Menorah High School for Girls

105 Brook Road, London NW2 7BZ

Inspection dates	26–27 February 2019

Overall effectiveness	**Good**
Effectiveness of leadership and management	**Outstanding**
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	**Outstanding**
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	**Good**
Outcomes for pupils	**Outstanding**
16 to 19 study programmes	**Good**
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders, including governors, are committed to providing pupils with a broad, high-quality education. Leaders oversee a productive balance of coverage of the secular curriculum and Jewish studies. Pupils are well prepared for the next steps of their education and employment, and for life in modern Britain.
- There is a high level of pastoral and academic support for pupils at the school. Staff know each pupil very well. The right support is given to pupils when they need it to enable them to thrive in their studies and have a very positive experience of the school.
- The quality of teaching is outstanding. Teachers are dedicated to ensuring that pupils fulfil their potential. Teachers have strong, confident subject knowledge. This motivates pupils and enables teachers to deepen and extend learning, so that pupils make outstanding progress.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. They are confident and articulate. They interact positively, and are polite and respectful.
- Safeguarding pupils is of paramount importance to leaders and all staff in the school. Pupils feel safe in the school and are confident they will receive the help they need if they have any concerns.
- Students achieve well in the sixth form, because of the good teaching and personalised support they receive from their teachers. They approach positions of responsibility with maturity and enthusiasm and develop valuable organisational skills.
- Pupils receive careers guidance throughout the school, from developing generic skills applicable to the workplace in Year 7, to high-quality work experience in the sixth form. Pupils are readily able to apply their studies to their career aspirations.
- Activities and trips enrich pupils' studies. Pupils enjoy meeting their peers from other schools and when carrying out work for charities. However, pupils would benefit from further opportunities to interact with those from different faiths, cultures and backgrounds.
- Special events promote health and fitness. However, there is a limited variety of sports available to pupils in physical education (PE) lessons and extra-curricular clubs.
- Leaders are rightly extending the work-related as well as academic courses available in the sixth form. This is to continue to increase the range of further and higher education options available to students.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Broaden pupils' personal development further by providing:
  - a wider range of, and more frequent, activities to boost pupils' interests beyond their curriculum studies and promote their health and well-being
  - more opportunities for pupils to work with those of backgrounds, cultures and faiths other than their own.
- Develop the sixth form provision by:
  - extending the courses available to students and ensuring appropriate recruitment to courses so that students embark on studies that are right for them
  - continuing to raise students' awareness of the wide range of educational pathways available to them when they leave the school.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Outstanding

- Leaders, including governors, are thoroughly committed to fulfilling the aims of the school. They enable pupils to achieve very well academically in a broad range of subjects in the secular curriculum and promote pupils' strong personal development and well-being. This work is alongside, and compatible with, the school's following of Orthodox Jewish practice and pupils' completion of Jewish studies (kodesh). Leaders have a clear sense of their duty to enable pupils to make a smooth transition to, and be well prepared for, an array of options for their life beyond the school.
- Leaders have an accurate view of the strengths and areas for development of the school. They are very receptive to external support and advice, including work with other schools and the local authority. Leaders' research and experience mean they are well placed to maintain high standards as the school grows. They demonstrate a relentless drive for continued improvement. This sets a fine example to all staff, who are thoroughly committed to their pupils' success and fulfilment.
- Communications between leaders, and with and between staff, are very efficient and constructive. This is especially apparent in the well-coordinated management and effective working of the large number of part-time staff. Teachers show exceptional dedication in maintaining a high level of collaboration, so that there is a smooth transition in their respective work with their shared classes.
- Leaders' high expectations are clear to all staff and pupils. Leaders carefully monitor and follow up when their expectations are not met. Teachers receive strong support and purposeful professional development opportunities, especially at departmental level. Whole-school training is focused appropriately on the school's priorities and is well coordinated to ensure that all are involved. New and training teachers receive valuable support from their colleagues, so that their teaching rapidly reaches high standards.
- Leaders' detailed and frequent overview of achievement information leads to prompt identification of those pupils who are falling behind their potential. Close liaison between academic and pastoral leaders, combined with their thorough knowledge of individual pupils, means the specific support each pupil needs is identified and provided. Leaders maintain a close eye on how well different interventions are working, organising additional staff training when needed. As a result, pupils catch up rapidly with others.
- Leaders use external funding productively to support pupils' achievement. The small number of disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) make progress as well as their peers.
- Pupils study a rich and varied curriculum, especially in key stages 3 and 4. Leaders schedule carefully the time devoted to the kodesh and the secular curricula, so that pupils cover both comprehensively. The kodesh is readily applied to aspects of the secular curriculum, in lessons and in assemblies, which enhances pupils' learning in, and appreciation of, both curricula.

