

Beth Jacob Grammar School for Girls

Stratford Road, Hendon, London NW4 2AT

Inspection dates

20 February 2024

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

Paragraphs 2(1), 2(1)(a), 2(2), 2(2)(d), 2(2)(d)(ii), 2(A)(1), 2A(1)(b), 2A(1)(d)

- At the previous inspection in March 2023, inspectors found weaknesses in the school's personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education. The PSHE programme was not planned and taught in a way that promoted respect for all of the protected characteristics. PSHE did not help pupils to build up an awareness of cultures and faiths beyond their own. Leaders had not met their statutory obligations regarding relationships and sex education (RSE). Teaching about relationships did not reflect the statutory guidance. Leaders did not have arrangements to ensure that a suitable programme for sex education was in place should a pupil who is eligible to request it do so.
- In their action plan, leaders referred to purchasing a curriculum which would be followed to deliver aspects of PSHE. In the plan, the purpose of this was unclear and there was no clear intention to pay regard to all the protected characteristics in any phase.
- This inspection found that leaders have made some improvements to the provision for PSHE. Curriculum plans now set out clearly what pupils will be taught in Years 7 to 11 under the broad topics of health and well-being, living in the wider world and relationships. PSHE is taught mainly through weekly timetabled 'mechaniches' lessons and is also threaded through the curriculum. For example, during the school's recent 'Technology Awareness Week', pupils were taught about online safety and the potential risks and negative impact of social media. Leaders have started to check that the curriculum is being delivered as planned. However, the programme for PSHE education does not encourage respect for other people paying particular regard to all protected characteristics of which pupils must be made aware at a timely point.
- Leaders now have a suitable programme available for any pupils who choose to receive sex education. As at the previous inspection, all pupils have been withdrawn from sex education at the request of parents. The school's programme for relationships education does not reference all the required content as set out in statutory guidance.

- The standards in this part continue to be not met.

Paragraph 2(1), 2(1)(a), 2(2), 2(2)(e), 2(2)(e)(i), 2(2)(e)(ii) and 2(2)(e)(iii)

- At the time of the previous inspection, pupils did not receive broad and impartial careers guidance. The school had not planned a careers programme to help pupils make informed choices about the range of options for their future education and careers, including pathways for aspirational professions such as medicine. Inspectors found that the careers advice offered to pupils did not extend beyond opportunities within the local community.
- The action plan set out leaders' proposed actions to improve the careers guidance offered to pupils. These included a new careers programme involving assemblies, workshops, mock interviews, work-experience placements and careers lectures. Leaders planned to involve an independent careers adviser and an employment charity in the careers programme.
- Leaders have realised their plans to improve careers. For example, pupils in Year 9 now have individual meetings with an external independent careers adviser. This helps them to reflect on their skills, interests and possible future careers. Pupils receive careful guidance when considering their GCSE options, with staff making pupils aware of the links between different subjects and further education and career options. Pupils in Years 10 to 12 have a careers event day where they have the opportunity to hear from external speakers about a range of careers, including graphic design, landscape gardening and accountancy. Leaders have set in motion their plans for pupils in Years 10 and 12 to have work experience in the summer term.
- These previously unmet requirements in this part are now met.

Part 2. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

Paragraph 5, 5(b) and 5(b)(vi)

- At the previous inspection, inspectors found that pupils were not provided with information about the full range of protected characteristics.
- There have been no developments in this respect. While the curriculum encourages respect for all people in a general way, it does not pay particular regard to all protected characteristics of which pupils must be made aware at a timely point.
- The standards in this part continue to be not met.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraph 7, 7(a), 7(b), 32(1)(c)

- At the previous inspection, safeguarding was judged effective. This continues to be the case. The school's safeguarding policy is up to date with statutory guidance and is available to parents on request.
- Leaders ensure that staff receive regular training to help them understand the signs that suggest that pupils may be at risk. Staff log any concerns about pupils and identify patterns in pupils' behaviour and well-being. Leaders follow up any concerns promptly and make sure that pupils get the right support. They involve external agencies, such as children's services, when necessary. Pupils are safe and well looked after here. They have

adults to talk to at school who they trust will help them with any concerns, no matter how small.

