

Inspection of Kisharon School

54 Parson Street, London NW4 1TP

Inspection dates: 17 and 18 January 2023

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| Overall effectiveness | Good |
| The quality of education | Good |
| Behaviour and attitudes | Good |
| Personal development | Good |
| Leadership and management | Good |
| Sixth-form provision | Good |
| Previous inspection grade | Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 |

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy coming to this school. They are proud to be part of such a happy and inclusive community. Staff foster pupils' talents and interests. Right from the start, everyone focuses on what pupils need to lead happy, healthy and independent lives.

Leaders and other staff have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. They do whatever it takes to help pupils to do well in their learning and in their personal development. Pupils really appreciate this. They are full of praise for staff. All around the school, pupils and staff share positive and purposeful relationships. Pupils are safe and very well cared for. Staff deal with incidents skilfully and sensitively. While bullying rarely happens, staff help pupils to understand how their behaviours might upset or hurt others.

Throughout the school, pupils of all ages and abilities show positive attitudes to learning. They are keen to get involved in everything that is on offer. They particularly like the regular trips to the forest. Pupils take part in visits out into the community where they practise what they have learned in school. For example, some pupils become increasingly confident at travelling on public transport. Others experience the world around them through visits to shops, museums and restaurants.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders, including trustees, put pupils at the heart of all decision-making. Over the past two years, leaders have made important and significant changes to the school's work. These changes are making a positive difference to pupils' all-round development. Throughout the school, pupils achieve well. They are well prepared for the next stages of their education. This includes those pupils who are ready to move on to employment or further education.

Leaders have created an innovative and ambitious curriculum. It focuses on pupils' personalised learning targets alongside well-planned themes and projects. Staff work together as a whole-school team to think about how each theme should be delivered to meet the needs of all pupils. Pupils, including in the sixth form, said that they enjoy their learning. Leaders have worked out what pupils need to learn and when. Subjects and themes are planned in a way which allows pupils to recap and revisit what they have been taught previously. The school's 'Kodesh' curriculum is woven carefully with other subjects. Pupils like this because it helps them to connect the two curriculums together in a meaningful way.

Staff check that pupils are making progress through the curriculum. They make sure that pupils' personalised targets are met. However, occasionally, teaching is not adapted well enough to cater for pupils' specific needs and starting points. Sometimes, what happens in lessons does not build on what pupils already know and can do. When this happens, pupils do not extend their learning as fully as they could.

Staff make sure that reading is promoted throughout all year groups and in each curriculum pathway. Pupils who are learning to read using phonics, including older pupils who need help to catch up, achieve well.

Staff work together impressively as a team. The school's therapists work alongside other staff to model and share ideas. This helps everyone to understand how to meet pupils' sensory, speech and physical needs. Leaders have a well-thought-out programme of professional development opportunities for all staff. Staff said they feel very well supported by leaders. They appreciate that leaders take their views seriously. Leaders consider staff workload carefully.

Staff provide a range of experiences, including sensory activities, to support pupils' communication and to enable pupils to express themselves. Pupils learn important life skills, such as cooking and using money. Sixth-form students are excellent role models to younger pupils. They were especially good at organising the school show. From set design to hospitality, everyone had a part to play.

Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. Lessons are rarely disrupted. Pupils are taught about the world around them. In personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education lessons, for example, pupils find out about different families and the importance of respect, tolerance and healthy relationships.

Leaders make sure that the curriculum places a strong emphasis on preparing pupils for when they leave the school. The careers programme is well planned. Staff build on pupils' interests to find relevant work experience opportunities. Sixth-form students enjoy their weekly shifts at local restaurants and childcare settings. Pupils enjoy visits from all sorts of professionals, including firefighters, plumbers and dentists. Staff make sure that these opportunities are accessible to all pupils in the school.

Many parents and carers expressed high levels of praise for the school's work. They can see the difference the school is making to their children's lives. Some parents are not so positive. Leaders and trustees know this. They have already started their work to further improve communication and to enable all parents to feel more involved in their child's learning.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders responsible for safeguarding undertake their roles diligently. They ensure that all staff understand pupils' vulnerabilities. Staff are well trained in identifying anything that might indicate that a pupil is at risk of harm. Record-keeping is meticulous. Leaders take all concerns seriously and take swift and appropriate action to ensure that pupils are kept safe. Leaders' work with children's services ensures that pupils and families get the help that they need. Leaders make sure that staff

are suitable to work with children. All the required checks are undertaken before staff join the school.

Staff make sure that pupils are safe in school. They teach pupils about how to keep themselves safe in a variety of situations.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Sometimes, there are inconsistencies in how well the curriculum is implemented. This happens when staff do not ensure that tasks are sufficiently adapted to match pupils' needs and starting points. This affects how well pupils build on what they already know and can do. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum is implemented consistently well. They should ensure that staff have the expertise to adapt teaching to cater for pupils' specific needs.
- Some parents are dissatisfied with the school. Leaders should improve their communication with parents so that all parents understand what is happening in school. Leaders should consider ways to enable all parents to be involved in school life and contribute to their child's learning.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

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| Unique reference number | 144752 |
| Local authority | Barnet |
| Inspection number | 10255279 |
| Type of school | Special |
| School category | Academy free school |
| Age range of pupils | 4 to 19 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 71 |
| Of which, number on roll in the sixth form | 11 |
| Appropriate authority | Board of trustees |
| Chair of trust | Emma Castleton |
| Headteacher | Emily Haddock |
| Website | www.kisharonschool.org.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | Not previously inspected |

Information about this school

- Kisharon School opened in September 2018. Since then, it has moved location to its current premises.
- The school has a Jewish religious ethos.
- The school caters for pupils with a wide range of special educational needs, including those with profound and multiple learning disabilities.
- The current headteacher took up her post in June 2021.
- Leaders do not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Although the school caters for children in the early years foundation stage, inspectors did not judge this aspect separately because there were too few children on roll at the time of this inspection.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and other senior leaders, including the school business manager. The lead inspector held meetings with the trustees and representatives of the local authority.
- Inspectors did deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, PSHE education and art. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors included the informal, semi-formal and formal pathways in each deep dive, taking into account the full range of pupils' needs within the school.
- Inspectors also looked at other areas of the curriculum, including science and computing.
- Inspectors looked at pupils' personal learning plans, documentation related to their targets and their individual files of work and their websites.
- Inspectors met with a variety of staff, both formally and informally. Inspectors reviewed the responses to the online staff survey.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, Ofsted's online survey, including the free-text comments.
- To inspect safeguarding, inspectors spoke with pupils, staff and leaders. They checked the single central record of staff suitability checks.
- Inspectors observed staff and pupil interactions around the school, including during social times.

Inspection team

Gary Rawlings, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Diane Rochford

Ofsted Inspector

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