

# Talmud Torah Chinuch N'Orim

Independent school standard inspection report

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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 Chinuch N'Orim is an independent day school for boys. It serves several orthodox traditions within the Jewish community of north Manchester and Salford. It opened in 1955 and is based in two converted houses surrounded by a hard-surfaced yard. The school is owned and maintained by a charitable trust. Compulsory fees are not charged and the school receives voluntary contributions. There are 268 pupils on roll aged between three and 12 years; all are White British. One of the pupils currently on roll has a statement of special educational needs. No pupil is looked after by the local authority. The school's Early Years Foundation Stage is for children aged between three and five years, taught in the Nursery and Reception years. Forty-four of the younger children are funded under the Government Nursery Scheme. The school is bi-lingual. Yiddish is the first language of 150 of the pupils, and all of the others speak English as their first language. The school is open six days a week, from 09.00am to 17.30pm, closing earlier on Friday. The school aims to 'provide a secure environment in which pupils are keen to learn and where boys receive an education which meets the school's stated religious aims'. The school was last inspected in May 2008.

## Evaluation of the school

The school provides a good quality of education and meets its aims very effectively; it has improved well since the last inspection. Pupils receive a broad curriculum, with an extensive coverage of religious studies which reflects the aims of the school. Teaching is good and rigorous; in the small classes pupils receive highly individualised attention and this helps them to make good progress and develop confidence and the willingness to express themselves. Provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is outstanding and it strongly supports the pupils' outstanding personal and religious development and behaviour. The school makes outstanding provision to promote the care, welfare, health and safety of students. All of the regulations for continued registration as an independent school are met.

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<sup>1</sup> [www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/32/contents](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/32/contents).

<sup>2</sup> [www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2005/18/contents](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2005/18/contents).

## Quality of education

The quality of the curriculum overall is good and it supports the pupils' progress well in the major areas of experience. Pupils with a statement of special educational needs are well served by the curriculum. It is divided into Jewish studies (*Kodesh*) and secular studies (*Chol*). The quality of the *Kodesh* curriculum is outstanding. It takes up two thirds of the timetable and covers a wide range of Jewish history, culture and religious practice. It is taught in Yiddish. *Chol*, which is taught in English, includes English, mathematics, science, history, home economics, geography and art. Design and technology is provided and students engage in a variety of practical activities. History includes a historical study of the Jewish people in Great Britain. The use of languages is a major strength of the curriculum. All pupils augment their English and Yiddish by studying Hebrew and Aramaic, becoming proficient in all of them. Speaking and listening skills are well covered and the school pays particular attention to the basic skills in English and mathematics. Physical education is taught making good use of external facilities. A strength of the curriculum is the fusion of the secular elements of *Chol* with Jewish values. This supports the school's very good provision for pupils' personal, social and health education.

The effectiveness of this fusion of the curriculum ranges from pupils leading the daily prayers to taking part in school drama productions for the community, such as one which traced the history of England and its Jewish inhabitants from William the Conqueror to modern times. Other extra-curricular activities, such as visits, practical projects and a variety of community-based charitable activities, add further to the personal and social development of the pupils. Courses are well structured to ensure that pupils of differing abilities learn effectively. This includes temporary setting by ability, the use of projects giving each pupil the scope to work at his own pace and individual tuition for those with special educational needs. To promote effective and continuous learning, a member of staff is responsible for the evaluation of how well pupils progress throughout the school. This assists the principal and staff in their efforts to continue to improve continuity and progression throughout the school.

The quality of teaching and assessment is good throughout the school. Provision in the Nursery and Reception years is very well planned and well informed by staff training in the current requirements for the Early Years Foundation Stage. Teaching is very effective in enabling children to enjoy their learning and to develop well across all areas of learning and development. Outcomes are good. There is a particular strength in helping very young Yiddish speakers to learn English.

Older pupils are encouraged to make good progress through well-planned and sequenced coverage of the curriculum, particularly in *Kodesh*. This is covered by teachers who are well qualified in Talmudic Studies. Most are rabbis with an extremely deep understanding of their subjects and an infectious enthusiasm which they pass on skillfully to the boys. Teaching is rigorous and pupils respond well to its debating and challenging style (*Chavrusah*); through this they are encouraged to participate, often with animation, in extended class discussions. The teachers, as religious practitioners, have a very positive influence on pupils' willingness to learn.

Secular lessons are well taught by enthusiastic teachers, some rabbis and some lay people. The small classes are well controlled by adults who are assertive yet calm, dignified and encouraging. This demeanour encourages pupils to be considerate and tolerant. Morale within the school is very high, both among staff and pupils, and there is a binding sense of community within which pupils are highly motivated to learn. One-to-one tuition is given where individuals are falling behind; where this takes place other pupils continue to concentrate on their work while the teacher is thus occupied.

Pupils' work is frequently assessed. Teachers often do this informally as they discuss work with individuals and they have a good understanding of how well each pupil is progressing. Marking is not usually accompanied by detailed written comments on how to improve but pupils are given this information verbally. They generally have a clear idea of how well they are doing from this kind of discussion. Teachers use a variety of effective methods to ensure that pupils of differing abilities are set work at the right level and make good progress. Planning to promote good continuity of learning throughout the school is effective, but opportunities are missed at times to support this with the use of consistent assessment and recording methods throughout the secular curriculum. Furthermore, it is rare for teachers, towards the end of an academic year, to show samples of pupils' work to those teachers who will be taking pupils into their own classes at the start of the next academic year. This impedes the capacity of teachers to plan their teaching to extend what pupils have attained in previous classes.