- These standards continue to be met.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraph 34(1), 34(1)(a) and 34(1)(b)

- At the previous inspection, leaders had not ensured that all the independent school standards were met. This was because they had not ensured that pupils receive impartial careers advice. They had not implemented the statutory guidance on RSE or PSHE, including paying particular regard to all protected characteristics.
- In their submitted action plan, leaders' plans to improve the quality of careers guidance to ensure that it is suitably broad and impartial were deemed likely to meet the relevant required standards.
- Leaders' proposed actions in their action planning were judged unlikely to ensure that the school filled the gaps identified in the school's RSE and PSHE curriculums.
- This inspection found that leaders continue to actively promote the well-being of pupils. They have taken some effective steps to now meet previously unmet standards so that leaders have been successful in making improvements to the school's careers programme.
- The proprietor body has not ensured that all those who have leadership and management responsibilities demonstrate the knowledge and skills and fully fulfil their responsibilities so that that the school standards are met consistently.
- Some unmet standards remain in Parts 1 and 2 and therefore requirements in this part continue to be 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, as set out in the annex of this report. 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.

The school now meets the following independent school standards

Part 1. Quality of education provided

- 2(2)(e) for pupils receiving secondary education, access to accurate, up-to-date careers education 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;

School details

Unique reference number	101388
DfE registration number	302/6092
Inspection number	10304686

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	Other independent school
School status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	11 to 17
Gender of pupils	Girls
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Girls
Number of pupils on the school roll	332
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	32
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Beth Jacob Grammar School for Girls Ltd
Chair	Benzion Freshwater
Headteacher	Rabbi Mendel Chissick
Annual fees (day pupils)	£7,200
Telephone number	020 8203 4322
Website	None
Email address	mrslevy@bjgs.org
Date of previous standard inspection	14 to 16 March 2023

Information about this school

- This is an independent Orthodox Jewish school in Barnet.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- Childcare provision, BY Creche, operates on the school site for the children of staff. This provision is registered with Ofsted and is the subject of separate inspection arrangements.

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.
- This was the school's first progress monitoring inspection since its previous full standard inspection in March 2023. It was conducted with 30 minutes' prior notice.
- Following the previous inspection, the school submitted an action plan. It was judged to be not acceptable by Ofsted in July 2023 and was rejected by the Department for Education (DfE).
- This inspection focused on the school's compliance with particular requirements in parts 1, 2, 3 and 8 of the standards.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the school's education consultant and other school leaders. The inspector met with two members of the school's governing body and had a telephone discussion with the chair of the proprietor body. The inspector spoke with a group of staff and met with two groups of pupils. The inspector visited a whole-school assembly.
- The inspector reviewed documentation presented by the school, including that related to RSE, PSHE and careers guidance. The inspector analysed school policies and documentation relating to safeguarding. The inspector checked the record of staff pre-employment checks.

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

The school has applied to the 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 is registered to accept up to 330 pupils, aged 11 to 17. Leaders have applied to increase the number on roll to 345. The school showed the inspector correspondence from DfE giving permission for the school to have a small number of additional pupils on roll while waiting for the material change inspection.
- The school premises are clean and well maintained. Classrooms and the outside areas are suitably spacious and resourced. There are adequate toilets, washing and changing facilities to accommodate the extra 15 pupils.

- Leaders have a clear understanding of relevant health and safety regulations to ensure that pupils are safe and well supervised on the school premises. All the required pre-recruitment checks on staff are completed. The site complies with fire safety regulations.
- Leaders have an appropriate risk assessment policy in place and they take suitable action to identify and mitigate any risks to pupils. This includes when pupils are taken off-site for activities such as educational visits.

Information about the material change inspection

- The inspector visited the school premises to check whether the school is likely to comply with Part 5 of the independent school standards. In addition, the inspector reviewed a range of documentation, including the school's policies and procedures related to health and safety, fire safety and risk assessment, and visited some lessons.

Inspection team

Jude Wilson, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Annex. Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school does not meet the following independent school standards

Standards that were not met at the previous inspection and remain un-met 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(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[9];
- 2A(1) The standard in this paragraph is met of 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(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; and

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

The school now meets the following requirements of the independent school standards

- 2(2)(e) for pupils receiving secondary education, access to accurate, up-to-date careers education 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;

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