

Beis Medrash Elyon

233 West Hendon Broadway, West Hendon, London NW9 7DH

Inspection dates

12–14 June 2018

Overall effectiveness	Inadequate
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Inadequate
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Inadequate
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- Leaders, including the proprietor, have not ensured that all the independent school standards are met.
- Not all of the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection have been fully resolved.
- Teaching varies widely and requires improvement. Less-able pupils do not receive enough support in lessons to help them learn as well as they could. Pupils' presentation of written work is often untidy.
- The curriculum is inadequate. Not enough attention is paid to pupils' personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education. Their creative, technical, musical and physical learning is weak.
- Pupils are not given impartial advice about future careers.
- Pupils do not learn about prejudice-based bullying.

The school has the following strengths

- Effective action has been taken to address the minimum standards that were not met at the time of the previous inspection.
- Standards in some subjects are high. Almost all pupils attain good pass grades in GCSE mathematics, physics and Biblical Hebrew. Most of them progress to A-level studies before they leave at the end of Year 10.
- Behaviour is good. Pupils feel that school is a safe, stimulating and enjoyable place to be.
- Leaders, including governors, are fully committed to maintaining the school's Jewish ethos.
- Parents and carers value the school's work and support its ethos fully.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

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

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Gain greater consistency in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by:
 - eradicating ineffective teaching
 - planning work suited to the needs of all pupils, particularly the less able
 - raising teachers' expectations of the quality of presentation of pupils' work.
- Improve the quality of the curriculum by:
 - implementing a programme of PSHE education
 - providing pupils with sufficient impartial advice and guidance about future careers, in line with the school's own policy
 - providing pupils with a wider range of weekly activities in physical education, art and design, technology and music.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management, including governance, by:
 - acting promptly to change the school's proprietor
 - strengthening monitoring procedures to enable leaders to check that all of the independent school standards are met
 - strengthening governance and providing the school with greater capacity to improve.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Inadequate

- Leaders have not ensured that all of the independent school standards are met. This is due to the school's proprietor's lack of capacity to run the school. Consequently, leaders' ability to make improvements have been limited. It also results from the reluctance of leaders to act on the recommendations made at the time of the previous inspection. Currently, progress towards achieving this is too slow.
- The secular curriculum lacks breadth and balance. Pupils study a range of subjects at GCSE and, for some, at A level. However, provision for them to participate fully in high-quality physical education (PE) or develop their creativity in art and design, technology and music is inadequate. As a result, pupils learning is restricted.
- Leaders are committed to meeting the school's aim to provide pupils with a Jewish education and prepare them for further religious studies at a yeshiva. Consequently, almost all pupils leave at the end of Year 10 and progress into yeshiva with a range of good qualifications. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of this. They want their children to spend the majority of their time learning about their own faith.
- Pupils' understanding of the causes of discrimination and prejudice-based bullying is weak. This is because too little time is allocated to promoting pupils' PSHE education. Leaders have links with other religious groups, and pupils raise funds for charity and visit residents of care homes. However, the curriculum provides insufficient opportunities for pupils to learn about life in modern Britain.
- Pupils are not given enough impartial advice about future careers, in line with the school's own policy. Consequently, their understanding of the range of educational and career opportunities after school are limited.
- The school is led by two headteachers, both of whom have high expectations and lead by example. They know the school well and work tirelessly to maintain its caring and supportive ethos. Another senior leader manages the school's day-to-day operation effectively, and ensures that staff follow policy and procedures. Currently, senior leaders are fully stretched because there are no middle leaders to support them in their work. For example, registers show that pupils attend regularly, but no information is available to show how effectively leaders analyse patterns and trends in attendance.
- Leaders evaluate the school's effectiveness as good. This is too generous and thus inaccurate. Although leaders' evaluations identify strengths in pupils' spiritual, moral and social development, it also notes significant weaknesses in their cultural development. The school improvement plan wisely prioritises broadening the curriculum and establishing new procedures to enable leaders to monitor the progress and well-being of all pupils. However, improvements have been slow to happen.

