

Yesodey Hatorah School

2–4 Amhurst Park, Hackney, London N16 5AE

Inspection dates

16–18 May 2017

Overall effectiveness	Inadequate
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Inadequate
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Inadequate
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Inadequate
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- Systems to manage safeguarding are not robust. Inspectors identified situations where the welfare and safety of pupils are placed at risk.
- Leaders, managers and governors do not demonstrate a good understanding of the independent school standards. Systems for leaders and governors to monitor, evaluate and review the work of the school are weak.
- Leaders across the school do not communicate with each other regularly. This has a negative impact on school improvement and has prevented the sharing of good practice.
- The school's buildings are maintained poorly, which compromises pupils' welfare. There is no hot water for pupils and no showering facilities.
- There are no systems in place to manage the performance of senior members of staff. This means that there has been little accountability at this level.
- Aspects of the school's promotion of fundamental British values are weak, particularly in relation to tolerance of people who have protected characteristics under the Equality Act (2010). Careers education is poor.
- There is no up-to-date accessibility plan.
- Pupils, including children in the early years provision, have not been kept safe at all times. Hence the early years provision is inadequate. There are too many inconsistencies between the boys' and the girls' provision in the early years. Access to the outdoor space is limited.

The school has the following strengths

- Teaching in the school is effective in helping pupils to make good progress, although the most able pupils could be challenged more.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and behave well. They attend regularly. Parents hold the school in very high regard.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school must take action to meet the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 (the 'independent school standards') and associated requirements. The details are listed in the full report.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Urgently ensure that robust systems are put in place to manage safeguarding procedures by:
 - conducting all necessary checks on the suitability of staff and recording these correctly on the school's single central register
 - nominating a designated senior person to oversee the rigour of these procedures across the school.
- Strengthen leadership and governance by:
 - establishing systems to manage the performance of senior and middle leaders to ensure greater accountability
 - providing more opportunities for the school's senior and middle leaders to work collaboratively so that good practice can be routinely shared, including in the early years provision
 - adopting a more evaluative approach towards measuring the school's effectiveness through regular monitoring and review activities
 - regularly checking the school's compliance with the independent school standards
 - ensuring that governors are provided with essential information about the school's performance so that they can deliver an appropriate degree of challenge and support
 - actively promoting a greater understanding of different faiths and beliefs, as well as pupils' understanding of people who have protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Equality Act
 - providing a high-quality careers education programme
 - producing an up-to-date accessibility plan.
- Improve teaching and pupils' outcomes by ensuring that the most able pupils are consistently stretched and challenged.
- Promote pupils' welfare more effectively by:
 - providing a permanent solution to the shared toilet and washroom facilities which are in place for teachers and pupils in the secondary boys' provision
 - ensuring that the classrooms provide a safe environment by carrying out a review of the accommodation and producing a schedule of repairs, including the windows and the roofing on the upper floor of the girls' provision and the classroom floors
 - providing pupils with hot water facilities in the washrooms and ensuring that the secondary-aged boys have showering facilities
 - consistently implementing the school's health and safety policy.
- Improve the early years provision by:
 - ensuring that safeguarding arrangements are robust
 - ensuring greater consistency in the provision offered to boys and girls, including the

quality of the resources

- improving the quality of the outdoor space and making sure that children are given more regular access to this area.

■ The school must meet the following independent school standards.

- 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 does not undermine the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs (paragraphs 2(1) and 2(1)(b)(ii)).
- The proprietor ensures that personal, social, health and economic education encourages respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Act 1 (paragraphs 2(2)(d) and 2(2)(d)(ii)).
- The proprietor ensures that pupils receiving secondary education access up-to-date careers guidance that is presented in an impartial manner and enables them to make informed choices about a broad range of career options and ensures effective preparation of pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British society (paragraphs 2(2)(e), 2(2)(e)(i), 2(2)(e)(ii) and 2(2)(i)).
- The proprietor 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, encourages further tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions by enabling pupils to acquire an appreciation and respect of and respect for their own and other cultures, and encourages respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Act (paragraphs 5, 5(a), 5(b)(v) and 5(b)(vi)).
- The proprietor ensures that arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school and that such arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State (paragraphs 7(a) and 7(b)).
- The proprietor ensures 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).
- The proprietor ensures that suitable toilet and washing facilities are provided for the sole use of pupils; and suitable changing accommodation and showers are provided for pupils aged 11 years and over at the start of the school years who receive physical education (paragraphs 23, 23(1)(a) and 23(1)(c)).
- The proprietor ensures 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).
- The proprietor ensures that toilets and urinals have an adequate supply of cold water and washing facilities have an adequate supply of hot and cold water (paragraphs 28(1) and 28(1)(b)).
- The proprietor ensures that persons with leadership and management responsibilities

at the school demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school standards are met consistently; fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently; and actively promote the well-being of pupils (paragraphs 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b) and 34(1)(c)).

