

# Inspection of Beis Chinuch Lebonos Girls School

Woodberry Down Centre, Woodberry Down, London N4 2SH

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Inspection dates:

29 November to 1 December 2022

## **Overall effectiveness**

## **Requires improvement**

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The quality of education

**Requires improvement**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Good**

Personal development

**Requires improvement**

Leadership and management

**Requires improvement**

Early years provision

**Requires improvement**

Overall effectiveness at previous  
inspection

Requires improvement

Does the school meet the independent  
school standards?

**No**

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils share a strong rapport with each other and with staff. There is a family feel to the school. Secondary school pupils act as positive role models to younger ones. They help younger pupils with their academic work. Pupils enjoy their learning and discussions during lessons.

Safeguarding is effective. Pupils learn about bullying, including through planned anti-bullying week activities. Bullying does not escalate because teachers deal with it quickly. Pupils behave well. They are polite, articulate and kind to each other. Pupils are keen to collect rewards which lead to an educational outing. They enjoy participating in competitions such as for creative writing. They dance, sing and play musical instruments in the annual school production. Older pupils take on responsibilities, including organising the school's charitable work.

Typically, leaders' expectations of what pupils can achieve are not high enough. Lessons are focused on the tasks that pupils must complete rather than important knowledge and skills for future learning. While pupils have opportunities for personal development, leaders do not ensure that all the required content is covered fully.

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

Leaders make sure that pupils experience a broad range of curriculum subjects. In English and mathematics, this is matched to the ambition of the national curriculum. This is not the case in other subjects. Limitations on the time pupils study other secular subjects affect breadth and depth of the curriculum in these subjects. Leaders have chosen to teach geography, but primary-aged pupils have limited time devoted to learning this subject, for example.

In the primary phase, leaders have not ensured that curriculum thinking builds on what children have learned in the early years. Typically, subject leaders have not identified the key knowledge and skills that they intend pupils to learn in each subject. They have not determined the order in which teaching should cover essential knowledge. Teachers do not systematically check pupils' understanding of new learning. Teachers' ambitions for what pupils can achieve are not routinely reflected in the tasks that they ask pupils to complete. Teaching prioritises activities for pupils to complete over the key knowledge and skills that pupils should know.

Leaders identify the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) well. They work closely with external agencies to meet pupils' individual needs. Teaching and support staff help pupils with SEND to access a full curriculum.

Leaders have invested in a new phonics programme. Primary-phase teachers have had very recent training to support them to implement this programme. However, staff do not use a consistent approach to teaching phonics. Children are not taught phonics from Reception. This delays the start of their phonics learning. The quality of phonics teaching is variable. Pupils who struggle with reading receive help, but this is not timely. As a result, these pupils do not build reading confidence or fluency. Pupils enjoy texts they read in English. This helps them to understand about plots

and characters in stories. However, leaders do not ensure that there are a wide range of books in the school library.

Teachers help pupils to develop a strong sense of morality. For example, pupils fundraise for their chosen charities. Leaders prioritise the teaching of physical and mental health. Pupils are encouraged to eat healthily and how to avoid eating disorders. They are taught the risks of alcohol, tobacco and drugs. Pupils are also taught about the changing adolescent body and personal hygiene. Older pupils are taught about British values through citizenship lessons. Topics include the rule of law, democracy and individual liberty. Leaders organise cultural outings including visits to museums in London, the Houses of Parliament and Buckingham Palace. However, there are few extra-curricular activities available for pupils in school. Leaders do not ensure that secondary-aged pupils have a planned approach to learning about different careers. Pupils receive one-to-one advice about their next steps, but this is not impartial. The school does not provide information about vocational qualifications and apprenticeships. This limits pupils' exposure to the breadth of available career options.

Across the school, low-level disruption is rare because pupils are keen to learn.

In primary and secondary phases, pupils are taught in general terms to respect people who are different from themselves, including through the personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum. In history, pupils learn about other cultures and religions from the past in general terms. Leaders do not encourage respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs because pupils do not gain specific knowledge of the range of cultures and religions in modern Britain. Teaching does not actively encourage pupils to respect people with characteristics that are protected by law.

Parents and carers value communication with school leaders to keep them informed of their children's learning. Leaders have consulted parents of secondary-aged pupils about the school's relationships and sex education (RSE) policy. All parents have exercised their right to withdraw their children from sex education in the secondary phase. In the secondary phase, relationships education does not include any aspect of intimate relationships and, for example, does not include the concepts and laws relating to consent, harassment, domestic abuse or grooming. Leaders have made suitable arrangements to provide sex education should any parents choose not to withdraw their children, or should a pupil wish to receive sex education rather than be withdrawn from three terms before the pupil turns 16 years of age.

The school's RSE programme includes topics such as the potential risks of social media and being cautious when meeting people that they do not already know. In planning the curriculum, leaders do not have regard to the Department for Education's statutory guidance on relationships education and do not ensure that pupils are taught all the relevant protected characteristics content, in an age-appropriate way and at a timely point as part of the school's relationships education.

