

Inspection of Beis Aharon School

83-95 Bethune Road, London N16 5ED

Inspection dates:

7 to 9 November 2023

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Good

Early years provision

Requires improvement

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Inadequate

Does the school meet the independent school standards?

Yes

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy coming to school. They like to learn, and they like to play football with their friends in the playground. Older boys enjoy helping younger pupils when they organise special school events to celebrate festivals. Pupils said that their teachers take care of them and that this helps them to feel safe.

The school is in the process of implementing significant changes to the secular curriculum, including designing a broad programme of subjects for pupils to study. This reflects the school's aim to prepare pupils well for further study when they leave the school. Leaders are ambitious for pupils, and they have high expectations for both pupils and staff. However, these changes to the curriculum are recent and not fully embedded across the school. While pupils do not currently achieve as well as they could, leaders know what they need to do to improve outcomes for pupils. They have prioritised the right things, for example ensuring that children learn to read from the start of Reception Year.

Pupils behave well. They are respectful to their teachers and to one another. Pupils are taught about the importance of friendship and respecting each other. Pupils do not disrupt the learning of others in lessons, and they take care over their work. Pupils are keen to discuss their learning, and they listen carefully to each other.

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

The school has created a curriculum that gives pupils experience of a wide range of subjects. This range of subjects meets the requirements of the independent school standards. This is in addition to the specialist religious education lessons that pupils study every morning.

Leaders have thought carefully about how to sequence the knowledge in the secular subjects so that they make best use of time allocated to the secular curriculum. This includes explicit identification of the knowledge that pupils need to learn and practise for subjects which are not delivered discretely, such as computing. The school's work to improve the curriculum is starting to have a positive impact on how effectively pupils learn. However, this work is new and not fully established. For example, curriculum thinking has not considered how learning in Years 1 and Year 2 will build logically on what is taught in early years. This means that pupils' achievement does not match the school's new and ambitious vision.

The curriculum sequences the knowledge in each subject so that pupils build on their prior learning step by step. For example, in physical education (PE), pupils are taught about different speeds of running before they are taught how to do sprint starts. Pupils also learn different styles of jumping. By Year 6, pupils are taught how to combine their running and jumping skills to attempt hurdling. Where teachers have secure subject knowledge, they select appropriate activities which help pupils to develop and apply their understanding. However, where teachers' subject

knowledge is less secure, the tasks that are set are less successful in ensuring that pupils learn and remember the intended curriculum.

Over time, pupils have developed gaps in their understanding of important ideas and concepts. This is due to the lack of a well-planned curriculum in the past. The school has now addressed this. New curriculums for reading, mathematics and English were introduced last year. Other subjects were introduced for the start of this academic year. The school assesses pupils' understanding in English and mathematics at the start of Year 1 in order to identify any gaps in learning. Moving forward, the school intends for teachers to conduct regular assessments in all subjects. When leaders identify gaps in learning, they review their curriculum planning and make adjustments. However, sometimes, teaching does not identify and correct pupils' mistakes or misconceptions as they arise. This means that pupils repeat previous mistakes.

The school is quick to identify pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Staff gather information from parents and carers when children join the school. Leaders meet teachers every week to discuss the progress pupils are making through the curriculum. Teachers adapt resources so that all pupils are supported to access the full range of subjects. Where necessary, pupils have additional support in the classroom. The school wastes no time securing the support of speech and language therapists and occupational therapists for those pupils who need it.

Leaders understand the importance of all pupils learning to read accurately and fluently from the start of Reception Year. As of this academic year, from the start of the Reception Year, all children are being taught phonics knowledge and how to use this knowledge to read and write words accurately. The school has invested in a scheme to deliver their phonics programme in a systematic way. This includes reading books that match the sounds that pupils know. Teachers read to pupils regularly, and pupils get to know their favourite books inside out. However, training for staff to develop their expertise in teaching pupils to read is incomplete. Some staff are not secure in how to deliver the phonics programme. Sometimes, the activities chosen for pupils are not effective in helping pupils secure their phonics knowledge. In other instances, teaching leads to pupils developing misconceptions early on. These misconceptions stall pupils' development as accurate and fluent readers.

Pupils are keen to come to school and learn. In lessons where teachers are most confident in what they are teaching, pupils listen carefully and enjoy their learning. When this is not the case, there can be some low-level disruption. However, teachers deal with this quickly, and it rarely disturbs the learning of others. Pupils are punctual to school and attendance is high. Leaders focus on rewarding pupils for positive behaviour rather than sanctioning poor behaviour. Staff work closely with parents to make sure there is not a need to suspend pupils from school.

During personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education lessons and assemblies, pupils learn about other religions and faiths, for example Islam and Christianity. Pupils also learn about democracy and the role of the monarchy in the

UK. Pupils recently wrote to the King to congratulate him on his coronation, and they were pleased to get a reply. The school offers a range of outings to support pupils' learning and wider development. For instance, pupils have visited Woodberry Wetlands as part of their learning in geography and science. They have also enjoyed reward trips to nearby theme parks. Pupils enjoy volunteering to be classroom monitors, ball monitors or to lead prayers before meals. Through PSHE lessons, pupils are taught about relationships and difference in an age-appropriate way.

