

Ohel Blima Rochel D'bobov School

Independent school standard inspection report

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Reporting inspector	Jill Bainton

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Purpose and scope of the inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005, 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.^{1, 2}

Information about the school

Ohel Blima Rochel D'bobov School was registered as an independent Jewish day school for girls aged from three to 10 years of age in 2008. The school is situated in a large house on the corners of Portland Avenue and Clapton Common in Hackney. It serves the ultra orthodox Jewish Bobov community, and the main language spoken is Yiddish. There are currently 83 girls on roll. There are 36 girls aged from three to five years in the Early Years Foundation Stage; all receive government funding and attend full time. No girls have a statement of special educational needs. The Nursery class speak only in the language of Yiddish, the first spoken language of these children. The afternoon lessons for the girls in the Reception and older classes are conducted in English. This is the first whole-school inspection report to be published. Central to the aims and ethos of the school is the development of a knowledge and understanding of the Jewish spiritual heritage.

Evaluation of the school

Ohel Blima Rochel D'bobov School provides a satisfactory quality of education. The school succeeds in its aims and in giving the girls an education that reflects its ethos. Through using a well-planned curriculum for both *Kodesh* (religious studies) and *Chol* (secular subjects) and satisfactory teaching, the girls make satisfactory progress. The girls' behaviour is outstanding. The procedures for safeguarding are good. The overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage is satisfactory. The school complies with all but two of the regulations.

Quality of education

The curriculum is good. In all classes, *Kodesh* takes place in the morning and secular studies in the afternoon. All morning lessons take place through the medium of Yiddish and afternoon lessons are conducted in English. Girls are taught to speak and write in English during this time and their spoken English is of a very good standard. Staff support younger children's learning through a range of appropriate activities planned using the Early Years Foundation Stage guidance. There are schemes of work for all secular subjects. Timetables show that numeracy, literacy, science,

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

physical education, history and geography are covered. The school is making good use of commercial schemes of work which they adapt to suit their specific needs. Art, music and design and technology are included in the good quality *Kodesh* curriculum. The school has recently produced long- and medium-term plans in all *Kodesh* subjects taught. The *Chumash* (the first five books of the Bible) curriculum is levelled and the school aims to level work in other subjects too. Personal, social and health education (PSHE) is embedded in both the secular and *Kodesh* curriculum. A number of visits outside the school and visitors to the school enhance the curriculum and the school makes good use of the local park for nature studies.

Teaching and assessment are satisfactory in both the *Kodesh* and the secular lessons, are and satisfactory in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Teachers plan for each lesson with lesson plans structured to ensure that all girls do not do the same work regardless of age or ability. In some lessons girls are given good opportunities to think and learn for themselves and effective use is made of paired and group work. In the less effective lessons the teachers' expectations are not high enough, the pace is too slow and the work is not sufficiently challenging, especially for the more able. The girls who need additional help are well supported in lessons. All the girls are highly valued as individuals and very well known by staff which helps better inform their teaching. Teachers carry out informal observations of the girls' learning during lessons and mark their work regularly in *Chol* lessons. The school is beginning to use National Curriculum level descriptors in English and mathematics to record and track pupils' progress and has begun to set targets for improvement. The school uses optional national tests to track the girls' progress and tests at Key Stage 1 in which the girls achieve success. Teachers make the most of the limited resources, but there are a limited number of fiction books.

In *Kodesh* lessons the girls are happy and on task throughout, with most lessons being conducted at a good pace. However, the teachers' expectations are not high enough nor are lessons sufficiently challenging. The girls make satisfactory progress overall, as seen in the lessons, their written work and their test results. They confirm through discussion that they enjoy their lessons and that the teachers help them with their work.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the girls is good. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make satisfactory progress in their personal development. PSHE is a regular part of the curriculum, and around classrooms and corridors there are many thoughtful phrases and quotations to promote reflection on the Jewish faith. The school successfully develops pupils' knowledge and understanding of the Jewish spiritual heritage. This is achieved each day with *Davening* (prayers), which is taken seriously by all girls, in addition to the spiritual guidance provided through the *Kodesh* curriculum which is made relevant to the girls' everyday lives. There are excellent relationships between staff and girls, and the individual attention given to the girls within the small classes helps them to

develop their confidence and self-esteem. The religious ethos of the school promotes the highest standards of behaviour and respect for others. The outstanding standards of behaviour throughout the school are the outcome of clear policies and the teachers' high expectations, which help to develop the girls' moral beliefs and attitudes. The school has a strong commitment to promoting good relationships and there are frequent opportunities for the girls to develop their social skills. Their attendance is high and girls talk about how much they enjoy school. A project on the Houses of Parliament and Big Ben helps to introduce them to English institutions. They learn about the National Health Service and about people who help them, which gives them an insight into English services. The school is very involved in its own community. It is appropriately aware of and tolerant towards people of other cultures and faiths and encounters many other nationalities through living in multicultural Hackney. The school holds fund raising events to support Jewish charities.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The welfare, health and safety of the girls are satisfactory. The school safeguards and promotes the welfare of all the girls including those in the Early Years Foundation Stage. All the necessary policies are in place, including anti-bullying, health and safety on visits outside school and behaviour policies. Practices minimise the health and safety risks to the girls. Risk assessments are carried out on visits outside school and on activities within the premises. The policy for safeguarding meets the latest guidance. A named person for child protection has been trained to the required level, as have the rest of the staff. There has been a satisfactory fire service report during the last two years and the school has complied with the recommendations made. The school holds termly fire drills, which are documented, and all fire appliances are checked annually. The first-aid policy meets the guidelines and several staff are trained first aiders. The girls are encouraged to eat healthily and are given fruit at break time. The school also has the benefit of links with *Hazolah* (Jewish emergency services). Pupils are very well supervised. Procedures for keeping the registers are all in order. The school fulfils its duties under the Disability Discrimination Act and has devised a three-year accessibility plan.

Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors

The school has carried out all the required checks to confirm the suitability of all staff to work with children and the information is held, as required, on a single central register of staff appointments.

Premises of and accommodation at the school

The premises and accommodation are satisfactory overall. A large corner house has been suitably converted and provides adequate classroom accommodation for the current number of girls. The school has now reached its maximum capacity. The proprietor is very aware that the premises require some refurbishment and is actively

looking for new premises. There is an adequate-sized hard play area outside with appropriate outdoor toys. There are some inadequate security arrangements.

Provision of information

The school provides parents, carers and others with a suitable range of information through the prospectus, the parents' handbook and a notice board. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school, making comments in the pre-inspection questionnaire such as, 'extremely satisfied...the school has done so much for my daughter as an individual...better than I could have imagined.' Parents are kept well informed through regular evening meetings and written reports. The senior staff make themselves available to speak to staff at mutually convenient times. The school provides parents with two written reports which, although satisfactory, contain a limited amount of detail about what each girl has learnt, the progress made and how she can be helped to improve.

Manner in which complaints are to be handled

There is a complaints procedure, which meet the regulations.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

The overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage is satisfactory. A planned range of learning opportunities helps to meet the children's needs and keeps them actively engaged in a variety of play activities. Effective links with parents help to keep them involved in their children's care and education, and they are kept well informed about their progress. The welfare of the children is a high priority with staff who promote a caring, nurturing environment. All children are happy, feel safe and secure and their behaviour is outstanding. The children have good relationships with each other and with the adults in the setting.

The outcomes for children are satisfactory. Children make satisfactory progress towards the early learning goals in all areas of learning, in relation to their starting points and capabilities. The class routines are clear; children are happy to share and work with each other and to share new experiences. They learn new skills through all six areas of learning, although they have a more limited experience of technology. Children are taught to count both in Yiddish and English and say their *Aleph Bet* (Hebrew alphabet) letters as well as the English alphabet. They are happy to talk about their experiences and inquisitive enough to ask many questions during circle time. *Davening* are said beautifully by the children. Children are aware of differences in people and are taught tolerance and respect to all.

The provision for children is satisfactory. Planning is satisfactory with staff starting to use the information from observations to plan suitable activities, but this is at an early stage. Adults make regular observations of children's progress. The leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are satisfactory. The adults in the setting are in the early stages of understanding the requirements of the Early

Years Foundation Stage. Secure arrangements are in place to safeguard children and most staff are suitably qualified or are currently undergoing training. The learning environment is satisfactory with adequate indoor resources and a good range of equipment outdoors.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The proprietor has ensured that the school meets The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, schedule 1 (‘the Regulations’), with the exception of those listed below.³

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of the premises of and accommodation at schools (standards in part 5) and must:

- ensure there are adequate security arrangements in place for the grounds and the building (paragraph 23(d))
- ensure there are appropriate arrangements for providing outside space for pupils to play safely (paragraph 23(s)).

What the school could do to improve further

While not required by regulations, the school might wish to consider the following points for development.

- Include more detail in the reports to parents about what each girl has learnt, what progress they have made and what they need to do next to improve.
- Raise staff expectations of what the girls can achieve in lessons.
- Make the process of monitoring and recording the children’s progress towards the early learning goals more formal in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Continue to develop the teachers’ understanding of the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

³ www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2010/1997/contents/made

Inspection judgements

outstanding	good	satisfactory	inadequate
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The quality of education

Overall quality of education			✓	
How well the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of pupils		✓		
How effective teaching and assessment are in meeting the full range of pupils' needs			✓	
How well pupils make progress in their learning			✓	

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Quality of provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development		✓		
The behaviour of pupils	✓			

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The overall welfare, health and safety of pupils			✓	
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The quality of the Early Years Foundation Stage provision

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage			✓	
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage			✓	
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage			✓	
Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage			✓	

School details

School status	Independent day
Type of school	Jewish girls nursery and primary school
Date school opened	2008
Age range of pupils	3–10
Gender of pupils	Girls
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 0 Girls: 83 Total: 83
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs	Boys: 0 Girls: 0 Total: 0
Annual fees (day pupils)	No fees charged for older girls
Address of school	99 Clapton Common, London E5 9AB
Telephone number	0208 2111945
Email address	office@bzdebobov.org.uk
Headteacher	Mrs Sarah Horowitz
Proprietor	Mr M Rothfeld