

# Ohr Emes

148 Upper Clapton Road, London E5 9JZ

**Inspection date**

1 March 2023

**Overall outcome**

**The school does not meet all of the independent school standards that were checked during this inspection**

## Main inspection findings

### Part 1. Quality of education provided

#### *Paragraph 2(1)(a), 2(1)(b)(i) and 2(2)(a)*

- At the previous progress monitoring inspection in March 2022, teaching of secular subjects remained weak. For some areas of learning, there were no plans or schemes of work. In other areas, inspectors found that what pupils were taught was too narrow and not properly planned. Leaders said that some subjects would be taught through the Kodesh curriculum but were unable to provide evidence to show how pupils' subject knowledge and skills would build securely over time.
- Leaders' action plan set out how leaders intended to broaden the secular curriculum, but the action points were too general and timescales too vague.
- This inspection found that leaders have now written suitable Year 1 curriculum plans for history, geography, science, art and design, design and technology, and physical education. These subjects, taught largely through the Kodesh curriculum, were added to the curriculum from October 2022. The plans include coverage of national curriculum aims and build on the curriculum plans for children in the early years. They take into account the different aptitudes and abilities of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- The successful long-term impact of these new plans is yet to be seen. Arrangements to assess pupils in line with the plans have not been finalised. Leaders have not provided teachers with enough training to teach each subject well. Some subjects, such as physical education, have not been allocated enough timetabled time.
- These independent school standards ('the standards') remain not met.

#### *Paragraph 2(2)(b) and 2(2)(c)*

- At the previous inspection, inspectors found that leaders had recently put a phonics programme in place. However, the required training for staff was still in progress, and this affected the quality of the programme's implementation. The tracking of pupils' progress in early reading was weak.
- Leaders' action plan stated that staff would be fully trained in August 2022 and that the

chosen systematic synthetic phonics programme would be implemented fully from September 2022.

- Leaders have taken effective action to significantly improve the school's approach to teaching reading. This inspection found that staff have completed external early reading and phonics training as planned. Children in Reception, all of whom speak Yiddish as their home language, now receive daily 'pre-phonics' sessions, which become formal phonics teaching sessions in the summer term. The tracking of pupils' progress in their reading is now much stronger. Leaders have established a weekly story-telling session in English in the early years and set aside time for all pupils to choose books which interest them.
- Pupils in Year 1, including those who find reading in English particularly difficult, were able to use their phonic knowledge well to decode words in books they had not seen before.
- These standards are now met.

*Paragraph 3, 3(a), 3(b), 3(c), 3(d), 3(e), 3(f) and 3(g)*

- At the previous inspection, these various standards relating to the quality of education were again not met. They include standards relating to effective lesson planning and teachers' use of effective teaching and assessment methods and demonstrating good subject knowledge.
- Leaders' action plan states that staff would be provided with training to cover these aspects. A system of peer observation between teachers was set to take place at least on a termly basis. Leaders intended to create their own system to assess pupils. The plan states that staff would be trained to use the new assessment system. However, the plan was light in detail. It neglected to explain precisely what, when and how actions would be implemented.
- This inspection found that leaders have initiated some important work to improve the quality of education, but that there is still a lot to do. For example, leaders recently received specific training in numeracy teaching skills from the local authority and ran a training day on the teaching of reading in January 2023. However, no further training has taken place, and the peer observation plan has not started. Leaders have not done enough to develop staff's subject knowledge in subjects other than English and mathematics. The school's new assessment system is in the process of being finalised and implemented. The mini-library areas in each classroom are better than before. However, leaders know that much more can be done to further increase the range of books available to pupils, and to make the areas, and therefore pupils' willingness to read for pleasure, more attractive and accessible.
- These standards remain not met.
- Some of the standards in this part remain not met.

### Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

*Paragraphs 7–7(b) and 32(1)(c)*

- The previous inspection judged these safeguarding standards to be met. This inspection's routine checks on pupils' safety found that this continues to be the case.

- Staff have been trained in light of the latest statutory guidance in 'Keeping children safe in education' (September 2022). Leaders have ensured that the school's safeguarding policy and chosen procedures reflect this statutory guidance. The policy is available in hard copy.
- These standards continue to be met.

## Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

### *Paragraph 34(1)–34(1)(b)*

- The previous inspection found that leaders had not ensured that all the independent school standards and the statutory requirements of the early years foundation stage were met.
- The school's action plan states that leaders intended to redesign the school's leadership structure to create accountability at all levels. The plan states that the headteacher and other leaders would monitor teaching regularly. Leaders intended to take advice from other schools and national organisations.
- This inspection found leaders have the right intentions. They have taken positive steps to move the school forward, including restructuring the arrangements for senior leadership and collaborating with other schools. Leaders have made significant progress to improve curriculum planning and the teaching of reading. However, there is a lot more to do to ensure that pupils receive the broad, high-quality secular curriculum required by the standards.
- The standard in this part remains not met.

## Statutory requirements of the early years foundation stage

### *Independent school standard 2(2)(f) and statutory requirements 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 1.13 and 2.1*

- In addition to weaknesses in the teaching of early reading, the previous inspection found that teachers did not have the expertise to observe and assess children's learning. Teaching plans in the early years were not fully developed. Leaders were beginning to check children's development in the seven areas of learning, but evidence of a deeper assessment of children's knowledge and skills was lacking.
- Leaders' action plan includes a range of actions, but the plan was too vague. For example, it did not explain how leaders, and subsequently other staff, would receive the training they need. The plan lacked specific actions and clear timelines.
- This inspection found leaders to have implemented suitable actions to improve curriculum and teaching plans in the early years. Planning and the online assessment system now appropriately reflect teaching and children's achievements in all seven areas of learning.
- As reported above, the teaching of early reading for children is much stronger than it was previously. The programme is now suitable for enabling children to develop age-appropriate phonic knowledge.
- However, leaders have more to do in ensuring children have access to an English language-rich environment, including a wider range of reading materials. Leaders have still not organised enough training for staff to develop the expertise to observe and

assess children's learning. The assessment system is not being used thoroughly or regularly enough to assess children's knowledge and skills.

- Standard 2(2)(f) and statutory requirements 1.3, 1.4, 1.5 and 1.13, based on the statutory framework 2021, are now met.
- Statutory requirements 1.6 and 2.1, based on the statutory framework 2021, are not met.

## **Compliance with regulatory requirements**

The school does not meet the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements that were checked during this inspection. This included the standards and requirements that the school was judged to not comply with at the previous inspection. Not all of the standards and associated requirements were checked during this inspection.

## School details

Unique reference number	147312
DfE registration number	204/6022
Inspection number	10262504

This inspection was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Type of school	Primary day school for boys of Orthodox Jewish faith
School status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	3 to 7
Gender of pupils	Boys
Number of pupils on the school roll	77
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Ohr Emes Ltd
Chair	Chanoich Muller
Headteacher	Chanoich Muller
Annual fees (day pupils)	£7,500
Telephone number	020 8800 8932
Website	None
Email address	adminscool@viznitzuk.org
Dates of previous standard inspection	6 to 8 July 2021

## Information about this school

- Ohr Emes is an independent primary day school for Orthodox Jewish boys aged three to seven. It is located in Clapton, Hackney.
- The school's proprietorial arrangements have changed. There is now a proprietor body, consisting of the three trustees of the registered charity, Ohr Emes Ltd. The new proprietor body is chaired by the current headteacher. The new proprietors are in the process of formally making this change with the registration authority.
- Though the school's registration agreement is for boys aged three to seven, leaders admit children who are close to their third birthday. At the time of the inspection, there was one

child on roll aged two, about to turn three. Leaders are considering applying for a material change to admit children aged two.