Governance

- Governance is inadequate. The proprietor no longer supports the school. The lack of leadership at the highest level has slowed the rate of improvement made since the previous inspection. Governors and senior leaders are seeking to appoint a new proprietor in the near future. At this stage, no formal approach has been made to the Department

for Education (DfE).

- The previous inspection report asked leaders to sharpen the school's procedures to check that all the independent school standards are met. Previous unmet standards relating to the school's admissions register and PE facilities have been resolved. However, other standards are now unmet. Governors have not done enough to ensure that the independent school standards are met in full.
- Governors are professional. Some work in other school settings, which gives them a broad understanding of current educational matters. They recognise that changes are needed and have commissioned an external consultant to help them make improvements. They have started to work with parents and the local community to make the much needed improvements to the school. However, this work is at an early stage and has not yet had an impact on improvement.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- All of the required checks are made when appointing adults to work with children.
- Staff training in safeguarding, including the 'Prevent' duty training to spot those at risk of becoming radicalised or vulnerable to extremism, is up to date.
- Suitable child protection arrangements are in place. The school's records show that there are very few safeguarding issues and that these are dealt with appropriately.
- Pupils are kept very safe. Security guards protect entry and exit to the school. They escort pupils when they leave the premises to participate in weekly football sessions at the local park.
- Leaders ensure that all health and safety requirements are met. Regular checks are made of the school's facilities, policies and procedures.
- Pupils are kept safe from risks attached to using social media. Pupils do not use mobile phones in school and do not have internet access.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Changes in staffing have led to inconsistencies. There are significant differences between the quality of teaching in religious studies and the quality of teaching in the secular subjects. Overall, it is more effective in religious studies. In the secular curriculum, too much of the teaching is weak and does not enable all pupils to make the progress of which they are capable. For example, not all teaching engages pupils fully and much is pitched towards the most able pupils. Although this provides these pupils with sufficient challenge, the less able struggle to keep up. No additional support is available to help them catch up and secure their understanding.
- In some cases, teachers' questions encourage pupils to contribute their ideas and share their views. However, this is not always the case. Some teachers do not engage all pupils fully in question and answer sessions and they allow others to dominate.
- Leaders check the quality of teaching and learning appropriately and have a clear understanding of where strengths and weaknesses lie. They use lesson observations well to pinpoint what teachers do well and what they need to improve. This is helping to

improve teaching. It is strong in mathematics but it remains weak overall.

- Procedures are in place to monitor the progress made by pupils in all subjects. However, these procedures are unwieldy and do not lend themselves easily to analysis. As a result, leaders have only a limited understanding of the progress pupils make over time. Furthermore, the information is not used well enough to inform staff about which pupils need additional support. Plans are under way to implement new systems later this year.
- Most pupils work diligently. However, pupils' books indicate that the quality of work is variable. For example, in Year 7, poor-quality presentation in pupils' books is not routinely challenged. Teachers do not make regular checks of the quality of work and do not have high enough expectations of what is, and is not, acceptable.
- Typically, religious studies is taught well. Pupils commit fully to reading aloud in class, annotating their work and reflecting on their learning. Expert teaching encourages them to think deeply about their faith, consider the views of others, and reach their own conclusions. Detailed questioning helps to confirm their understanding.
- The teaching of mathematics is a strength of the school. Teachers demonstrate secure subject knowledge, particularly in A-level lessons. Teachers are clear about what pupils are expected to do. They often use the interactive whiteboards well to demonstrate their explanations and model answers for the class.
- In mathematics, pupils are given extended periods of time to get on with their work, enabling teachers to circulate and support those in need of additional help. Small class sizes enable staff to make regular checks of pupils' progress by asking them to put their 'hands up if you don't understand', and targeting support towards them. Pupils begin studying GCSE mathematics in Year 8. Teachers use a range of past papers and resources provided by the examination board to consolidate pupils' learning successfully.
- Teaching in other subjects is not as strong, including in English. As a result, pupils make less progress and do not reach the same high standards as they do in mathematics. This is especially so for less-able pupils, who make much less progress than others do. In Year 7 science, progress is limited and pupils do not deepen their knowledge sufficiently.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Inadequate