- The proprietor ensures that arrangements are made to meet the requirements of paragraph 3 of schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.
- The proprietor ensures that the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the early years foundation stage are met.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Inadequate

- Leaders have not ensured that safeguarding procedures have been sufficiently robust to keep pupils safe at all times. Leaders had not carried out all of the necessary vetting checks of staff, although this was rectified before inspectors left the school. Of greater concern was the arrangement for male staff and boys to use a shared toilet and washroom facility within the boys' provision, which potentially placed pupils at risk.
- The school's senior leaders work too much in isolation and do not routinely communicate with one another. This means that planning for whole-school improvement is flawed and the sharing of effective practice is hindered. Indicative of this was the variable quality of documentation provided to inspectors by the leader of the girls' provision and the two leaders of the junior and senior boys' provision.
- Inspectors considered the school's self-evaluation documentation. Inspection evidence gathered does not support senior leaders' views of the school's overall effectiveness, which are overgenerous in places.
- Senior leaders across the school have not ensured that all of the independent school standards have been met. Although inspectors were confidently informed by leaders that the school complied with all of the standards, further scrutiny and inspection activity showed that a number of the standards were unmet. There are no systems in place to check compliance.
- The performance of middle and senior leaders is not managed well. Because there are no formal systems in place, this had led to a lack of accountability at senior and middle leadership level. Governors are unable to hold senior leaders to account or measure the effectiveness of their work.
- Some aspects of the school's promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are weak. Pupils do not demonstrate a wide understanding of different faiths, beyond their own. Senior leaders preclude the teaching of certain protected characteristics of people defined in the Equality Act 2010. The school is of the view that this would be considered unacceptable by the Charedi community that the school serves. This prevents pupils from having sufficient experiences that help them prepare for their future lives in British society.
- Careers education is limited. There is no established programme, beyond having representatives from a few professions speaking to the senior boys. This does not allow the pupils to make well-informed choices about all available career pathways.
- There is no up-to-date accessibility plan in place to ensure that all groups of pupils have equal access to the curriculum.
- Inspectors reviewed the impact of leadership and management and how well leaders promoted pupils' personal development and welfare. This was in relation to a request from the Department for Education who had received a complaint about the school. Inspectors found both aspects to be weak.
- Despite a lack of any coordinated approach to strategic improvement across the three provisions within the school, the leaders' vision is known and shared. Parents expressed

positive views in their responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, about how well they feel the school meets their expectations.

- Discussions with the school's many middle leaders indicate that there is the potential for them to make a positive contribution towards school improvement.
- Teaching is managed well in the school. Leaders have established a system to set teachers targets, assess the impact of their teaching and provide suitable training. Inspectors who observed pupils' learning and progress jointly with senior leaders agreed with their evaluations of the quality of teaching over time.
- The curriculum time allocated to the Kodesh (Jewish studies) and the Chol (secular studies) is balanced for both the boys and the girls. There have been some positive developments in the curriculum offered to senior boys. Art is now an established subject and is popular. Pupils have access to a range of extra-curricular clubs and activities.
- Despite some weaknesses in the school's promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, there are also many strengths. In both their Kodesh and their Chol lessons, pupils are encouraged to work well together and they learn right from wrong. Teachers typically link what pupils are learning to the values of their own faith.
- The school liaises well with parents through regular newsletters which keep them up to date with recent and upcoming events. Reports to parents on their children's progress are regular and informative.
- The school does not have a website. The school provides a suitable safeguarding policy to parents on request.

Governance

- Governors have not ensured that systems to safeguard pupils in the school are robust, or that the well-being of the pupils is actively promoted.
- It is clear that governors wish the school to be successful and, between them, they have a range of useful skills. However, they have not held the school's leaders sufficiently to account and have not asked appropriate questions to evaluate the school's effectiveness. This is evidenced through the inspectors' scrutiny of governing body meeting minutes. They rely too much on what they are being told, rather than ask probing and challenging questions which require answers to be explained in sufficient detail.
- Governors acknowledge that further training is required in order to make them fully effective in their roles.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.
- The school's leaders have not managed safeguarding robustly. Staff have been allowed to start working at the school who have not been subjected to the necessary vetting checks. Furthermore, the school's single central register of recruitment checks on staff has not been consistently well maintained.
- Administrative flaws in the management of safeguarding and the recording of checks on the single central register were put right at the request of the lead inspector, and before

the inspection team left the school site.

