

Inspection of Bnois Jerusalem Girls School

71 and 75–81 Amhurst Park, London N16 5DL

Inspection dates

8 to 11 November 2022

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Inadequate

Leadership and management

Inadequate

Early years provision

Requires improvement

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Inadequate

Does the school meet the independent school standards?

No

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy attending their school. They especially look forward to the festivals, performances and craftwork they take part in. However, leaders significantly restrict pupils' personal development. Pupils do not learn about any religions other than their own. References to personal relationships and some of the differences people have are avoided entirely. Pupils do not receive impartial careers guidance. Leaders continue to prevent pupils from taking any public examinations because of the risk of content in the examination papers causing offence. Pupils therefore continue to lack readiness for life in modern British society.

Leaders provide pupils with a better secular curriculum than was the case at the previous graded inspection. An increasing number of subjects are well planned and resourced. Pupils' reading in English is also getting better. Nevertheless, the quality and consistency of secular education remains variable.

Leaders and staff have high expectations of pupils' attendance, punctuality and behaviour. As a result, pupils attend regularly and are punctual to school and lessons. They behave well and are polite and courteous. Safeguarding is effective. Staff deal with any concerns, including incidents of bullying.

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

Children get off to a better start than previously because early years provision has improved. The early years curriculum is more coherently organised. Plans cover all the required areas of learning. Children are now taught phonics from the start of Reception. Staff have a clearer understanding of how to assess children's learning accurately. However, too many early years staff have been employed without the approved qualifications. Ongoing professional training for staff, including in how to teach phonics, is not organised or delivered systematically. As a result, the quality of education in the early years is variable. Some requirements of the statutory framework for the early years foundation stage (EYFS) are not met because staff do not hold the required approved-level qualifications.

Leaders are constructing an increasingly well-sequenced curriculum for pupils in Years 1 to 11. Pupils study a broader range of subjects than in the past, including a full programme of secular history. Teachers' subject knowledge remains strong. Pupils learn to read fluently. Staff provide effective support to those who need additional help. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) continue to be well identified and supported.

Leaders ensure that pupils read a wider range of English fiction and non-fiction texts than was previously the case. Teachers have worked effectively with curriculum advisers and reflected on curriculum design and the order in which subject content is taught. In some subjects, the curriculum is now coherent and ambitious. In these subjects, such as mathematics and history, the order of key content helps pupils to build up knowledge and practise skills. Leaders are also making sure that

assessment information, usually based on regular tests, is used to inform the next steps in pupils' learning. This is helping pupils to know and remember more in a greater number of subjects over time.

However, these improvements are not consistent across departments and subjects. For example, personal, social, health and economic education has not been coherently thought through between the early years and secondary departments. In some subjects, what is being taught is different to what is in the planned curriculum.

Pupils are encouraged to be kind and respectful. They work hard in class and demonstrate consistently positive behaviour and attitudes. Staff promote pupils' understanding of some aspects of British values, including the rule of law and democracy. Pupils have visited the Houses of Parliament and the Royal Courts of Justice. They enjoy taking part in extra-curricular activities, including the annual pantomime and trips to the Kent coast and central London. Pupils take an active part in preparing for and celebrating Jewish festivals. However, they are taught general respect for others without any reference to the religions, faiths and beliefs of others. By the time pupils leave the school in Year 11, the curriculum delivered has not encouraged respect of others, including those with protected characteristics.

Pupils are taught about plenty of different careers. However, leaders do not organise impartial advice and guidance about the wide-ranging options available to pupils beyond progression to a seminary. Leaders teach creationism as part of a belief system. In science, the proprietor body continues to forbid any references to sexual reproduction or scientific theories behind the origins of life. These significant restrictions in knowledge continue to limit pupils' preparation for life in modern Britain.

Leaders have written and published a relationships and sex education (RSE) policy. However, leaders do not include the full extent of relationships education in the school's policy, as set out in statutory guidance. Leaders limit relationships education to friendships and omit other aspects, including being safe and the concepts of sexual consent, harassment or abuse. All parents and carers at the school have exercised their right to withdraw their children from sex education in the secondary phase. Leaders have not made suitable arrangements to provide sex education were any parents to choose not to withdraw their children, or should any pupils wish, from three terms before their 16th birthday, to receive sex education rather than be withdrawn.

