

Inspection of Pardes House Grammar School

Hendon Lane, Finchley, London N3 1SA

Inspection dates: 10 to 12 May 2022, and 28 June 2022

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Inadequate

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Good

Does the school meet the independent school standards?

No

What is it like to attend this school?

Leaders are not providing pupils with a safe school. Many of the requirements for independent schools are not met, including those relating to safeguarding, supervision of pupils, the premises and risk assessment.

Pupils study a religious curriculum, which is integrated with a programme of personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education. Pupils also study a wide range of secular subjects, and in some, such as English and mathematics, pupils learn well. However, the curriculum is not planned to build up pupils' knowledge and skills in all subjects.

Pupils are proud to attend Pardes House Grammar School. Staff have high expectations of pupils' attitudes, behaviour and attendance. Pupils respond positively, by working hard and behaving well in lessons. Outside of lessons, pupils mostly conduct themselves sensibly, but, at times, become overly boisterous in corridors. Leaders deal effectively with any incidents of bullying.

Pupils attend regularly. They enjoy earning merits and the rewards that this earns them, such as ice-cream treats and theme park trips.

Pupils are taught about the importance of being respectful, kind and tolerant. They learn about different faiths and cultures, as well as fundamental British values. However, pupils are not taught about all of the ways people can be different and that these differences are protected by law. Enrichment experiences which aim to support pupils to explore their interests and talents are underdeveloped.

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

In addition to their core study of religious education, English and mathematics, pupils choose from a broad range of subjects. These include options such as catering, business studies, sports science, design and technology and computing.

Leaders make sure that the curriculum in many subjects, including English and mathematics, is carefully planned. In these subjects, leaders have made clear what they want pupils to learn and how this builds up in a logical sequence. Teachers ensure that they teach in line with these plans. They also use suitable assessment checks which inform their lesson planning. As a result, pupils develop their reading, writing and mathematical skills and knowledge effectively. Pupils read widely and are supported well to become confident, fluent readers. Pupils typically achieve high grades in a range of external qualifications in these and other subjects.

The quality of the secular curriculum is inconsistent. In a few subjects, leaders and teachers have not considered the knowledge and skills they want pupils to learn. This means that the curriculum does not enable pupils to build knowledge and skills over time. This is especially the case in physical education and some aspects of technological education.

Teachers are subject specialists. However, leaders do not ensure that teachers have a consistently strong understanding of how the planned curriculum should be put into practice for pupils with different needs and starting points. Therefore, there is too much reliance on withdrawing pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) from lessons for one-to-one tuition. This sometimes means pupils miss out on learning the curriculum being taught to their peers.

The PSHE education programme provides pupils with regular learning about British values, careers and personal safety. Pupils learn about different faiths, cultures and beliefs. In citizenship lessons, pupils are taught about democracy, justice and the economy. Leaders organise some further opportunities to support pupils' personal development. For example, pupils take part in assemblies, careers week, citizenship lessons and lunchtime chess club. Pupils said they also enjoy visits linked to their faith, such as their recent overseas trip to Hungary. However, opportunities designed to support pupils develop their interests and talents are limited. Full consideration has not been given to how to support pupils' social development, for example by planning experiences and activities that enable pupils to work with their peers in different contexts.

Many aspects of the PSHE education curriculum are successfully designed and implemented to support pupils' readiness for life in modern Britain. However, the PSHE education curriculum does not give due regard to promoting respect for all people, including those with protected characteristics.

The school's relationships and sex education (RSE) programme does not include teaching about different types of relationships that people may have and the legal rights of those with protected characteristics. The requirement to follow statutory guidance for RSE is not met.

Leaders are not fulfilling some of their statutory responsibilities, including providing pupils with a safe and suitable environment. Inspectors found the room used to teach cooking to be unclean and cluttered. Perishable ingredients were not stored properly. At washing facilities, some hot water supplies present a scalding risk. The school's risk assessment policy is not implemented consistently well. For example, leaders' risk assessment of a residential trip for Year 10 pupils was very weak.

Arrangements for the supervision of pupils are too informal. For example, though there is no before-school provision, pupils are able to enter the building before the school day begins, including when no staff other than security guards are on site. This lack of supervision puts pupils at unnecessary risk. The school's arrangements for recording pupils' attendance are inefficient and lack rigour. Some attendance codes are missing, or incorrect codes are used. As a result, attendance information is unreliable and inaccurate.

New senior leaders have been recently appointed. They have ambitious plans in place to develop the curriculum, assessment and premises. Staff feel well supported by leaders. They expressed no concerns about their workload. Governors, overseen

by the proprietor, are involved in the life of the school. Together, they have a clear vision for the future. However, though they hold leaders to account to some extent, governance is not sufficiently rigorous. As a result, many of the independent school standards are not met.

The school is compliant with schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 because a suitable accessibility plan is in place.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

Leaders do not take their safeguarding responsibilities seriously enough. They do not consistently follow their own recruitment processes for the safer recruitment of new staff. This puts pupils at risk.

Leaders provide staff with suitable training. Staff are vigilant in looking out for signs that a pupil's welfare is at risk. They follow up on any concerns, such as changes in pupils' behaviour, without delay.

Staff teach pupils about staying safe, including how to look after both their physical and mental health.

