

# Talmud-Torah Yetev-Lev

Independent school standard inspection report

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Reporting inspector	James Henry

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Royal Exchange Buildings  
St Ann's Square  
Manchester  
M2 7LA

T: 0300 123 1231  
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## Purpose and scope of the inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005, 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.<sup>1, 2</sup>

## Information about the school

Talmud Torah Yetev-Lev is an independent, strictly orthodox, Jewish day school for boys aged from three to 12 years of age. It opened in 1965. There are 480 pupils on roll and nine pupils have a statement of special educational needs. There are 197 children in the Early Years Foundation Stage; 149 attend on a part-time basis and these part-time children receive government funding. The school is located near Stamford Hill in the centre of North London's orthodox Jewish community. The school is owned and maintained by the Satmar Chassidic community. Virtually all boys speak Yiddish as their first language. Jewish studies (*Kodesh*) are taught in Yiddish. Secular subjects (*Chol*) are taught in English. There is a headteacher for the Jewish studies and one for the secular studies. The majority of time is spent on *Kodesh* studies. The school is open six days a week from Sunday to Friday.

The school exists to meet the need 'for learning, socialisation, care and support for Yiddish speaking children and parents in the locality'. The school's last full inspection was in March 2008. Subsequently, there have been two monitoring inspections in November 2008 and May 2010.

## Evaluation of the school

The overall quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory and the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is good. Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. The school places a strong emphasis on the well-being of pupils with robust procedures for safeguarding and, as a result, the provision for the welfare, health and safety of pupils is good. The school has put in place an assessment framework to monitor the progress of pupils; this is an improvement and addresses the regulation not met at the last monitoring inspection. The overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage is satisfactory, although there are important improvements still to be made. The school meets its aims and complies with all but one of the regulations.

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<sup>1</sup> [www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2002/ukpga\\_20020032\\_en\\_14#pt10-ch1-pb4-l1g162](http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2002/ukpga_20020032_en_14#pt10-ch1-pb4-l1g162)

<sup>2</sup> [www.opsi.gov.uk/ACTS/acts2005/ukpga\\_20050018\\_en\\_15#sch8](http://www.opsi.gov.uk/ACTS/acts2005/ukpga_20050018_en_15#sch8)

## Quality of education

The quality of the curriculum is satisfactory overall. The *Kodesh* curriculum is good, with effective schemes of work that are broken down into different units supported with appropriate resources. There is a strong focus on the development of basic Hebrew reading and comprehension skills and the *Kodesh* curriculum follows the traditional model, beginning with the study of *Chumash* (Bible) and progressing through to *Mishna* (oral law) by the end of Year 2 and study of the Talmud in Year 5. Encompassed within the *Kodesh* curriculum are aesthetic and creative elements, for example, pupils used design and art and craft skills to build tabernacles. Also, Jewish history is included along with opportunities for pupils to develop their mathematical and scientific skills. The good planning of the *Kodesh* curriculum makes a significant contribution to the good progress made by pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, in their *Kodesh* studies.

The *Chol* curriculum is satisfactory and improving. It covers the full range of secular subjects although for religious reasons there is no provision in the school for information and communication technology. The provision for mathematics is more developed than English and science. The school has engaged an external consultant to develop schemes of work across all subjects that meet the religious and cultural needs of the school. These are text book based and quite rigidly followed and do not always challenge all groups of pupils, especially the more-able. However, they are used creatively in English and mathematics and contribute well to pupils' good progress in these subjects. For example, pupils in Year 5 were learning about frequency tables and answering questions in English based on information provided in the tables. Also, pupils were producing pieces of extended writing in English based on the topic of 'appreciation' that supported their spiritual and moral development.

Teaching and assessment are satisfactory overall. While staff are dedicated and committed, the quality of teaching is affected by a lack of consistently good classroom management and the regular use of different teaching techniques. *Kodesh* lessons are formal and teacher-led but the better lessons are more interactive with a variety of teaching and learning techniques. Pupils study with intense concentration in *Kodesh* lessons and respond well to challenging concepts and tasks and participate with enthusiasm. *Chol* lessons are also sometimes formal and teacher-led, with teachers following the text books introduced in the recently-developed *Chol* curriculum. While pupils concentrate hard and take an active part in discussions and in question and answer sessions, they are not always given enough opportunities to be responsible for their own learning. Marking is satisfactory but basic with the use of praise. It does not include comments on how pupils could improve their work further.