The proprietor and members of the governing body do not ensure that the school meets all independent school standards. Leaders demonstrate some capacity for

improvement in the increased coherence in the school's approach to teaching early reading. Leaders are considerate of staff workload.

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

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are trained in statutory safeguarding requirements. They know how to identify any pupils at risk of harm and the importance of reporting this quickly. There is strong pastoral support for pupils, especially in relation to mental health. Staff are kept informed about the risks of harm to pupils in the local area. Safeguarding records are well maintained.

Pupils are encouraged to keep themselves safe, including on their journey to and from school. Older pupils are taught some understanding of online safety, especially in relation to the potential dangers of social media. The school has an appropriate safeguarding policy that is made available to parents on request.

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

- The school's approach to teaching phonics is not consistent. Children are not taught phonics from the start in Reception. The support for older pupils who struggle with reading is not as timely as it could be. This limits the development of reading fluency and confidence for some pupils. Leaders should ensure that all staff who teach phonics and support pupils' reading have the expertise to implement the school's approach to phonics consistently and coherently.
- In some subjects, curriculum thinking is in the early stages of development. Content and sequencing have not been well thought through. Leaders do not ensure that sufficient time is allocated in all subjects for pupils to learn successfully. This limits pupils' knowledge and understanding in these subjects. Subject leaders should identify the key facts, knowledge and skills that they intend pupils to learn in every subject. Leaders should also provide subject knowledge development and guidance for all staff so that they check pupils' understanding effectively across all subjects.
- Leaders do not ensure that the RSE programme encourages respect for all the protected characteristics in line with statutory guidance for pupils of secondary school age. In primary and secondary phases, leaders do not enable pupils to develop a deep understanding of other faiths and cultures. Leaders do not ensure that curriculum planning pays regard to all the protected characteristics. Leaders should ensure that respect and tolerance are actively promoted through ensuring that pupils are taught about the religions and cultures of others. They should ensure that the RSE programme meets statutory requirements and covers all aspects of being safe, and respectful relationships content including the legal

rights and responsibilities regarding equality (particularly with reference to the protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010) and that everyone is unique and equal and covers all the protected characteristics.

- Leaders do not provide pupils with impartial careers advice. This limits pupils' exposure to a broad range of career options. Leaders should ensure that leaders provide pupils with information about education and career opportunities post-16. This will enable pupils to make informed decisions about their next steps.
- Leaders do not fulfil their statutory responsibility to pay due regard to all the protected characteristics when planning the curriculum. Leaders do not encourage pupils to develop knowledge of, and respect for, all those with protected characteristics. Leaders should make provision to promote respect for all the protected characteristics as set out in the Equality Act 2010.
- The school provides a narrow range of extra-curricular opportunities. This limits the extent that pupils can develop their wider talents and interests. Leaders should ensure that pupils have opportunities to participate in a wide extra-curricular offer beyond their learning in lessons.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	102171
<b>DfE registration number</b>	204/6399
<b>Local authority</b>	Hackney
<b>Inspection number</b>	10242741
<b>Type of school</b>	Other independent school
<b>School category</b>	Independent school
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2 to 16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Girls
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	774
<b>Proprietor</b>	Abraham Schecter
<b>Headteacher</b>	Leah Klein
<b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>	£2,080
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8809 7737
<b>Website</b>	None
<b>Email address</b>	bursar@bclschool.org.uk
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	25 to 27 February 2020

## Information about this school

- Beis Chinuch Lebonos Girls School is an independent day school with an Orthodox Jewish ethos. Most pupils speak Yiddish as their first language. The school operates from one site. It is in the Stamford Hill area of north London.
- The school's previous standard inspection took place from 25 to 27 February 2020.
- The school does not make 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 leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors met with senior leaders across the early years, infant, junior and secondary phases of the school as well as the headteacher. They spoke to the proprietor and members of the governing body.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in art, early reading, English, geography, mathematics and science. They met with subject leaders to discuss the curriculum, visited lessons, spoke with teachers and looked at pupils' work.
- Inspectors also considered the curriculum in other subjects.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents, pupils and staff, including through responses to Ofsted's online surveys.
- In advance of meetings with pupils, inspectors agreed with leaders the themes of questions to be asked. Inspectors were not able to speak to pupils about relationships and sex education, or the protected characteristics of sexual orientation and gender reassignment.
- The inspection of safeguarding included meetings with leaders of safeguarding and discussions with the proprietor. Inspectors also asked staff and pupils about safeguarding. Inspectors looked at documentation relating to safeguarding, including the record of pre-employment checks on staff, the school's systems for reporting concerns and curriculum documents.
- In order to check compliance with the independent school standards, inspectors toured the site, accompanied by the proprietor.

## **Inspection team**

Lisa Strong, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Jonathan Newby

Ofsted Inspector

Sean Flood

Ofsted Inspector

Lucy Bruce

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.
- 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)(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)(i) effective preparation of pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British society.
- 2A(1) The standard in the 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 paragraph (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 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.

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