Leaders have focused on improving the quality of education since the previous inspection. They have organised some effective training for teachers. This has helped to improve the secular curriculum. Teachers felt well supported. They expressed no concerns about their workload. However, leaders and the proprietor body do not demonstrate capacity for improvement. Members of the proprietor body do not provide formal or effective scrutiny of leaders' work. They have not ensured that the independent school standards are met. The school is repeatedly failing to meet these standards over time.

The proprietors have admitted pupils after 23 September 2021, the date when a restriction order imposed by the Department for Education (DfE) came into force. This has been reported to the DfE, which has regulatory enforcement powers to address breaches of restriction.

Leaders have not included information about the restriction order in their admissions policy or prospectus as required. Leaders also continue to use the admission register incorrectly as a waiting list.

The school remains compliant with schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

At the request of the DfE, this inspection included checking the school's progress in meeting previously unmet independent school standards. These standards were last judged to be unmet at a progress monitoring inspection in February 2022. They included standards relating to the active promotion of tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs, and encouragement of respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics. Standards concerning leadership and management, and misuse of the school's admissions register, were also not met. This inspection found that the proprietors have continued to forbid any coverage of different religions, faiths and beliefs, and of any information relating to some of the protected characteristics. The admission register continues to be used inappropriately. As a result, all the same standards are again judged to be not met.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The school has a strong culture of safeguarding. Leaders take their safeguarding responsibilities seriously. They ensure staff are trained well, and that pupils have trusted adults they can go to for support and guidance. Leaders follow up concerns promptly and effectively, including with external agencies.

Pre-employment checks on adults are completed in line with all the requirements. They are recorded accurately. The recruitment process is suitable although record keeping of the interview process lacks rigour.

The school's safeguarding policy reflects the latest guidance. In the absence of a website, it is readily available in hard copy from the school's office on request.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and proprietor)

- The proprietor body continues to not permit pupils to take examinations to achieve any nationally recognised qualifications at the end of key stage 4. Pupils' options for post-16 study are therefore limited to institutions that will admit them without these qualifications. Leaders and the proprietors should ensure that pupils have access to public examinations, such as GCSEs, so that they can gain

qualifications that provide them with a broader range of options for future education, training or employment.

- Leaders' improvements to the secular curriculum are not consistent across departments and subjects. In some subjects, the curriculum has not been planned coherently, and in others, work in pupils' books does not reflect the ambition of the curriculum plans. Leaders and the proprietor body should ensure that the key content that pupils need to know is planned and taught in a coherently sequenced way so that they build cumulative knowledge and skills securely in all subjects.
- Staff in the early years do not hold recognised, approved Level 2 or Level 3 qualifications, as required by the EYFS statutory framework. This impacts on the quality of education in the early years. Leaders and the proprietors should ensure that enough staff in the early years are trained to the required level, and achieve approved qualifications, in line with the statutory requirements.
- Teachers do not receive consistently high-quality phonics training. This means the teaching of phonics lacks consistency and rigour. Leaders and the proprietors should ensure that teachers receive more regular, high-quality phonics training.
- Leaders fail to actively encourage pupils to respect those with different faiths, beliefs and cultures. Leaders and the proprietors should ensure that tolerance between different cultural traditions is actively encouraged and that respect and tolerance of different faiths, beliefs and cultures of others are actively fostered.
- Pupils do not receive impartial careers advice and guidance. Leaders and the proprietors should ensure that pupils are provided with impartial information about the wide education, training and career options available to them after they leave school.
- The RSE curriculum does not take full account of current statutory guidance and omits key concepts such as sexual consent, harassment and abuse. Secondary-age pupils do not receive adequate relationships education to equip them for life in British society. By the time pupils leave the school, leaders and the proprietors have not ensured that through relationships education, pupils have been taught about legal rights and responsibilities, particularly with reference to those with protected characteristics. There are no arrangements to provide sex education were any parents to choose not to withdraw their children, or should any pupils wish, from three terms before their 16th birthday, to receive sex education rather than be withdrawn. Leaders and the proprietors should ensure that the RSE curriculum is planned and delivered fully, in line with statutory guidance.
- Leaders omit information such as reproduction and scientific theories behind the origins of life entirely from the curriculum. Leaders and the proprietors should review the curriculum to ensure it presents pupils with a balanced presentation of religious and scientific theories.
- The proprietors have not published information about the restriction order in their admissions policy and prospectus as they are required to do. They have also admitted pupils during the period defined in the restriction order. Leaders continue to use the admission register incorrectly by including many pupils awaiting admission. Proprietors should ensure they update their policy and

prospectus to account for the restriction order. They should also ensure they adhere to the restriction order by admitting no new pupils. They should use the admission register correctly by only entering pupils on the admission register on the first day on which the school has agreed that the pupil will attend the school.

