

Inspection of Wiznitz Cheder School

126b Stamford Hill, Hackney, London N16 6QT

Inspection dates: 30 January to 1 February 2024

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

The quality of education

Inadequate

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Inadequate

Leadership and management

Inadequate

Early years provision

Inadequate

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Inadequate

Does the school meet the independent school standards?

No

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy attending this school and would recommend it to others. The environment is calm and orderly, and pupils are kind and respectful to each other. Pupils have adults they can speak with if any worries or concerns should arise. This helps to ensure that pupils feel safe and are kept safe each day.

Leaders have introduced some more time for teaching of the secular curriculum. The teaching of English and mathematics are now a focus of each afternoon. However, this is still in its infancy. Teachers do not have strong enough subject knowledge to teach the curriculum well or to check pupils' understanding. This limits what pupils know and remember. Pupils, including children in early years and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), are not well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Pupils receive personal, social and health education (PSHE), including relationships education. However, pupils have limited understanding of different faiths and cultures. This means that pupils are not well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Pupils enjoy the opportunities they have to visit the local area. Older pupils look forward to their residential trip. Pupils make a positive contribution to the local area. For example, they raise money for charity and sing at a local care home.

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

Leaders have given thought to what pupils, including children in early years, are learning over time. They have focused on English and mathematics as a priority. These subjects are now taught each day. Leaders have invested in a phonics programme to help pupils learn to read. Teachers have received some training to implement the programme. Teachers read stories to pupils each week and pupils practise reading using books that match the sounds that they know. However, the phonics programme is not being taught consistently well. For example, pupils do not learn the sounds they need swiftly enough. Similarly, sometimes staff do not identify and address errors in pupils' reading, so these persist over time. Leaders are aware of historic gaps in learning for older pupils but not enough is being done to help these pupils to catch up. As a result, pupils do not read with sufficient fluency, accuracy or confidence. This limits their access to more complex texts and the wider curriculum.

The curriculum for mathematics is well designed and effectively sequenced. Pupils revisit key concepts, such as basic number skills. Teachers check pupils' understanding of important subject content and address any misconceptions they may have. This means that pupils can tackle increasingly complex ideas by drawing on what they have learned previously. The curriculum in mathematics has only been introduced very recently. Pupils are catching up but are not currently working at an age-appropriate stage of learning.

Leaders foster intellectual, physical and creative effort through a broad curricular offer. However, some subjects, such as art, are not well established. In these, leaders have not identified the most important knowledge that pupils should learn or when. Teachers, therefore, do not routinely focus on important concepts in different subjects. Teachers' assessments of what pupils know and remember are not yet fully informing next steps. While leaders are keen to develop their support for all pupils to catch up, they are not yet accurately pinpointing these interventions. In addition, due to leaders' prioritisation of curriculum improvements in English and mathematics, staff have not yet received planned training in subject or pedagogical knowledge to be able to implement the wider curriculum with precision'. As a result, pupils do not receive an appropriate standard of education in these subjects and are not well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Leaders have systems in place to identify pupils with SEND. External support is sought when required. For example, specialists such as therapists offer advice and guidance to support pupils' individual needs. However, teachers do not make effective use of this information to adapt tasks. This means that pupils with SEND sometimes struggle to access the curriculum.

The school has not ensured that the resources and space for the youngest children are appropriate. For example, children do not have sufficient access to outside space to support their learning. Staff provide activities based around the seven areas of learning set out in the early years foundation stage (EYFS) framework. However, insufficient thought has been given to the most important knowledge that children need to know and remember and how these small steps are sequenced. Children in early years are not sufficiently prepared for the next steps of their education.

Pupils are well behaved in lessons and at break and lunchtimes. They enjoy school and this is reflected in their very high attendance. They look forward to their visits to the park and the annual community outing.

