

Vishnitz Girls School

13 October 2016

49 Amhurst Park, London N16 5DL

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

Paragraph 2, 2(1)(a), 2(2), 2(2)(d), 2(2)(d)(ii), 5(b), 5(b)(vi)

- The school's policy is to exclude from the school's curriculum reference to certain of the protected characteristics as set out in the Equality Act 2010 (the protected characteristics).
- The proprietor and leaders strongly believe that this policy is in accordance with the precepts of their faith. Therefore, the school does not encourage pupils to have respect for other people because it does not pay particular regard to the protected characteristics.
- Standards relating to the protected characteristics are not met. The proprietor and leaders agree that the school's policy on the protected characteristics means that the school cannot meet these standards.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraph 7, 7(a), 7(b)

- At the time of the last inspection, the school's child protection policy had not been reviewed since 2010. It did not have regard to the latest statutory guidance from the Department for Education, 'Keeping children safe in education'. Staff were not appropriately trained in safeguarding matters.
- The school's action plan included actions to ensure that staff read Part 1 of 'Keeping children safe in education', to update the safeguarding policy and to undertake safeguarding checks of staff.
- Some progress has been made since the last inspection. The school's child protection policy is now up to date and refers to the latest statutory guidance. Pupils know whom to talk to if they feel unsafe, and feel able to do so.
- However, standards relating to safeguarding arrangements continue to be unmet. The new child protection policy is not implemented effectively. Required safeguarding checks on staff are incomplete. The single central record does not show that all required checks have been made. Planned staff training has not taken place. Leaders demonstrate a lack of understanding of the latest statutory guidance. The proprietor and senior leaders do not monitor the implementation of policies relating to safety robustly enough.
- The school does not publish its safeguarding policy on a website because it does not have a website. Leaders report that they write to parents informing them that policies are available on request. However, leaders did not provide a copy of this letter for inspection. School policies relating to the safety of pupils are not easily accessible because they are kept in a locked office.

Paragraph 11, 16, 16(a), 16(b)

- At the time of the last inspection, the school's health and safety policy and risk assessment policy were not implemented effectively. The early years setting was in a poor state of repair and untidy. Staff had not received appropriate training to help them respond to safeguarding concerns or assess risks appropriately.
- The school's action plan proposed to update and implement the school's health and safety policy. The plan proposed to create a risk assessment policy and ensure that security staff conduct regular risk assessments.
- The school's health and safety policy and risk assessment policies are now up to date and include risk assessments for educational trips.
- However, standards relating to health and safety and risk assessment continue to be unmet because neither of these policies is implemented effectively. While security staff undertake daily risk assessments, leaders do not ensure that identified risks are followed up with sufficient urgency. Risk assessments do not reflect the range of risks identified by the school's health and safety policy. Hazardous chemicals and cleaning solutions are left within easy reach of pupils in communal areas and unlocked cupboards.

Paragraph 14

- At the time of the last inspection, systems for supervising pupils were insufficiently robust.
- The school's action plan proposed to provide supervision of pupils arriving and leaving school, and at breaktimes. The plan included action to prevent unwanted visitors through the use of security officers.
- This standard is now met. Pupils are properly supervised at breaktimes and lunchtimes and a staff duty rota is in place. Security officers are on duty throughout the day.

Paragraph 15

- At the time of the last inspection, attendance registers were not correctly completed because staff failed to use the recommended register codes.
- The school's action plan proposed to ensure that registers are completed and checked daily.
- This standard is now met. Attendance registers are correctly completed and checked regularly. Staff now use the appropriate codes.

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

Paragraph 18(1), 18(2), 18(2)(b), 21(1), 21(3)(b)

- At the time of the last inspection, required checks were not made to secure the safety of pupils. School leaders were not aware of the need to undertake prohibition checks of staff.
- The school's action plan proposed to ensure that all staff complete a disqualification disclosure declaration and to update policies relating to the single central record.
- Some progress has been made. Staff are now required to complete a disqualification disclosure declaration and are provided with the latest statutory guidance.
- Standards relating to prohibition checks and the keeping of a single central record continue to be unmet. Senior leaders still do not ensure that all the required checks on staff are made and recorded on the single central record. The headteacher and senior leaders are unsure of which checks are required. The proprietor does not check leaders' work to secure the safety of pupils robustly enough.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Paragraph 24, 24(1)(a), 24(1)(b)

- At the time of the last inspection, the school did not have a suitable medical room to accommodate sick or injured pupils. Furthermore, accommodation for medical examination in the early years setting did not allow for privacy.
- The school's action plan proposed to designate a room on the ground floor as a sick room.
- Some progress has been made. The medical room at the newly acquired early years setting now meets requirements. However, it is cluttered with storage items.
- The standard relating to the provision of a medical room at the Amhurst Park site remains unmet. The designated room is an office which is in daily use and is unsuitable to meet the medical needs of pupils. It does not include a washing facility or allow for privacy. The only provision made to meet the medical needs of pupils is a sleeping bag which can be rolled out on the bare floor, and a first aid kit.

Paragraph 25

- At the time of the last inspection, the general level of maintenance at the early years site was poor. Paint was peeling from the walls and the flooring was uneven.
- The school's action plan proposed to report risks, conduct risk assessments and implement a new risk assessment policy.
- Some progress has been made towards meeting this standard. The school has recently acquired the two school sites currently in use. The general level of maintenance has improved. The sites inspected at previous inspections have now closed.
- However, standards relating to the maintenance of premises continue to be unmet. The newly refurbished site at Amhurst Park is not maintained to a standard which ensures the health, safety and welfare of students. Hazardous chemicals are not locked away and are within easy reach of pupils. This is not included as a risk on the school's risk assessments and therefore is not identified or reported on them. Additionally, leaders do not take action to remedy identified risks from the regular risk assessments in a timely manner.