The school's safeguarding policy is written in line with the latest statutory guidance and is available in hard copy to parents and carers.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and proprietor)

- Leaders do not follow their procedure for recruiting new staff. Leaders allow staff to start working with pupils following a weak and informal recruitment process. This puts pupils at risk of harm. Leaders should ensure that they consistently follow a rigorous recruitment process that pays regard to statutory safeguarding guidance.
- The cooking room is unclean, disorganised and unsafe. Some hot water supplies at the washing facilities in the toilets present a scalding risk because they are not regulated. Leaders should take urgent action to ensure the independent school standards relating to health and safety, and the premises, are met.
- The school's risk assessment policy is not implemented consistently well. Leaders do not thoroughly consider how to minimise risks to pupils, such as on residential trips. Arrangements for the supervision of pupils are too informal, such as in the mornings before the school day begins. This puts pupils at unnecessary risk. Leaders need to adopt a rigorous and effective approach to assessing and managing potential risks, ensuring that their risk assessment policy is implemented fully. Leaders should also ensure that pupils are appropriately supervised, including before the school day begins.

- The school's arrangements for recording pupils' attendance are inefficient and lack rigour. As a result, attendance information is unreliable and inaccurate. Leaders should review and strengthen their processes for recording pupils' attendance, ensuring accurate attendance codes are entered consistently for all sessions.
- Leaders do not provide teachers with high-quality professional training that develops their understanding of how to deliver the curriculum effectively for all pupils. This includes making adaptations so that the needs of pupils with SEND are catered for well. This limits the quality and consistency of some pupils' education. Leaders should provide training that will help teachers develop this expertise so that teaching enables pupils, including those with SEND, to learn knowledge and skills, in every subject, in a progressive, coherent sequence.
- In some areas of learning, including physical and technological education, the knowledge pupils need to learn and remember has not been identified. This means that pupils do not build up their knowledge effectively over time. Leaders need to ensure that all subjects are consistently well planned and sequenced.
- The provision for personal development does not include suitably rich experiences designed to promote pupils' social development. Extra-curricular provision is underdeveloped, which means pupils miss out on opportunities that aim to help them explore different interests and talents. Leaders should widen the school's extra-curricular offer, providing pupils with a greater range of experiences and activities.
- The PSHE education programme delivered does not encourage respect for all people, including those with protected characteristics. The RSE curriculum does not follow the statutory guidance because pupils are not taught about different types of relationships. Therefore, some of the independent school standards are not met. Leaders should ensure that their plans and implementation for PSHE education and RSE comply with the independent school standards and statutory guidance. They should ensure that pupils are fully prepared for life in modern British society.
- Leaders, governors and the proprietor should ensure that all the independent school standards are met consistently.

How can I feed back my views?

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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	101385
DfE registration number	302/6084
Local authority	Barnet
Inspection number	10210771
Type of school	Orthodox Jewish school for boys
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	10 to 16
Gender of pupils	Boys
Number of pupils on the school roll	271
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Michael Lisser
Headteacher	Yitzchok Lev
Annual fees (day pupils)	£7,710
Telephone number	020 8349 4222
Website	None
Email address	office@pardesgrammar.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	6 to 8 February 2018

Information about this school

- Pardes House Grammar School is an independent secondary day school in Finchley, London. It provides religious and secular education for Jewish Orthodox boys. Pupils typically leave the school at the end of Year 10 and move on to study at a yeshiva. A small number of pupils remain at the school in Year 11 to follow a personalised study programme.
- The school makes no use of alternative provision.
- The school's most recent inspection was a material change inspection in September 2021. In light of this inspection, the registration authority increased the school's maximum capacity to 300 pupils.
- The school's last standard inspection was in February 2018.
- Leaders have asked the registration authority to change their age range from 10 to 16, to 11 to 16. This is because the school does not admit pupils of primary age.

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 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.

- This standard inspection was conducted with one day's notice.
- Inspectors completed deep dives in these subjects: English, design and technology, geography and PSHE education. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers and spoke to some pupils about their learning and their work.
- Inspectors considered a range of evidence to consider pupils' safety, personal development and behaviour. They spoke with a range of pupils in all year groups. In line with leaders' request, inspectors did not ask pupils questions about sex education and the protected characteristics.
- Inspectors met with the proprietor and the chair of governors.
- Inspectors met with the school's safeguarding leaders and reviewed a range of safeguarding documentation, including pre-appointment checks on staff.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View.

- Inspectors reviewed a range of evidence to check compliance with the independent school standards.
- Inspection visits took place on 10 to 12 May 2022 and 28 June 2022. Two inspectors returned to the school on 28 June 2022 to gather additional evidence. At the inspection visit on 28 June 2022, inspectors focused in particular on gathering evidence on the welfare, health and safety of pupils following concerns raised with Ofsted and the registration authority. Evidence gathered during all inspection visits has been included in this report.

Inspection team

James Waite, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Nigel Clemens

Ofsted Inspector

Madeleine Gerard

Her Majesty's 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.
- 2(2) For the purposes of paragraph (2)(1)(a), the matters are-
 - 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)(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)(b) ensures that every registered pupil who is provided with secondary education at the school is provided with relationships and sex educations, except so far as the pupil is excused as mentioned in sub-paragraph (2),
 - 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.

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(b) ensures that principles are actively promoted which-
 - 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.
- 11 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that relevant health and safety laws are complied with by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written health and safety policy.

- 14 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that pupils are properly supervised through the appropriate deployment of school staff.
- 15 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that an admission and attendance register is maintained in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006.
- 16 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that-
 - 16(a) the welfare of pupils at the school is safeguarded and promoted by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written risk assessment policy; and
 - 16(b) appropriate action is taken to reduce risks that are identified.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

- 25 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that the school premises and the accommodation and facilities provided therein are maintained to a standard such that, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of pupils are ensured.
- 28(1) The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that-
 - 28(1)(d) the temperature of hot water at the point of use does not pose a scalding risk to users.

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.

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