Comprehensive assessment records are kept to show pupils' progress in their *Kodesh* studies. The *Menahel* (head of *Kodesh*) tests pupils regularly and additional support for pupils is arranged if needed. Records and assessments of pupils' progress in their *Chol* studies, particularly in spelling, mathematics and multiplication tables, have been introduced. Assessments are normally done through formal tests but are not

judged against any national results. While these assessments are used to monitor and provide support for pupils if necessary, except in the Early Years Foundation Stage, they are not systematically used by teachers to inform further planning to adapt the *Chol* curriculum to meet the needs of different pupils. However, there is a coordinator for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and pupils with a statement of special educational needs make sound progress in their *Chol* studies. Relationships throughout the school are outstanding and pupils are consistently conscientious in their learning and make satisfactory progress overall.

## **Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils**

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is good. Their spiritual development is outstanding. Pupils recite prayers with great devotion as their singing fills the whole school during the time for *Davening* (prayer). Pupils effectively distinguish between right and wrong, with their moral and social development being based on the values of justice and respect for others as specified in the Torah and their *Kodesh* curriculum studies. Behaviour is outstanding both in classes and generally around the school. Pupils are very polite, respectful and friendly towards both adults and each other. Relationships are very positive with pupils feeling safe and confident to approach any member of staff if they have any concerns.

Consequently, pupils enjoy their education as shown by their outstanding attitudes to learning. Attendance is sound, with the school monitoring individual pupils' absences and contacting parents and/or carers if necessary.

Pupils make an effective contribution to the school and wider community. They are involved in fundraising activities for school. They collect for charity, for example by supporting the local community ambulance, and are willing to take on responsibilities around school such as monitors and prefects. The school provides pupils with a broad knowledge of British institutions and services, for example in explaining the process of undertaking an election. The school promotes tolerance and inclusion towards others, for example towards the significant minority of pupils from Sephardi communities that are in the school. Pupils receive a solid foundation in developing their personal and academic skills through the *Kodesh* curriculum, in particular, that enables them to proceed successfully to their next stage of education.

## **Welfare, health and safety of pupils**

The provision for the welfare, health and safety of pupils is good in both the school and in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Procedures to safeguard pupils and for child protection are good. All relevant policies, including those for child protection, are in place. Staff are suitably trained in safeguarding procedures and all adults are vetted before being allowed to work in the school.

The behaviour and anti-bullying procedures are robust, with pupils saying bullying is not an issue in school. Pupils have confidence that the staff will deal with any worries or concerns that may arise. Detailed risk assessments for visits and within school are carried out and appropriate checks are made to ensure that buildings and the

playground are safe. The level of supervision in the playground and generally around school is good. There are sound first-aid facilities with appropriately trained staff. The school also benefits from access to the local Jewish paramedic service.

Physical education is now part of the *Chol* curriculum and helps to promote pupils' healthy lifestyles. Also, pupils have healthy snacks and meals, according to their religious and cultural traditions, during the day.

The school meets the fire regulations. Electrical equipment and fire extinguishers are regularly checked and fire drills held each term. The school meets requirements in respect of the Disability and Discrimination Act 1995, as amended, and also has appropriate signs in Braille for any pupils who may have sight difficulties.

### **Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors**

The school carries out all the required checks to ensure that all staff are suitable to work in school. These include ensuring that all the required checks are up to date and are recorded on a single central register.

### **Premises and accommodation at the school**

The school comprises three main buildings, two of which are on the same site and the third over the road. There are also two temporary portakabins which are situated on a separate site in the same road. All the properties are soundly maintained and there is an adequate number of classrooms of an appropriate size for the numbers of pupils. There are facilities for pupils who are ill and hot water is provided in all pupils' washrooms. Decoration in certain parts of the buildings is worn, but decoration is satisfactory overall.

### **Provision of information**

Parents and carers overwhelmingly value the school and its approach to the education of their children. They find the school approachable if they have any concerns. There are regular opportunities for parents and carers to discuss their children's progress and this is supplemented by an annual written report on their children's achievements. Parents and carers receive the required information apart from information on the number of staff employed at the school and their qualifications.