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is inadequate.
- Pupils' personal development is undermined by the limited amount of time allocated to this aspect of their education. In addition, there is a lack of impartial careers guidance. This makes it difficult for them to make choices about the next stage of their education, training and employment. All pupils joining the school expect to progress on to further religious study in one of several yeshivas across the country. Leaders feel that careers guidance is therefore unnecessary. However, they acknowledge that without it, the independent school standards are not met.
- Pupils are not aware of all the characteristics protected by the Equality Act 2010. This is in keeping with the school's aims and ethos, and leaders consider that issues such as sexual orientation will be dealt with by parents when pupils are older. During the inspection, leaders insisted that no mention of these issues was to be made in discussions

with pupils. This request was respected by the inspector. It was clear from discussions with leaders that pupils do not develop a full understanding of equality discrimination. Leaders understand that by not addressing this aspect of the curriculum, as set out in the Equalities Act 2010, the independent school standards are not met.

- High-quality care and support provided in school each day makes a significant contribution to pupils' welfare and safety. They feel very safe in school because staff go out of their way to make them feel secure and well cared for.
- A range of duties within school and during enrichment activities encourage pupils to take responsibility and develop leadership skills. For example, during a recent three-day hike in open country in the South Downs, pupils were expected to supervise transport arrangements, organise domestic arrangements in camp, and lead social activities. A second hike in Snowdonia is arranged for later this term.
- Pupils show the utmost respect for their culture and traditions. Daily prayer is taken very seriously. Pupils pray alongside staff and each other respectfully and honourably. They volunteer regularly to lead prayer. While pupils show respect for others, they do not have sufficient knowledge to apply this to other traditions and lifestyles that make up modern Britain.
- Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school's work. They value highly the 'family approach' to providing care and support, as well as the high standards achieved by their children. One of several parents who wrote or asked to speak to the inspector summed up these views by saying, 'We share the same values; the school gives my child the same values we have.'

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are confident, self-assured learners. They respond very well during faith and secular studies lessons, taught from 9am until 6pm each day. Teachers expect them to work hard, show effort and contribute to school life. Throughout the inspection, pupils were well-mannered and polite. All of them conducted themselves well.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school. When asked, they said there was little they would change in school. Pupils stated that behaviour in lessons is good. They said it could be even better if they had more opportunities to learn together in pairs and small groups, and do practical tasks. Pupils note that behaviour in corridors, the hall and on the playground is better than it is in lessons. This is due to the school's friendly, sociable environment and the excellent opportunities they have at breaktimes and lunchtimes to play games together. Their weekly visits to a park in the local community to play football matches are, in their view, a highlight of the week.
- School is a safe, stimulating place to be. Records maintained by leaders show very few incidents of poor behaviour. Pupils feel free from bullying, saying 'there is hardly any'. When it does occur, they feel they could approach any member of staff who would stop it from happening again. Suitable policy and procedures are in place to prevent bullying.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- The school aims to provide all pupils with at least six GCSE qualifications. This aim is only partly achieved. For example, last year, one pupil attained eight good GCSE passes, but approximately one third of pupils fell well short of meeting the school's aim of acquiring six GCSE qualifications. Almost all pupils attained a good pass grade in GCSE mathematics, and nearly half of them attained grades 8 or 9. Almost all pupils had already attained good pass grades in GCSE Biblical Hebrew in Year 9, and over half of them attained grades 8 or 9. Results in GCSE physics and Modern Hebrew were also very high.
- This year, similar high standards are expected in GCSE examinations. Results in English are forecast to rise. In mathematics, half of all pupils currently in Year 10 have already attained a grade 8 or 9. Most of them have also attained good pass grades in physics and Biblical Hebrew.
- These high standards of achievement are not consistent for all subjects. Far fewer pupils attained a good pass in English language, compared to mathematics. Leaders say this was due mainly to changes made to the GCSE English examination, which led to a decline in results. However, inspection evidence shows that some pupils, especially the less able, were not provided with enough support. Results in GCSE geography, history and economics were broadly average.
- From their average starting points on entry in Year 7, the school's assessment information shows that most pupils make the progress that the school expects, and many of them make strong progress. All of them start GCSE studies in Year 8. Results show that the good progress shown in Biblical Hebrew, mathematics and physics is not matched in other subjects. A minority of less able pupils make much less progress than others. Leaders have identified the need to provide further support for these pupils to aid their progress.
- The quality of work in pupils' books in English and science in Year 7 does not represent good progress over time. Work is poorly presented and often left unfinished. In some cases, pupils say that they do a minimal amount of work.
- Pupils capable of studying for A-level qualifications are encouraged to do so. Leaders feel that this is important as this is the only chance pupils have to gain these qualifications before progressing on to further religious study when they leave school at the end of Year 10. This works well in some subjects. Last year, over half of the pupils who had already attained good pass grades in GCSE Biblical Hebrew and progressed on to the A-level course achieved high pass grades.
- This provision works well when study programmes are tailored for the most able pupils. However, this approach is not successful for all pupils, or in all subjects. Results show that some pupils who attained A* and A grades in mathematics in Year 9 did not go on to achieve high grades at A level. Leaders have recognised that some pupils are not suited to A-level studies at such an early age. The school's improvement plans include actions to amend this from September 2018 onwards.