- Leaders do not record clearly the interview and decision-making process when appointing new staff. Although this does not directly compromise pupils' safety, the recruitment process lacks rigour and does not reflect statutory safeguarding guidance. Leaders and the proprietors should ensure that the interview process, and the subsequent decisions made, are clearly recorded.
- Some of the independent school standards continue to be not met. The proprietors and leaders should take action to ensure they 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.

School details

Unique reference number	100291
DfE registration number	204/6242
Local authority	Hackney
Inspection number	10242726
Type of school	Orthodox Jewish day school for girls
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	2 to 16
Gender of pupils	Girls
Number of pupils on the school roll	722
Number of part-time pupils	None
Proprietor	Bnois Jerusalem School
Chair	Judah Wider
Headteacher	Mrs M Landau
Annual fees (day pupils)	Variable and voluntary
Telephone number	020 8800 5781
Website	None
Email address	admin@bnoisschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	10 to 12 December 2019

Information about this school

- Bnois Jerusalem Girls School is an independent Orthodox Jewish day school for girls aged two to 16.
- Since 24 September 2021, the school has been subject to a restriction order from the DfE. Leaders are not permitted to admit any new pupils to the school.
- There was evidence that the proprietors are not complying with the restriction imposed by the Secretary of State for Education on 24 August 2021. This is because there was evidence that pupils had been admitted after 23 September 2021. The Secretary of State has powers to take regulatory action against schools found to be in breach of a restriction on their registration.
- The school's last graded inspection took place in December 2019. Since then, there have been two progress monitoring inspections in March 2021 and February 2022. Both inspections judged some independent school standards to be unmet.
- The school makes 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.

- At the request of the DfE, this standard inspection was conducted without notice. It included a progress monitoring element, as well as checks on the school's compliance with a restriction order on the admission of new pupils.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in six subjects: reading, mathematics, history, geography, physical education, and personal, social, health and economic education. For each deep dive, inspectors met with curriculum leaders, visited lessons, spoke to pupils about their learning, spoke to teachers, and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also listened to pupils read.
- Inspectors met with the substantive headteacher and heads of department throughout the inspection. Inspectors also met with members of the proprietors, including the chair.
- Inspectors met with the school's safeguarding leaders and reviewed a range of related documentation, including employee files and pre-employment checks on staff.
- Inspectors met with a group of pupils to hear their views about their school. The discussion focused on pupils' perceptions of their safety, learning and personal development. In line with the proprietors' request, inspectors did not ask pupils

questions about certain topics, including sex, relationships and religions other than their own.

- Inspectors considered parents' handwritten responses to Ofsted's online survey for parents, Parent View. There were no responses to the staff or pupil online surveys.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of evidence to check compliance with the independent school standards.

The school's progress in meeting previously failed standards

During the inspection inspectors checked whether the school now meets the independent school standards that it was judged to have failed at its previous progress monitoring inspection on 9 February 2022.

The outcome of this part of the inspection is: **the school continues to not meet the previously failed standards.**

Inspection team

James Waite, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Jonathan Dyer	His Majesty's Inspector
Jonathan Newby	Ofsted Inspector
Gary Pocock	Ofsted Inspector

Annex. Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school failed to meet the following independent school standards and early years foundation stage statutory requirements

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(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)(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)(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 education, except in 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(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

- 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.

Part 6. Provision of information

- 32(1) The standard about the provision of information by the school is met if the proprietor ensures that-
 - 32(1)(j) particulars of any action specified in sub-paragraph (4) are published and maintained on the school's website or, where no such website exists, are provided to parents.
- 32(4) The action specified in this sub-paragraph is-
 - 32(4)(b) any decision of the Secretary of State to impose a relevant restriction on the proprietor under section 116 of the 2008 Act.

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.

Early Years Foundation Stage

- 3.33. For children aged two: there must be at least one member of staff for every four children; at least one member of staff must hold an approved level 3 qualification; and at least half of all other staff must hold an approved level 2 qualification.
- 3.37. For children aged three and over in independent schools, where there is no person with Qualified Teacher Status, Early Years Professional Status, Early Years Teacher Status or another approved level 6 qualification, no instructor, and no suitably qualified overseas trained teacher, working directly with the children: there must be at least one member of staff for every eight children; at least one

member of staff must hold an approved level 3 qualification; and at least half of all other staff must hold an approved level 2 qualification.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2022