All pupils now have access to relationship education through both the Kodesh and the PSHE curriculum. For example, pupils learn about healthy friendships. The lesson content of a fully comprehensive PSHE curriculum has not yet been detailed. This is because leaders are still in the process of identifying the whole school specific subject content that pupils need to learn. For example, plans are not in fully place to help all pupils to learn about different religions and ways of life.

The board of proprietors has taken action to address weaknesses in the school. The proprietor has invested in additional staffing and consultant support to help the school further. Staff feel that leaders are considerate of their workload and well-being. This demonstrates there is sufficient capacity to improve. The board of proprietors have been overgenerous in their evaluation of the impact of this work. Routines for oversight and monitoring have not been sufficiently rigorous or systemic. As a result, governors do not have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and priorities for improvement. This has limited the extent to which governors can hold leaders to account. Leaders have not ensured that all the independent school standards are met.

The school is compliant with schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010. The statutory safeguarding and welfare requirements of the EYFS framework are met. However, the requirements for learning and development set out in the EYFS framework are not met.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The school makes appropriate pre-employment checks. However, leaders have not maintained sufficient oversight of safer recruitment practices. For example, the school was not recording the statutory checks they had carried out and the dates these had been completed as required. Specifically, this concerned the recording of relevant qualifications and the requirement for a separate barred list check when not requesting a new Disclosure and Barring Service check for staff who join the school from other educational establishments. These administrative errors were corrected through the course of the inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and proprietor)

- The phonics programme is not implemented well. Pupils do not secure the sounds they need swiftly enough to develop as accurate, fluent and confident readers. The school must ensure that the programme is implemented effectively, and that staff are well trained to teach phonics with accuracy and precision.
- The curriculum beyond reading and mathematics, including PSHE and for children in the early years, is poorly designed and sequenced. As a result, pupils do not develop a deep body of knowledge and understanding in these areas. The school should identify the important concepts that pupils need to learn and remember. These should be sequenced, so that pupils revisit and embed their knowledge over time. The school should also ensure that staff are sufficiently trained and have appropriate subject knowledge to teach the curriculum and check pupils' understanding of important ideas.
- Tasks and activities are not well adapted to help pupils with SEND access the curriculum. As a result, they are not well prepared for the next stage of their education. The school must ensure that the advice and guidance provided by external agencies is used to support pupils with SEND to access the curriculum.
- Children in the early years do not have sufficient access to resources or time outdoors to support their learning and development. This limits their achievement. The school should provide appropriate resources to ensure that children can successfully access the curriculum.
- The administration and oversight of recruitment practices are not sufficiently rigorous. This is because there is a lack of clarity about which pre-employment checks have taken place and how they are recorded. The school must ensure that

appropriate systems are in place to check the pre-employment process. The school should also ensure that staff involved in this process and its oversight have had appropriate safer recruitment training.

- Those responsible for governance, including the board of proprietors, do not have sufficient oversight of the school's strengths, weaknesses and priorities for improvement. They have not ensured that the independent school standards are met. The school should ensure that leaders at all levels establish systems to check the work of the school and its impact on addressing the areas of weakness.

How can I feed back my views?

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The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

School details

Unique reference number	137809
DfE registration number	204/6004
Local authority	Hackney
Inspection number	10286432
Type of school	Other Independent School
School category	Independent School
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Boys
Number of pupils on the school roll	88
Number of part-time pupils	None
Proprietor	Viznitz Limited
Chair	Michael Rosenberg
Headteacher	Pesach Taub
Annual fees (day pupils)	None
Telephone number	020 8809 9513
Website	None
Email address	admin@viznitzcheder.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	12 to 14 October 2021

Information about this school

- Wiznitz Cheder is a strictly Orthodox Jewish primary day school for boys.
- The most recent standard inspection was in October 2021, when the school's overall effectiveness was judged to be inadequate. There have been two progress monitoring inspections since then, in May 2022 and December 2022.
- The Secretary of State for Education imposed a restriction on the school on 22 November 2021. The restriction is now in force. The restriction means that the proprietor must not admit any new pupils to the school from 12 September 2022 onwards.
- The school does not use any alternative providers.
- The chair of the board of proprietors resigned from his position as a trustee of the company in September 2022. He continues to act as the chair of the board of proprietors.
- Leaders and the proprietor have started work on building a new school. Leaders estimate that the building will be ready for September 2024.