School details

Unique reference number	140492
DfE registration number	302/6007
Inspection number	10038178

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	Jewish boys' school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	11 to 15
Gender of pupils	Boys
Number of pupils on the school roll	70
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Mr Y Schleider
Chair	Mr A Morrelle
Headteachers	Rabbi Y Lang Rabbi Z Lebovicz
Annual fees (day pupils)	£6,000
Telephone number	0208 203 8240
Website	N/A
Email address	headteacher@elyon.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	2–4 December 2014

Information about this school

- Beis Medrash Elyon of North West London School is registered to admit up to 100 boys between the ages of 11 and 15 years.
- All pupils are from strictly Orthodox Jewish backgrounds.
- None of the pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- No pupils are deemed to be disadvantaged.

- No pupils are looked after by the local authority.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school is led by two headteachers, one responsible for the Jewish religious studies programme and the other for secular studies.
- A small governing body oversees the school's strategic leadership. The proprietor works in the school as a teacher, but no longer actively supports the school's work.
- The school was inspected in December 2014 and was judged to require improvement.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was commissioned by the DfE as part of the normal inspection cycle to ascertain the school's overall effectiveness and assess whether it meets all of the independent school standards.
- The inspector toured the school with one of the headteachers, met with senior leaders and scrutinised documentation to check whether the school met the independent school standards.
- The inspector carried out a learning walk with one of the headteachers to observe pupils at work in six lessons, including religious studies, English, mathematics and science. He observed pupils travel from school to a local park to participate in sport.
- He observed pupils' behaviour during breaktimes and lunchtimes, and during prayer. He also talked informally with pupils.
- The inspector held meetings with senior leaders, two members of the governing body and four parents who asked to speak with him.
- He looked at a wide range of documentation provided by school leaders, including policy statements, schemes of work, self-evaluation and improvement planning, minutes of meetings of the governing body, safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures, including the single central record, and leaders' monitoring records.
- The inspector considered 37 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire (Parent View), two letters from parents and 12 responses to Ofsted's questionnaire for staff.

Inspection team

John Mitcheson, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex. Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school must 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.
- 2(2) For the purposes of paragraph (2)(1)(a), the matters are:
 - 2(2)(a) full-time supervised education for pupils of compulsory school age (construed in accordance with section 8 of the Education Act 1996), which gives pupils experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical and aesthetic and creative education;
 - 2(2)(d) personal, social, health and economic education which:
 - 2(2)(d)(ii) encourages respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Act;
 - 2(2)(e) for pupils receiving secondary education, access to accurate, up-to-date careers guidance that:
 - 2(2)(e)(i) is presented in an impartial manner;
 - 2(2)(e)(ii) enables them to make informed choices about a broad range of career options; and
 - 2(2)(e)(iii) helps to encourage them to fulfil their potential.
 - 2(2)(i) effective preparation of pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British society.

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 and appreciation of respect for their own and other cultures;
 - 5(b)(vi) encourage respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Act.

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; and
 - 34(1)(c) actively promote the well-being of pupils.

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