- Staff have received, read and understand the government's latest guidance, 'Keeping children safe in education' (2016).
- Staff have also been provided with up-to-date training on the government's 'Prevent' duty, which aims to prevent young people from being drawn into terrorist activity or becoming the victims of radicalisation. Staff understand their responsibilities and how to make a referral when concerns arise.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Pupils experience effective teaching which meets their needs well. Teachers have positive relationships with pupils and high expectations, which encourages them to learn well and make good progress.
- Teachers make clear at the start of each lesson what they expect pupils to have achieved by the end. This ensures that they see the relevance of what they are learning and what they need to do to achieve their goals.
- Teachers make effective use of their good subject knowledge, both in the Kodesh curriculum as well as in the afternoon Chol lessons.
- Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make good use of their phonics skills, particularly when reading aloud. They are able to blend and segment words well.
- Teachers make good use of questioning to test that pupils have understood what they are learning. This aspect is particularly strong in the senior boys' provision.
- In Year 4 mathematics, pupils were observed converting decimals into fractions. All pupils were able to demonstrate their understanding of the concept and apply their reasoning skills well. The teacher's skilful questioning tested pupils' understanding of the concept. This enabled the teacher to provide further bespoke tasks which presented an appropriate degree of challenge.
- Teachers assess pupils' progress, although how this is done varies depending on which provision they are in. Boys in the senior provision are tested every two weeks, which allows teachers to measure the rate of their progress from their different starting points. Boys and girls in the junior provision have a common system in place to assess progress in mathematics. These systems inform teachers' planning to ensure good progress.
- Girls in the primary provision have particularly neat handwriting. Some of the boys' presentation is untidy.
- Teaching assistants work well with pupils in group situations or when offering one-to-one support. However, when the teacher is teaching the whole class and they are present in the classroom, they sometimes add little to the whole-class learning.
- The quality of teachers' written feedback varies. When teachers implement the school's assessment policy well, pupils are clear about what they have got wrong and what they need to do to put it right.
- Occasionally, teaching does not consistently meet the needs of the most able pupils. This means that they are not always presented with an appropriate degree of stretch and challenge, which slows down their progress.

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is inadequate.
- The school's leaders have not ensured that all staff employed at the school have routinely undergone the necessary vetting checks, which compromises pupils' welfare. Boys in the secondary school have been placed at risk due to the unacceptable arrangements to share both toilet and washroom facilities with male members of staff.
- The school building is in a poor state of repair. The flooring in some of the rooms is hazardous, walls in classrooms have peeling paint. Inspectors found one room flooded in the girls' provision, following inclement weather, due to poorly maintained roofing. Windows on the upper floor of the girls' provision were found to be fully opened, with the window inhibitors disarmed. Routine maintenance is not carried out regularly to ensure that the fabric of the buildings is maintained to a satisfactory level.
- The toilets do not have hot water and there are no showers for the secondary-aged boys to use after physical education lessons. The boys' toilets in the secondary school are unsanitary.
- Pupils eat healthily at breaktimes and during lunch. Inspectors observed pupils eating fresh fruit and vegetables. They are supervised well when outdoors to ensure that they are kept safe and that accidents are minimal.
- The school site is secure. The gates are locked during the school day and the presence of security guards at both entrances ensures that only authorised persons may enter the school grounds. Pupils say that they feel safe when in school.
- Some pupils are presented with roles and responsibilities. These include collecting the registers and handing out books. The pupil voice is underdeveloped in the secondary provision.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are friendly and well mannered. During their breaktimes, they socialise well with one another. Girls routinely play traditional outdoor games, including hopscotch and skipping. Boys behave sensibly and make effective use of their time outside of lessons.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons is typically good as a result of teaching which engages their interest. Inspectors observed very little, if any, low-level disruptive behaviour.
- Bullying is a rare occurrence and pupils can describe in their own words what they understand by the term. Parents who met with inspectors reported that any issues relating to bullying were quickly resolved by the school.
- Pupils attend school regularly. Attendance is in line with the national average for primary- and secondary-aged pupils. Exclusions are a rare occurrence.
- Some pupils' work is untidily presented. This is particularly the case for secondary-aged boys.