- Leaders are proactive in seeking and acting on pupils' views. For example, leaders have consulted with pupils about aspects of safeguarding. Pupils know which member of staff they would most comfortably talk to if they had any worries.
- Pupils throughout the school receive guidance on careers and develop skills that are applicable to the world of work. Year 11 pupils are inspired by guest speakers representing a diversity of professions at the school's careers events. Year 7 pupils are clear on how their studies are relevant to their career aspirations, relating, for example, their studies in science to the healthcare professions.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is integrated across all aspects of life in the school. The nurturing of pupils' kind, respectful and considerate attitudes towards others is integral to the ethos of the school. Pupils are confident in debating with each other on themes relevant to different subjects, including science and history. Assemblies and form-time discussions provide an insight into current affairs and contemporary political issues. Leaders, including governors, prioritise pupils' appreciation of and respect for all, encouraging a broad outlook beyond the school and their community. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. However, there are too few opportunities for pupils to meet and work with those from contrasting backgrounds.
- Leaders have developed the school's provision for physical education within the constraints of the available space. They rightly have plans in place to extend pupils' participation in more types of sport.
- The very large majority of parents and carers who responded to Parent View, the online survey, indicated they are very supportive of the school. All parents agreed that the school provides valuable information about their child's progress.

Governance of the school

- Governors are knowledgeable, with a clear understanding and fulfilment of their roles and responsibilities. They draw effectively on their professional backgrounds and personal experience of the school to be a proactive and productive forum for the support and challenge of senior leaders.
- Governors evaluate accurately the school's strengths and priorities for development. They take a thorough overview of, and hold school leaders strongly to account for, all aspects of the school's effectiveness. Leaders are using improved, accessible systems, for example for the review of pupils' achievement and the impact of the expenditure of additional funding, because of governors' high expectations.
- Governors forge and maintain close and positive links with parents. Governors promote successfully their commitment to maintaining the school's ethos and nurturing pupils' self-confidence and preparedness for the next steps in their education, employment and future lives.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Staff are fully aware of their responsibilities to safeguard pupils, because of their up-to-date training, including on the Prevent duty. Leaders have established clear systems for staff to follow if they have any concerns about a pupil.
- Leaders are alert to their responsibilities for safer recruitment. All required checks are made when new staff are employed.
- There is a very strong level of personalised support for pupils, based on leaders' and teachers' knowledge of each pupil as an individual. Well-considered training ensures that staff recognise when pupils need support and know what help is best needed. Staff liaise with outside agencies appropriately to ensure that the right specialist advice and support are available.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment — Outstanding