Paragraph 28, 28(1), 28(2), 28(2)(b)

- The previous inspection did not report on the provision of drinking water facilities at the new premises at Amhurst Park because the site had not yet opened. Facilities at the Amhurst Park site do not meet standards relating to the provision of suitable drinking water facilities.
- Labelled drinking water facilities are not separate from the toilet area. The drinking water facilities in the playground that are separate from the toilet area are not labelled.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

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

- At the time of the last inspection, the proprietor failed to make sure that all the independent school standards were met. The proprietor failed to ensure that the safeguarding and welfare of pupils were promoted.
- The school's action plan proposed to provide new job descriptions to reflect the independent school standards, use professional help to guide the running of the school, and ensure that relevant staff read and understand the independent school standards.

- Standards relating to leadership and management continue to be unmet because a number of the independent school standards remain unmet. Therefore, the school has not implemented its action plan effectively.

Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- The school has an accessibility plan in place and therefore meets the requirements of Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

Statutory requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage

- At the time of the last inspection, statutory requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage relating to managing potential disqualification of staff were not met (3.14–3.18).
- The school's action plan did not consider the unmet statutory requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Some progress has been made. The school now requires staff to complete a disqualification disclosure declaration. The inspection was unable to check whether requirements relating to managing potential disqualification are met by staff at the early years setting.

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. 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 does not meet the following independent school standards

Standards that were not met at the previous inspection and remain unmet at this inspection

- Ensure that the proprietor makes arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school; and such arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State (paragraph 7, 7(a) and 7(b)).
- Ensure that relevant health and safety laws are complied with by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written health and safety policy (paragraph 11).
- Ensure that the welfare of pupils at the school is safeguarded and promoted by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written risk assessment policy; and appropriate action is taken to reduce risks that are identified (paragraph 16, 16(a) and 16(b)).
- Ensure that no such person carries out work, or intends to carry out work, at the school in contravention of a prohibition order, an interim prohibition order, or any direction made under section 128 of the 2008 Act or section 142 of the 2002 Act. Alternatively, any disqualification, prohibition or restriction which takes effect as if contained in either such direction (paragraph 18(1), 18(2) and 18(2)(b)).
- Ensure that the proprietor keeps a single central register, which shows that the school has undertaken the relevant recruitment and identity checks, including those of any disqualification, prohibition or restriction (paragraph 21(1) and 21(3)(b)).
- Ensure that suitable accommodation is provided in order to cater for the medical and therapy needs of pupils, including accommodation for the medical examination and treatment of pupils, and the short-term care of sick and injured pupils, which includes a washing facility and is near to a toilet facility (paragraph 24, 24(1)(a) and 24(1)(b)).
- Ensure that the school premises and the accommodation and facilities provided therein are maintained to a standard such that, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of pupils are ensured (paragraph 25).
- Ensure that those with leadership and management responsibility demonstrate the skills and knowledge appropriate to their role, and fulfil their responsibilities effectively, so that the independent school standards are met consistently; and that they actively promote the well-being of pupils (paragraph 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b) and 34(1)(c)).

Standards that were met at the previous inspection, but are now judged to not be met at this inspection

- Ensure that personal, social, health and economic education encourages respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010 (paragraph 2, 2(1)(a), 2(2), 2(2)(d), 2(2)(d)(ii)).

- Ensure that the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils actively promotes principles which encourage respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010 (paragraphs 5(b), 5(b)(vi)).
- Ensure that suitable drinking water facilities are provided, are clearly labelled and are in a separate area from the toilet facilities (paragraph 28, 28(1), 28(2), 28(2)(b)).

The school now meets the following independent school standards

- Ensure that pupils are properly supervised through the appropriate deployment of school staff (paragraph 14).
- Ensure that an admission and attendance register is maintained in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (paragraph 15).

School details

Unique reference number	138516
DfE registration number	214/6006
Inspection number	10023026

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	Orthodox Jewish day school
School status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	3–10
Gender of pupils	Girls
Number of pupils on the school roll	184
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Mr Steiner
Chair	Rabbi Schneebalg
Headteacher	Mrs Weiss, Mrs Fogel, Mrs Grohman
Annual fees (day pupils)	£5,200
Telephone number	020 8800 0490
Email address	head@vishnitzgirlsschool.co.uk
Date of previous standard inspection	July 2013

Information about this school

- Since the last inspection, the school has moved into two newly acquired sites: 49 Amhurst Park, London N16 5DL and 85 Lordship Road, London N16 0QY.
- Since the last inspection, the school's former sites at 196 Lordship Road, London N16 5ES and 85 Fairholt Road, London N16 5EP have closed.
- The school's previous standard inspection took place in July 2013. Since then, one progress monitoring inspection took place on 23 February 2016.
- The school operates early years provision at 85 Lordship Road, London N16 0QY.
- The school's religious character is Orthodox Jewish.
- The number of pupils admitted by the school exceeds its registered capacity.

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.
- The inspection was carried out with no notice.
- During the inspection, records and policies relating to safeguarding, risk assessment, admissions and attendance were scrutinised.
- The inspector held meetings with the proprietor, senior leaders, administrative staff and a representative from the school's religious community. The inspector spoke to pupils without a member of staff present.
- The inspector conducted a tour of both sites used by the school and visited the school's two former sites which have now closed.

Inspection team

Vanessa Ward, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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