

Inspection of Etz Chaim Jewish Primary School

20 Daws Lane, London NW7 4SL

Inspection dates: 20 and 21 February 2024

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| Overall effectiveness | Good |
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| The quality of education | Good |
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| Behaviour and attitudes | Good |
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| Personal development | Good |
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| Leadership and management | Good |
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| Early years provision | Good |
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| Previous inspection grade | Good |
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The headteacher of this school is Hannah Martin. This school is the only school in a single academy trust, Etz Chaim Primary School Trust. The trust is overseen by a board of trustees, co-chaired by Elizabeth Bennett and Samuel Shaerf.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy coming to this nurturing school. They are happy and know that staff work hard to keep them safe. Staff take the time to get to know pupils as individuals and encourage them to express their opinions. They learn to respect differences. Many parents and carers commented on the warm, nurturing and supportive atmosphere.

The school has high ambitions for pupils' achievement. The curriculum has gone through a period of change, and all pupils study the full range of national curriculum subjects. Pupils here are confident and articulate. Leaders have worked to improve behaviour. Many pupils behave well in lessons and play together happily at breaktimes.

Older pupils readily take on additional responsibilities. These include roles as library monitors, sports leaders, digital leaders, ambassadors and being part of the Tzedakah Tzevet charity group. These roles allow pupils to contribute to the wider life of the school. Pupils are confident to suggest ways to make the school even better and to raise funds for the local community and beyond. Pupils enjoy residential visits and activities, and events linked to the school's Jewish character.

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

Recent changes have been made to the curriculum to ensure that it meets the requirements of what is expected nationally. In all subjects, leaders have identified the knowledge they want pupils to learn. This is well sequenced so that pupils return to, and deepen their understanding of, important ideas over time. This ensures that staff have clear guidance about what and when to teach new content, providing consistency across the school and helping to reduce staff workload. Staff are fully on board. They appreciate these improvements and enjoy working here. Governors have also played their part in providing clear direction for the school and in supporting leaders to maintain the momentum of change.

Staff have secure subject knowledge, design interesting lessons and explain new concepts clearly. This helps pupils to build their knowledge across a breadth of subjects. At times, however, assessment is not used precisely to check carefully that pupils have learned what was intended before moving on to new content, which results in some gaps in pupils' knowledge. Similarly, tasks and activities are not consistently adapted well enough to meet pupils' needs. As a result, sometimes pupils find it difficult to get started with or complete learning tasks. This is particularly so for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and for pupils who find learning more challenging.

The school's approach to reading is effective. Children learn to read in both Hebrew and English when they start Reception Year. Leaders ensure that all pupils starting school are assessed straight away. Staff and well-trained volunteers ensure that those in the early stages of reading get additional support to catch up with their

peers. These pupils rapidly become fluent and confident readers. Leaders prioritise reading throughout the curriculum, and as a result, pupils enjoy reading and talk confidently about books.

Leaders and staff have created a culture where bullying is not tolerated. A new behaviour policy is helping pupils to develop higher levels of self-control and attention to learning. During lessons, most pupils settle into routines, enabling learning to proceed uninterrupted. Where any low-level disruption occurs, staff usually manage this well. Pupils typically listen attentively in assemblies, move around the school sensibly and play together happily during breaks and lunchtime. However, the new policy is not consistently implemented. Leaders recognise that there is work to do to further improve pupils' resilience and attitudes to learning. Pupils enjoy school and attend regularly. They arrive on time and are ready to learn. They rarely miss a day.

The programme of personal, social and health education is carefully designed. It builds pupils' knowledge of how to keep safe, including when online, how to develop healthy relationships and the importance of physical activity. Pupils enjoy learning about different religious festivals and exploring character traits through religious texts. They understand that they live in a diverse society and embrace each other's different beliefs and values.

Older pupils take an active role in supporting younger ones, for example through 'circle meetings' that are planned and led by Year 6 pupils. They learn to appreciate the opinions of others. Pupils value supporting various charities, such as the local food bank. Older pupils enjoy these opportunities for leadership and value the skills that they develop in carrying out their responsibilities.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Occasionally, teaching does not check carefully that pupils have understood what they are learning before moving on to new content. This means that pupils continue to have misconceptions in their knowledge and understanding. The school needs to ensure that staff routinely check pupils' understanding and adapt their teaching so that any gaps in learning are identified and corrected, and pupils develop secure knowledge over time.
- Tasks and activities are not consistently adapted to meet the needs of pupils with SEND and for pupils who find learning more challenging. As a result, some pupils struggle to start their learning promptly or to complete the tasks they are set. The school should ensure that the curriculum is adapted appropriately so that pupils are consistently supported to achieve well.

- The school's revised behaviour system is not fully embedded. There are some inconsistent expectations, meaning that some pupils do not listen to instructions or settle to tasks as quickly as they should. The school should ensure that routines are embedded so that expectations are consistently high across the school.

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.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

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| Unique reference number | 136938 |
| Local authority | Barnet |
| Inspection number | 10268695 |
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Academy free school |
| Age range of pupils | 4 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 176 |
| Appropriate authority | Board of trustees |
| Chair of trust | Elizabeth Bennett and Samuel Shaerf (Co-Chairs) |
| Headteacher | Hannah Martin |
| Website | www.etzchaim-primarieschool.org.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | 28 November 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 |

Information about this school

- The school has a modern Orthodox Jewish character.
- Pupils study the subjects of the national curriculum as well as Jewish studies. Jewish studies make up 20% of pupils' timetable.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school had received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, other senior leaders, teachers and pupils. The lead inspector met with the members of the governing body, including the chair of governors. The lead inspector also held a meeting with the school's improvement partner.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of their work. The lead inspector listened to some pupils reading to staff.
- Inspectors also considered the curriculum in other subjects.
- 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 took account of a range of other information, including the school's improvement plans, policies and minutes of governing body meetings.
- Inspectors took account of the views of pupils, parents and staff through discussions and their responses to Ofsted's surveys.

Inspection team

Sabrina Edwards, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Caroline Dulon

His Majesty's Inspector

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