- Teachers' subject knowledge across the curriculum is impressive. Their enthusiasm for their subjects motivates pupils. There is a very positive rapport between pupils and teachers, creating an industrious and amiable learning environment.
- Pupils are responsive to their teachers' high expectations. They support each other's learning through listening to each other, discussing and debating. Pupils are respectful and diligent because they are ambitious and value their education. Pupils' work is generally presented very well. They take pride in their achievements.
- Teachers apply a systematic checking of pupils' learning in lessons and regular assessments over time to inform their planning. Pupils receive the right levels of support and challenge to fulfil their potential so that, overall, pupils make outstanding progress. Pupils know how to improve their work, because of the guidance they receive from their teachers.
- Teachers routinely use questioning well to enable pupils to reflect on the reasons for their responses and develop their use of technical vocabulary. There are regular opportunities for pupils to boost their literacy skills.
- Teachers are extremely knowledgeable about the curriculum studied by pupils across the school and skilfully extend pupils' prior learning. Pupils articulate their learning confidently; for example, Year 7 pupils are very clear on how their studies of a topic such as the Romans in history build on their coverage of their work in primary school.
- On a few occasions, higher-ability pupils are ready to apply their learning more swiftly, which would enable them to make even better progress.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- There is well-developed, strong pastoral leadership. Pupils' one-to-one meetings with their form tutors provide a helpful overview of any areas of school life that pupils are finding difficult. Pastoral and academic leaders work closely so there is a holistic approach to enabling pupils to achieve their best. Leaders have ensured that teachers are alert to, and can support, pupils who have any mental health concerns.
- There are regular trips and activities to enhance the curriculum and further develop pupils' social skills and experiences. This includes residential trips for all year groups, including overseas. Year 7 pupils value these opportunities for team-building and getting to know each other better during their first year in secondary school. Older pupils develop their language skills on a trip to Paris and their knowledge of history is enriched with a trip to Poland.
- Pupils value their work in the community, for example supporting pupils with SEND in a local school and visiting older people.
- Pupils are aware of contemporary risks to their safety, including their e-safety. They know who to go to if they have any concerns and are confident they would receive the help they need. They feel safe and well looked after in the school. They know how to keep themselves safe outside the school.
- Pupils take part in extra-curricular activities and clubs, often related to their studies. Pupils told inspectors that they would like to have more varied options so that they could explore new interests, such as in the creative arts including music.
- Pupils learn how to keep fit and healthy in subjects such as food technology and science. Assemblies and special events such as 'health week' increase pupils' awareness of healthy lifestyles. These include a talk from a general practitioner and raising the profile of good nutrition. However, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to experience different sports and more routinely reflect on the importance of healthy lifestyles and physical fitness.
- There are clear priorities for school leaders to ensure that pupils increasingly have raised awareness of those of backgrounds, cultures and faiths other than their own. Valuable work is completed in this area, in assemblies and across the kodesh and secular curricula. Pupils take part in activities such as work with local charities, when they meet and work alongside others from a diversity of backgrounds. There are insufficient opportunities for contact with schools of contrasting profiles and with young people of different faiths and backgrounds.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning and each other are impeccable. Pupils are punctual to lessons. They are attentive, interacting productively and supporting each other's

learning. They socialise pleasantly and are polite and welcoming to visitors. They frequently describe the school as one big family.

- Pupils' overall attendance at the school is slightly below the national average. Leaders know the specific, often complex, reasons for pupils being absent from school too often. Staff work closely with families so that individual pupils improve their attendance. Leaders ensure that pupils catch up on work missed when they are absent and do not fall behind. Pupils take this seriously, as they value their education and academic success.
- Incidents of poor behaviour are very rare.

Outcomes for pupils — Outstanding

- At the end of key stage 4, pupils' attainment and progress in English, mathematics and the English Baccalaureate subjects are significantly above the national average. The school's own assessment information and the work in pupils' books demonstrate that this high level of achievement is reflected across all year groups and subjects.
- The proportion of pupils gaining the English Baccalaureate qualification is well above average. This is mainly due to most pupils completing the modern Hebrew GCSE, as well as the increasing proportions studying French.
- The small numbers of pupils with SEND and disadvantaged pupils make progress as well as their peers. Leaders' comprehensive tracking systems and the regular review of pupils' achievement ensure that pupils receive the right support swiftly to enable them to fulfil their potential.
- Pupils make excellent progress from their different starting points, including most-able pupils. Leaders work closely with teachers and put in place effective strategies to ensure that pupils thrive on challenge, deepening and applying their learning diligently.
- Pupils' literacy skills are developed well across the kodesh and secular curricula. There are regular opportunities for pupils to read out loud in lessons. In the current absence of a library, leaders ensure that departments have a wide selection of books for pupils to access, and pupils make good use of these. Leaders are mindful of further actions needed to ensure that all pupils have equal access to quality texts and are using the available resources to their full potential.

