

Etz Chaim School at the Belmont

Independent school progress report

DCSF registration number	352/6053
Unique Reference Number (URN)	131015
Inspection number	346677
Inspection dates	2 March 2010
Reporting inspector	Chanan Tomlin

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Purpose and scope of the visit

This inspection visit was carried out by Ofsted under Section 162A of the Education Act 2002¹, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005².

The visit was conducted at the request of the Registration Authority for independent schools in order to monitor the progress the school has made in implementing its action plan following the previous inspection.

Information about the school

Etz Chaim Boys' School was established in 1993 in North Manchester as a strictly orthodox Jewish school. There are currently 91 pupils on roll, aged 11 to 15 years. The school accepts pupils of widely differing abilities, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities. Its mission is 'to provide religious, personal and academic education, in order to prepare pupils for a full religious life in accordance with the religious outlook of the community at large'. To achieve these aims: 'emphasis is mainly on cultivating enthusiasm and love for Jewish studies, practice and ethos, which prepares pupils adequately for their next institution, whilst concurrently providing a basic secular education to GCSE level, an understanding of the natural world and the world around them, and some skills which will be of economic use to them in their future.'

Context of the visit

The school was last inspected in June 2007. It produced an action plan after its first monitoring visit in March 2009. The action plan was evaluated in November 2009 and was found to be satisfactory in all areas except that there was concern over the timescale involved in making checks on members of staff from overseas and in remedying hazardous flooring. The purpose of this visit was to evaluate the progress of the school in implementing its action plan.

Summary of the progress made in implementing the action plan

At the time of the monitoring visit of March 2009, neither all members of staff nor the proprietor had undergone appropriate Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks, procedures for the recruitment of staff were inadequate and staff details were not all included in a central register. In addition to this, appropriate checks were not carried out to ascertain the suitability of staff from overseas to work in the school.

Currently, most members of staff and the proprietor have CRB disclosures and details of these are included in the central register. Three members of staff have started

¹ www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2002/ukpga_20020032_en_14#pt10-ch1-pb4-l1g162

² www.opsi.gov.uk/ACTS/acts2005/ukpga_20050018_en_15#sch8

working with pupils without their CRB disclosures being received. They are appropriately supervised, but have not had the full range of other checks required to make this arrangement permissible. Other procedures for the recruitment of staff are still inadequate because they are inconsistent and do not include all the features required by the regulations. The central register of staff checks still does not include details of checks of identity, medical fitness, employment histories, character references or the right to work in the United Kingdom, nor is this information kept anywhere else on file. The school has still not conducted appropriate checks to ascertain the suitability of teachers from overseas to work in the school.

The monitoring visit of March 2009 identified that the school did not have appropriate facilities for pupils that are ill and that the flooring on the ground floor and the stairs was in disrepair and dangerous. The school now has a room for pupils that are ill, furnished with a handbasin as required and a bed. The flooring has been repaired and does not now pose a danger.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

As a result of this inspection visit, the school must take action to meet the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2003³ as amended ('the Regulations'), as follows:

- carry out appropriate checks on staff to confirm their identity, medical fitness, previous employment history, character references and right to work in the United Kingdom (paragraph 4(2)(a))
- ensure that all other checks are in place prior to members of staff without CRB disclosures starting work in school (paragraph 4(2)(b))
- check the suitability of staff from overseas according to the guidance of the Secretary of State (paragraph 4(2)(c))
- ensure that the central register includes details of the full required range of checks on staff (paragraph 4C(2) and (3)).

³ www.opsi.gov.uk/si/si2003/20031910.htm

School details

Name of school	Etz Chaim School at the Belmont
DCSF number	352/6053
Unique reference number (URN)	131015
Type of school	Secondary boys' school
Status	Independent
Date school opened	July 1993
Age range of pupils	11-16 years
Gender of pupils	Boys
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	91
Number on roll (part-time pupils)	0
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational need	3
Annual fees (day pupils)	£ 5,800
Address of school	The Belmont 89 Middleton Road Manchester Lancashire M8 4JY
Telephone number	0161 740 0300
Fax number	0161 740 0301
Email address	manager@ec-school.org.uk
Headteacher	Rabbi E Cohen
Proprietor	Mr N M Halpern
Reporting inspector	Chanan Tomlin
Dates of inspection	2 March 2010