. Pupils acquire a secure understanding of key concepts. Typically, they are well prepared for what comes next in their learning and apply their knowledge with confidence.

Leaders make sure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are identified accurately and supported well. Leaders make effective use of additional guidance and support from outside organisations to identify and plan for pupils' needs. This includes devising and providing individual programmes of support for pupils who need it.

Leaders' ethos for the school plays a key role in pupils' behaviour and attitudes to their learning. Clear routines and high expectations are understood by all. Pupils behave considerately and are respectful of each other, both in classrooms and at social times. This excellent behaviour begins in the early years and extends throughout the school. As a result, pupils get on with their learning and focus well. Pupils enjoy school and attend regularly.

Leaders prioritise encouraging pupils to love learning and be curious about the world around them. Pupils' achievements in school are celebrated. They are eager to tell the headteachers about their work and progress. These are acknowledged through the headteachers' 'stars' which are proudly displayed and communicated with the school community.

The aims of the secular and religious curriculums come together well to promote pupils' personal development. Pupils learn about themselves and the world in which they live. For example, pupils are taught ways to keep themselves safe. They also learn about democracy and British values, for example through school council elections. Pupils are taught to respect people who are different to them, including those with different faiths or who are from different cultures. Relationships education is provided in accordance with statutory guidance. Leaders have consulted with parents on the school's approach.

The requirements of the independent school standards are met. The statutory requirements of the early years foundation stage are also met. However, members

of the proprietor body have too readily accepted leaders' overly positive evaluation of the school. They have not challenged leaders effectively or held them to account for all aspects of the school's work. This includes leaders' actions to improve the school and its premises, as well as the quality of the curriculum on offer.

Staff feel well supported by leaders. As one staff member put it: 'Leaders are open to listening to what staff members have to share and take other staff members' views into consideration.' However, there is further work needed to ensure that staff have received training to develop their subject knowledge and in turn, ensure they are able to teach the curriculum consistently well.

The proprietor makes sure that the requirements of schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 are met.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff know what they must do to keep pupils safe. Leaders have ensured that staff are appropriately trained. Throughout the year, staff have updated training to expand their understanding of different aspects of safeguarding such as the 'Prevent' duty and peer-on-peer abuse. Leaders have effective systems to monitor concerns and check that the actions they take are keeping pupils safe. Staff know about potential risks and are vigilant in spotting when pupils may need additional help.

Pupils understand how to keep themselves safe. Pupils know that they can speak with staff if they are feeling anxious or unhappy.

The safeguarding policy complies with the most recent government guidance and is made available to parents.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and proprietor)

- Leaders' approach to early reading is only partially considered. They have not ensured that a systematic programme is in place to teach pupils to read using phonics. Staff lack training on how to teach phonics well. Pupils do not always learn to read with books that match the phonics that they know. This affects how well all pupils learn to read, but particularly those who find reading more difficult. Leaders should ensure that the teaching of phonics has a high priority in the school from the time that children start in the early years. They must ensure that all staff are well trained to teach phonics and early reading and that pupils have access to books that they can use to build fluency.
- The secular curriculum is not coherently planned and sequenced in all subjects. Long-term curriculum plans are in place, but many of these are very new. Some plans do not define what knowledge pupils need to learn and in what order.

Leaders have begun to think about this, but more work is needed. Leaders need to ensure that each subject is planned and sequenced effectively so that pupils achieve well.

- The proprietor body's oversight of the school's work lacks rigour. Its understanding of the curriculum, as well as other aspects of leaders' work, is underdeveloped. The proprietor body should take effective steps to improve the way in which it checks leaders' work. This includes following up on agreed actions and whether these have been implemented as planned.

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	136014
DfE registration number	302/6122
Local authority	Barnet
Inspection number	10210718
Type of school	Other independent school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Girls
Number of pupils on the school roll	274
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Beis Chinuch Primary School Ltd
Chair	Rabbi Cramer
Headteacher	Rabbi Cohen
Annual fees (day pupils)	£3,120
Telephone number	020 8905 4376
Website	None
Email address	office@beischinuch.org
Date of previous inspection	20 to 22 February 2018

Information about this school

- The school is an Orthodox Jewish independent day school for girls. The school is owned by the registered company Beis Chinuch Primary School Ltd.
- The school has been based in the London Borough of Barnet since 2007. It is situated on two sites, both at synagogues in Edgware. Parts of both these buildings are shared with visitors to the synagogues.
- The school's curriculum includes Kodesh (Jewish studies) as well as secular subjects (Chol). The school day is equally divided between these areas of study.
- A new head of Chol was appointed in September 2021.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school does not have a website. Parents are made aware that policies are available from the school office on request.

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.

- Inspectors met with the head of Kodesh, as well as the head of secular subjects. They also met with other members of staff. An inspector met with a representative of the proprietor body. Inspectors held formal and informal discussions with pupils.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics, science and art. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders and teachers, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Other subjects were also considered.
- Inspectors spoke with parents and considered the 87 responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses from parents.
- Inspectors met with leaders with responsibility for safeguarding and reviewed a range of safeguarding documentation, including pre-employment checks on staff. Discussions were held with pupils and staff to consider the school's safeguarding arrangements.

- Inspectors toured the premises and took into account a range of documentation in considering the school's compliance with the independent school standards.

Inspection team

Adam Vincent, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Rajeshree Mehta

Ofsted Inspector

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