16 to 19 study programmes — Good

- Students achieve well in the sixth form. Leaders are quick to identify when the quality of teaching and learning is not of the standard they expect. They put in place appropriate targets and professional development to support teachers to improve.
- Students are well prepared for the next steps in their education. They receive personalised guidance on their career choices and applications. The majority of students move on to further and higher education, often after a gap year in a seminary overseas. Students pursue a wide variety of degree courses.
- Students attend high-quality work experience relevant to their interests and professional ambitions. Leaders ensure that students make the best of this opportunity

by being thoroughly prepared beforehand and reflecting afterwards on the skills and insight they have acquired, relevant to the workplace.

- Leaders go to great lengths to ensure that students entering the sixth form are able to pursue subjects that match their interests and career aspirations. However, the recruitment to some courses is more successful than others. Leaders are reflecting on the optimum approach, so that pupils have a fuller appreciation of the value of different courses, including work-related qualifications, and make choices that are right for them. Leaders promote an increasing array of education pathways available to pupils after they leave the school, including apprenticeships.
- Leaders are highly considerate of the challenges of students' transition to the more independent routines in the sixth form. As in the rest of the school, students are clear on, and value greatly, the regular support they receive from their tutors and teachers. Students know they have someone to turn to with any difficulty, in both pastoral and academic areas.
- Students thrive on responsibilities, such as organising the school performance in which all pupils are involved. They arrange special events for different festivals, including the rosh chodesh to mark the start of each month in the Hebrew calendar, and enrich the community spirit of the school through acts of kindness - the chesed - and work for charity - tzedakah.

School details

Unique reference number	142627
Local authority	Barnet
Inspection number	10058828

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Other secondary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Girls
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Girls
Number of pupils on the school roll	299
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	58
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Dr David Landau
Headteacher	Mrs Esther Pearlman
Telephone number	0208 208 0500
Website	www.menorahhigh.org
Email address	admin@menorahhigh.com
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Menorah High School for Girls opened as an independent school in September 2001. It converted to voluntary-aided status in April 2016. It is a school for Orthodox Jewish girls aged 11 to 18 years.
- The school aims to provide a broad and balanced education based on the secular curriculum (chol) and Jewish studies (kodesh).
- The school is much smaller than the average-sized secondary school. Most of the pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for support from the pupil premium funding is well below the national average.
- Fewer pupils than average receive support with SEND or have an education, health and care plan.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below average.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors held meetings with: school leaders, governors, members of staff and groups of pupils. One inspector held a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors visited classrooms, sometimes accompanied by school leaders, to observe the learning that was taking place. One inspector attended an assembly.
- A wide range of documentation was evaluated, including: the school's self-evaluation and development plan; published and the school's own achievement information; records of the monitoring of teaching; attendance information; and records relating to the safeguarding of pupils, including case studies, training information and the single central record.
- Inspectors looked at pupils' work in their books. They held informal conversations with pupils and staff around the school.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school, including at breaktimes and lunchtimes.
- The responses to surveys completed by 26 members of staff and 113 pupils and the 47 responses to Parent View, the online survey, were taken into account.
- This was the first inspection of the school since it acquired voluntary-aided status. The previous inspection was carried out under the independent school inspection framework, in January 2010, when the school was judged to be good overall.

Inspection team

Amanda Carter-Fraser, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Yvonne Chisholm	Ofsted Inspector
Fiona Abankwah	Ofsted Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

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. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

Parent View
You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: http://eepurl.com/iTrDn.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2019