The proprietor, chair of governors and leaders of the school share a vision to provide pupils with a secular education that prepares them well for the future. They have implemented significant changes in the school. This includes recruiting new staff to make this vision a reality. They are also supported by external consultants who are experienced in this area of education.

The proprietor and chair of governors know the school well. They are effective in holding leaders to account to implement their vision. The work of leaders and the proprietor means that all of the independent school standards are met.

Parents are very supportive of the work that leaders are doing. They commented on the positive changes that they have seen under the new leadership.

Leaders listen to staff. They understand that implementing a lot of change at pace can bring about challenges for staff. Staff feel well supported, share leaders' vision and feel confident that they can manage their workload.

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

The school meets the statutory requirements of the early years foundation stage.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and proprietor)

- Leaders have introduced a new secular curriculum. Training for staff, including those that are new to the school, on how to deliver all aspects of the curriculum remains incomplete. As a result, the new curriculum is sometimes not implemented as the school intends. The school should ensure that staff receive the training and support they need to implement the planned curriculum effectively, and in turn, ensure that pupils achieve highly.
- The school has made reading a priority, but phonics has only been introduced to the Reception Year from this October. As with other areas of the curriculum, training for staff remains ongoing. As a result, staff are sometimes not secure in their understanding of how to deliver the phonics programme and support pupils' reading development. The school must ensure that teachers have the training to

implement the early reading programme as intended so that pupils make progress in their reading development.

- Teaching does not routinely identify and correct pupils' mistakes or misconceptions in lessons. This is because teachers' understanding of the curriculum across subjects is not fully developed. The school should ensure that staff receive the training they require to spot and correct pupils' difficulties and errors when they occur.
- Currently, there is not a clear connection between the early years curriculum and what pupils learn in Years 1 and 2. This means that the Year 1 and Year 2 curriculum does not sequentially build on what pupils know from Reception Year. Leaders should ensure there is clear curriculum progression from the Reception Year to Years 1 and 2.

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	131170
DfE registration number	204/6398
Local authority	Hackney
Inspection number	10303415
Type of school	Other independent school
School category	Independent day school
Age range of pupils	3 to 13
Gender of pupils	Boys
Number of pupils on the school roll	262
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Belz Cheider
Chair	Aharon Hoffman
Headteacher	Zalmi Kandler
Annual fees (day pupils)	Fees are variable depending on parents' ability to pay
Telephone number	020 8802 8666
Website	None
Email address	admin@beisaharonschool.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	28 to 30 June 2022

Information about this school

- This is an independent day school for boys aged three to 13. The school has an Orthodox Jewish ethos. All pupils speak Yiddish as a first language and Hebrew as a second language. Pupils speak English as an additional language.
- This is the first standard inspection following a progress monitoring inspection on 3 May 2023.
- The school is registered to admit pupils to the age of 13, but the school does not have pupils above the age of 11. Leaders choose to operate the school as a primary school.
- The school's early years provision is located at 118 Bethune Road, London, NE16 5ED. The provision is directly opposite the main school building located at 83-85 Bethune Road, London, NE16 5ED.
- Belz Cheider was appointed as the new proprietor of the school in February 2023. The acting headteacher at the last inspection is now the substantive headteacher.
- The school does not make use of alternative provision.
- The school is registered to accommodate 243 pupils. The school is in breach of its registration because there are 262 pupils on roll currently. The school has informed the Department for Education and requested a material change to the number of pupils on roll.

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.

Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.

The school meets the independent school standards. These are the requirements set out in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher for secular education, the proprietor, the chair of governors, the designated safeguarding lead, the curriculum leader for secular studies and representatives from the consultancy company advising the school. Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation provided by the school to check compliance with the independent school standards. They also toured the school's premises.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, geography and PSHE. Inspectors visited lessons, reviewed pupils' work, met with

pupils to discuss their learning and met with subject leaders and teachers. Inspectors also considered pupils' learning in other subjects, such as history, science and PE.

- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils. Pupils' behaviour in lessons and at playtimes was observed.
- Inspectors spoke to a range of staff about safeguarding, pupils' behaviour and staff's workload. Inspectors spoke to parents at the start of the school day. Inspectors looked at parent responses to Ofsted's surveys.

The school's proposed change to the maximum number of pupils

The school has applied to the Department for Education (DfE) to make a 'material change' to its registration. At the DfE's request, we checked whether the school is likely to meet the relevant independent school standards if the DfE decides to approve the change. This part of the inspection was carried out under section 162(4) of the Education Act 2002.

- The outcome of this part of the inspection is: **the school is likely to meet the relevant independent school standards if the material change relating to the school provision is implemented.**
- The school has applied to increase the maximum number of pupils on roll from 243 to 420.
- This inspection recommends an increase to the requested number of 420 pupils. The school is purpose built and the premises have adequate indoor and outdoor space to accommodate 420 pupils. Classrooms are large and have space for at least 26 pupils. There is sufficient dining space, outdoor space and bathrooms for the proposed increase in the number of pupils. As pupil numbers increase, the school intends to increase the number of staff so that there is adequate supervision of pupils. These plans are likely to be suitable.

Information about the material change inspection

- An inspector visited both school sites to look specifically at whether the accommodation and resources were sufficient and suitable to accommodate the proposed increase in pupil numbers.
- The inspectors also considered whether proposed staffing arrangements would be suitable.

Inspection team

Mark Smith, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Maureen Okoye

Ofsted Inspector

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