- There was evidence of litter in the playgrounds, particularly in the space used by the primary- and secondary-aged boys.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils make good progress over time from their different starting points. This is closely linked to teachers' high expectations of what pupils are able to achieve.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress. This includes pupils who have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan. Teachers' planning is well considered in order to meet the needs of this group of pupils, and any additional funding to meet their needs is deployed effectively.
- Inspectors observed senior pupils, some of whom have special educational needs and/or disabilities, making effective use of computer programs in the 'individual tuition unit' to develop their literacy skills or to reinforce topics they had covered in mainstream lessons. These pupils were engaged in their learning and making good progress.
- Pupils across the school make good progress in both their Kodesh and secular studies. In the morning Kodesh studies, inspectors observed pupils being taught through the medium of Yiddish combined with English. The afternoon sessions, which are taught in English, are used to encourage pupils to develop their writing skills.
- Pupils learn modern Hebrew from a very early age and make strong progress as they move up the school. They move from learning individual letters to forming words and sentences, and eventually produce extended pieces of writing. This proficient language acquisition is closely linked to the work they do in their morning Kodesh studies.
- Pupils in the primary provision make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics as they move up the school.
- Pupils in the secondary provision make good progress over time. This is crucial, as they sit their GCSE examinations at the end of Year 10 before they leave the school. There is an upward trend in the standards they achieve year on year.
- The school has rightly identified the promotion of literacy and reading as an ongoing priority, as many of the pupils do not speak English as a first language when at home. Middle leaders identified the transition from key stage 1 to key stage 2 as an important area of focus. This is because it is where bridging the gap through the effective acquisition of literacy skills is a necessity to ensure that pupils' progress is sustained.
- Occasionally, the most able pupils could make even better progress. This is because some teaching does not consistently meet their needs to ensure rapid and sustained progress over time.

Early years provision

Inadequate

- The early years provision is judged as inadequate overall because of the flaws relating to the school's leadership and management of safeguarding procedures.
- Boys and girls who enter the Reception Year are taught separately. Boys enter Reception Year with skills and abilities that are above average for children of their age, and girls with skills that are typical for their age.
- The quality of leadership is stronger in the girls' provision. However, the leaders of both settings do not share good practice regularly and often. The leader of the girls' provision did not know where the boys' setting was located in the school. The current leadership structure does not enable an overview of the early years provision across the school. Evidence to support the school's evaluation of the effectiveness of the early years provision was more readily available in the girls' provision, whereas leaders relied more on anecdotal evidence for the boys.
- Children make good progress during their time in the early years in communication and language and in numeracy. The proportion who reach a good level of development by the end of the Reception Year is average. This stage of their education places them in a good position when they enter Year 1.
- Children's physical development and their understanding of the wider world, although provided for, are more limited. This is due to the fact that the outdoor space is not directly linked to the Reception classrooms. Furthermore, access to the outdoor space is on a rota basis, as this space is shared between the Nursery children, the boys and the girls.
- The early years internal teaching spaces are a priority for improvement. The resources in the girls' provision are somewhat limited, and of poor quality in the boys'.
- The quality of teaching in the early years is inconsistent and this is closely linked to the use of assessment, to which all staff contribute. The girls' provision uses ongoing assessment, but this is less frequently used in the boys' provision.
- Phonics is taught well to enable children to make progress at an appropriate level.
- Children typically behave well and listen to adults' instructions in the girls' provision. Behaviour is less well managed in the boys' provision. However, across both provisions there are not enough opportunities for child-initiated learning.
- Communication with parents is effective through the use of regular newsletters and reports. These were seen for the girls' provision. The early years leaders of the boys' setting confirmed that similar systems are in place, but examples were not provided to the inspection team.

School details

Unique reference number	100287
DfE registration number	204/6072
Inspection number	10030851

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	Other independent school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	5 to 15
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	671
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Rabbi C Pinter
Chair	Mr S Wahrhaftig
Headteacher	Mrs R Deutsch
Annual fees (day pupils)	£3,016 to £3,796
Telephone number	020 8800 8612
Email address	office@yhsl.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	1 December 2010

Information about this school

- Yesodey Hatorah School is located in Stamford Hill, North London. The school offers primary education to boys and girls, and secondary education to boys. Boys and girls are taught separately. There is also an early years setting where boys and girls are taught separately.
- The school was last inspected in November to December 2010.
- The primary provision is larger than the average-sized primary school. The secondary provision is smaller than the average-sized secondary school. Lessons are conducted in Yiddish in the morning sessions and in English in the afternoon secular lessons.
- The school, in adherence with its religious ethos, aims to follow the educational traditions and regulations of Orthodox Judaism, as well as the requirements of the early years

foundation stage curriculum. Morning sessions follow the Kodesh (religious) curriculum and afternoon sessions cover the Chol (secular) aspects.

- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. A below-average proportion of pupils have an education, health and care plan. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is above the national average.
- The school has no disadvantaged pupils.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was conducted with one day's notice.
- The Department for Education commissioned this inspection as a result of a complaint made about the school. The subject of the complaint raised wider issues about the leadership and management of the school.
- Inspectors observed learning in all year groups and across a range of subjects. Some of these observations were conducted jointly with the school's senior leaders. Inspectors also looked at a range of pupils' folders and books.
- Meetings were held with the proprietor, senior and middle leaders, the chair and three other members of the governing body, parents and groups of pupils.
- Inspectors scrutinised school improvement documents, policies, information on progress, records of the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, and information on pupils' behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors considered 33 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View.

Inspection team

John Daniell, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Kanwaljit Singh	Ofsted Inspector
Paula Farrow	Ofsted Inspector
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