### **Manner in which complaints are to be handled**

The school has policies and procedures in place that meet all the regulations for dealing with complaints.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

The overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage is satisfactory, resulting in satisfactory outcomes for children overall.

Children aged three and four attend the nursery on a part-time basis in the mornings, with children aged five being educated on a full-time basis in a Reception class. Relationships throughout the setting are good, with children being very well behaved and enjoying their education. Children develop their personal, social and emotional skills at an early age and respond well. They make good progress through the learning opportunities provided in the *Kodesh* aspects of the curriculum.

Children are well cared for and settle quickly. Children's welfare is given a strong priority with staff communicating and working well with parents and carers. All the necessary safeguarding procedures are in place and appropriate staff are trained in first aid. Consequently, children feel safe and secure in the setting.

Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with little knowledge of spoken English. However, they make good progress in their communication, language and literacy skills, especially in beginning to learn English and in their Hebrew studies. Provision through the *Chol* curriculum for other areas of learning, such as developing children's physical and creative development as well as their knowledge and understanding of the world, is more limited but nevertheless, results in children making satisfactory progress. The outdoor resources are just adequate but are well used and enjoyed by the children. Only some classes have free-flow access to the outside due to the physical structure of the accommodation, but adequate arrangements to address this are made for the other classes.

The quality of teaching overall is satisfactory with activities adequately planned and delivered in a positive, challenging way. This is despite the fact that not all staff are formally trained to the appropriate level. The coordinator for the setting does not have the required qualifications. Although there is a sufficient number of staff to ensure good supervision and provide a satisfactory education, the ratio of appropriately qualified staff to children does not meet statutory requirements. The school is currently working well to address these deficiencies.

Staff carry out ongoing assessments of children's progress through observations and this information is used appropriately to inform teaching. However, the assessments are not recorded in a format that can be used easily for the compilation of the Early Years Foundation Stage profile.

Leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are satisfactory because, despite some important shortcomings, outcomes for children are generally satisfactory and sometimes good. A useful start has been made on effective self-evaluation and in finding out more about the quality provision in other settings.

## Compliance with regulatory requirements

The proprietor has ensured that the school meets The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, schedule 1 ('the Regulations'), with the exception of those listed below.<sup>3</sup>

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of the provision of information (standards in part 6) and must:

- make available to parents of pupils and of prospective pupils, and on request, to the Chief Inspector, the Secretary of State or an independent inspectorate the number of staff employed at the school, including temporary staff, and a summary of their qualifications (paragraph 24(1)(b)).

In order to comply with the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage, the school must:

- raise the quality of provision in all areas of learning to the current good quality of 'communication, language and literacy'
- ensure the proper qualifications of staff and the correct ratio of qualified staff to children in line with the guidance and requirements of the 'Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage'
- ensure that assessments of children's achievements are in a format that can be used to compile the Early Years Foundation Stage profile.

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<sup>3</sup> [www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2010/1997/contents/made](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2010/1997/contents/made)



## Inspection judgements

outstanding	good	satisfactory	inadequate
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### The quality of education

Overall quality of education			√	
How well the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of pupils			√	
How effective teaching and assessment are in meeting the full range of pupils' needs			√	
How well pupils make progress in their learning			√	

### Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Quality of provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development		√		
The behaviour of pupils	√			

### Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The overall welfare, health and safety of pupils		√		
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### The quality of the Early Years Foundation Stage provision

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage			√	
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage			√	
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage			√	
Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage			√	

## School details

<b>School status</b>	Independent
<b>Type of school</b>	Jewish Primary
<b>Date school opened</b>	1965
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–12 years
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Boys
<b>Number on roll (full-time pupils)</b>	480
<b>Number on roll (part-time pupils)</b>	149
<b>Number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs</b>	9
<b>Number of pupils who are looked after</b>	0
<b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>	None
<b>Address of school</b>	111-115 Cazenove Road London N16 6AX
<b>Telephone number</b>	0208 806 3834
<b>Email address</b>	accounts@satmar.co.uk
<b>Headteacher</b>	Rabbi E Padwa
<b>Proprietor</b>	Talmud Torah Education Limited