- The proprietors have purchased new school premises. Once planning and refurbishment works are complete in 2024, the proprietors intend to apply for a material change to relocate the school.
- The previous standard inspection took place in July 2021, when the school's overall effectiveness was judged to be inadequate. The school's most recent inspection was a progress monitoring inspection in March 2022, when some independent school standards remained not met.
- The school uses no alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out at the request of the registration authority for independent schools. The purpose of the inspection was to monitor the progress the school has made in meeting the independent school standards and other requirements that it was judged to not comply with at its previous inspection.
- The school's previous progress monitoring inspection (PMI) in March 2022 again judged some of the independent school standards to be not met. The Department for Education (DfE) asked the proprietor to submit another action plan. This was judged to be not acceptable by Ofsted in October 2022. The action plan was subsequently rejected by the DfE in November 2022. This was the first PMI since the school's action plan submission and the second PMI since the standard inspection in July 2021.
- The inspection was conducted without notice.
- The focus of the inspection was to check whether the school complied with particular requirements within parts 1, 2, 3, 6 and 8 of the independent school standards, and some of the early years foundation stage requirements.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, head of early years and compliance manager. He toured the premises, visited lessons and had meetings to discuss the curriculum and safeguarding. He scrutinised curriculum plans and pupils' work. He also met with two groups of pupils in Year 1 and listened to them read.
- There were no recent responses to Ofsted's online survey (Ofsted Parent View) to consider as part of this inspection.

## Inspection team

James Waite, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector



## **Annex. Compliance with regulatory requirements**

### **The school does not meet the following independent school standards and associated requirements**

*Standards that were not met at the previous inspection and remain unmet at this inspection*

#### **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.
- 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 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.

### **Early Years Foundation Stage**

1.6. Educational programmes must involve activities and experiences for children, as set out under each of the areas of learning.

#### **Communication and Language**

The development of children's spoken language underpins all seven areas of learning and development. Children's back-and-forth interactions from an early age form the foundations for language and cognitive development. The number and quality of the conversations they have with adults and peers throughout the day in a language-rich environment is crucial. By commenting on what children are interested in or doing and echoing back what they say with new vocabulary added, practitioners will build children's language effectively. Reading frequently to children, and engaging them actively in stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems, and then providing them with extensive opportunities to use and embed new words in a range of contexts, will give children the opportunity to thrive. Through conversation, story-telling and role play, where children share their ideas with support and modelling from their teacher, and sensitive questioning that invites them to elaborate, children become comfortable using a rich range of vocabulary and language structures.

#### **Literacy**

It is crucial for children to develop a life-long love of reading. Reading consists of two dimensions: language comprehension and word reading. Language comprehension (necessary for both reading and writing) starts from birth. It only develops when adults talk with children about the world around them and the books (stories and non-fiction) they read with them, and enjoy rhymes, poems and songs together. Skilled word reading, taught later, involves both the speedy working out of the pronunciation of unfamiliar printed words (decoding) and the speedy recognition of familiar printed words. Writing involves transcription (spelling and handwriting) and composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech, before writing).

2.1 Assessment plays an important part in helping parents, carers and practitioners to recognise children's progress, understand their needs, and to plan activities and support.

Ongoing assessment (also known as formative assessment) is an integral part of the learning and development process. It involves practitioners knowing children's observing level of achievement and interests, and then shaping teaching and learning experiences for each child reflecting that knowledge. In their interactions with children, practitioners should respond to their own day-to-day observations about children's progress and observations that parents and carers share.

## **The school now meets the following requirements of the independent school standards and early years foundation stage**

### **Part 1. Quality of education provided**

- 2(2) For the purposes of paragraph (2)(1)(a), the matters are-
  - 2(2)(b) that pupils acquire speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills;
  - 2(2)(c) where the principal language of instruction is a language other than English, lessons in written and spoken English, except that this matter does not apply in respect of a school which provides education for pupils who are all temporarily resident in England and which follows the curriculum of another country;
  - 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.

### **Early Years Foundation Stage**

1.3. There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational programmes in early years settings. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected.

1.4. Three areas are particularly important for building a foundation for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, forming relationships and thriving. These are the prime areas: communication and language; physical development; and personal, social and emotional development.

1.5. Providers must also support children in four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied. The specific areas are literacy; mathematics; understanding the world; and expressive arts and design.

1.13. For children whose home language is not English, providers must take reasonable steps to provide opportunities for children to develop and use their home language in play and learning, supporting their language development at home. Providers must also ensure that children have sufficient opportunities to learn and reach a good standard in English language during the EYFS: ensuring children are ready to benefit from the opportunities available to them when they begin Year 1. When assessing communication, language and literacy skills, practitioners must assess children's skills in English. If a child does not have a strong grasp of English language, practitioners must explore the child's skills in the home

language with parents and/or carers, to establish whether there is cause for concern about language delay.

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