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.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspection was carried out with one day's notice.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and other school leaders. They met with the acting chair of the proprietorial body and a trustee.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, geography, mathematics and personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of their work. In line with leaders' request, inspectors did not ask pupils about some of the protected characteristics.
- 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 reviewed the admissions log and scrutinised relevant documentation and policies to check compliance with the independent school standards and current restriction.

Inspection team

Sophie Healey-Welch, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Bob Hamlyn	Ofsted Inspector
Julie Wright	His Majesty's 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; and
- 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)(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;
 - 2(2)(i) effective preparation of pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British society.
- 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 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;

Part 4. Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

- 21(1) The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor keeps a register which shows such of the information referred to in sub-paragraphs (3) to (7) as is applicable to the school in question.
- 21(3) The information referred to in this sub-paragraph is-
 - 21(3)(a) in relation to each member of staff ("S") appointed on or after 1st May 2007, whether-
 - 21(3)(a)(ii) a check was made to establish whether S is barred from regulated activity relating to children in accordance with section 3(2) of the 2006 Act;
 - 21(3)(a)(iv) checks were made to ensure, where appropriate, that S had the relevant qualifications;

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;

The school failed to meet the following requirements of the statutory framework for the early years foundation stage.

1.12 - Practitioners should be ambitious for all children. To do this they must consider the individual needs, interests, and development of each child in their care. They must use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience for each child in all areas of learning and development. Practitioners working with the youngest children are expected to ensure a strong foundation for children's development in the three prime areas. The specific areas of learning provide children with a broad curriculum and with opportunities to strengthen and apply the prime areas of learning. This is particularly important in developing language and extending vocabulary.

1.15 - Providers must 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 key stage 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.

1.16 - This framework does not prescribe a particular teaching approach. Play is essential for children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, relate to others, set their own goals, and solve problems. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play and learning that is guided by adults. Practitioners need to decide what they want children in their setting to learn, and the most effective ways to teach it. Practitioners must stimulate children's interests, responding to each child's emerging needs and guiding their development through warm, positive interactions coupled with secure routines for play and learning.

1.17 As children grow older and move into the Reception Year, there should be a greater focus on teaching the essential skills and knowledge in the specific areas of learning. This will help children to prepare for key stage 1.

1.18 In planning and guiding what children learn, practitioners must reflect on the different rates at which children are developing and adjust their practice appropriately. Three characteristics of effective teaching and learning are: playing and exploring, active learning and creating and thinking critically - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

1.19 - All children deserve high-quality early education and care. This requires a quality workforce. A well-trained, skilled team of practitioners can help every child achieve the best possible educational outcomes. Children need to build an

attachment with their key person for their confidence and well-being. The key person also promotes children's learning by developing a deep understanding of their individual needs and children can particularly benefit from their modelling and support. The requirements in relation to workforce training and responsibilities, including that of the key person, are outlined in Section 3 but they are equally important for children's learning and development as they are for their safety and welfare.

2.5 - Ongoing assessment (also known as formative assessment) is an integral part of the learning and development process. It involves practitioners understanding children's interests and what they know and can do, and then shaping teaching and learning experiences for each child reflecting that knowledge. In their interactions with children, practitioners should make and act on their own day-to-day observations about children's progress and observations that parents and carers share. However, there is no requirement to keep written records in relation to this.

3.26 - What practitioners know, plan for, and do matters for children's learning, development, safety, and happiness in settings. Providers must support staff to undertake appropriate training and professional development opportunities to ensure they offer quality learning and development experiences for children that continually improves.

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