As a consequence of the good planning and teaching of the curriculum and the excellent relationships staff have with the pupils, progress is good throughout the school. This is true in both the religious and secular parts of the curriculum and among boys of all abilities. The progress made in Jewish studies is particularly impressive.

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

Pupils' outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development leads to their outstanding behaviour. Attendance is very high and the pupils enjoy school immensely. The school meets its aim of promoting pupils' personal development exceptionally well, both in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in the main school. Pastoral care is a strong feature of the school, a major focus of which is the development of pupils' desirable personal traits of taking on responsibilities, modesty and consideration (*Middos*). Central to this is the growth in pupils' knowledge and understanding of Jewish spiritual heritage. Pupils have a deep appreciation of and respect for their own culture. This is achieved well through *Kodesh* lessons, regular opportunities for prayer and through the whole ethos of the school. In some lessons, pupils learn with study partners. Although the pupils come from strictly orthodox Jewish homes, their families represent a wide spectrum of Jewish cultural backgrounds. The school rightly prides itself on the tolerance and harmony which is promoted between pupils from these different backgrounds. Pupils develop a deep respect for people of other cultures as is evident in their dealings with external

visitors and in their attitudes when speaking about the wider community. Issues of race, equality and prejudice are effectively addressed in the curriculum. Pupils have good opportunities to discuss other cultures in various lessons, in both their *Kodesh* and *Chol* studies. Pupils are keenly aware of the institutions of England, and of the important Jewish view that 'The law of the country is the Law' (*Dina deMalchusa Dina*). Through extensive discussion of Jewish law and ethics, pupils develop a strong sense of right and wrong. Relationships at all levels are excellent, and the school is a secure, well-ordered and purposeful community characterised by friendliness and mutual concern. Pupils prepare effectively for their economic well-being through the in-depth study of classical legal texts (Talmudic and Halachic) and by being encouraged to apply their lessons to daily life. They learn to be mature and self-disciplined, and to show initiative and hold positions of responsibility in class such as being wardens (*Chazzan* and *Gaboiyim*) at daily prayers. Their enthusiasm and contribution to the life of the school, their community and beyond are excellent.

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

Provision to promote the welfare, health, and safety of pupils is outstanding, both in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in the main school. Policies are clear, regularly reviewed, well understood and implemented by the staff. They support the exceptionally high level of guidance and pastoral care of pupils, on and off-site. Child protection procedures are robust and staff, including the designated officer for safeguarding, are trained at the required level. Risk assessments are used well by staff throughout the school as they teach courses and activities, on and off site. Staff are crystal clear about their responsibilities for health and safety, and for supervising pupils, and they carry them out diligently. Practical lessons are carefully organised to promote pupils' safety. The premises are diligently managed despite the difficulties created by the complicated layout of the building; they comply with health and safety requirements. Procedures for fire safety are robust and regular equipment checks are made by specialists. A comprehensive policy to counter bullying and harassment is well understood and applied by the staff, though there is no evidence that bullying takes place. Teachers are highly effective in helping pupils to understand how to stay healthy and safe, and to consider the safety of others. The school has a detailed plan for increasing accessibility to the premises which meets the requirements of the Equality Act 2010; it is poised to apply this to the new building which is planned to be erected. Admissions and attendance registers are properly maintained and the deficiencies in the latter identified in the last inspection have been fully resolved.

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

The suitability of all staff and the proprietor to work with pupils has been checked as required. The necessary information is kept up to date on a single central register of checks.

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

The school occupies two connected Victorian houses which are kept in a satisfactory and safe state of repair but this requires much effort and maintenance. Classrooms are appropriate in size. The hard play area is adequate for informal play and some team games and the school makes regular use of local high quality leisure facilities for swimming and sporting activities. The premises are protected by secure and robust fencing and walls. A plot of land adjacent to the school has been purchased and planning permission has been secured to erect a new building there, and then to demolish the existing building.

## **Provision of information**

A concise school prospectus containing all the required information is made available to all parents and carers. Regularly-produced and informative reports on pupils' progress are sent to parents and carers. Informal communications between staff and parents and carers are excellent and they are highly satisfied with the information which the school provides on the development of their children.

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

The policy and procedures for handling complaints meet requirements.

## **Compliance with regulatory requirements**

The proprietor has ensured that the school meets The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, schedule 1 ('the Regulations').

## **What the school could do to improve further**

While not required by regulations, the school might wish to consider the following points for development:

- improve the consistency of the procedures for assessing attainment and recording progress throughout the school in the secular curriculum
- pass on records and samples of pupils' work to class teachers as pupils progress from one year group to another to help the receiving teachers better plan their teaching in the early part of the academic year.

## 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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## School details

<b>School status</b>	Independent		
<b>Type of school</b>	Jewish		
<b>Date school opened</b>	1955		
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3-12 years		
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Boys		
<b>Number on roll (full-time pupils)</b>	Boys: 233	Girls: 0	Total: 233
<b>Number on roll (part-time pupils)</b>	Boys: 35	Girls: 0	Total: 35
<b>Number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs</b>	Boys: 1	Girls: 0	Total: 1
<b>Number of pupils who are looked after</b>	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
<b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>	£0		
<b>Address of school</b>	11 Wellington Street East Salford Manchester M7 2AU		
<b>Telephone number</b>	0161 792 9292		
<b>Email address</b>	ttcnmanc@gmail.com		
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Eva Margulies		
<b>Principal</b>	Rabbi Joshua Waldman		

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



13 January 2012

Dear Pupils

### **Inspection of Talmud Torah Chinuch N'Orim School**

I promised to write to you about what I thought of your school when we had finished the inspection.

- The school gives you a good education and helps you make good progress.
- The teaching helps you learn well and the subjects and activities are very interesting. They will be very useful to you as you prepare to move on to your next school.
- You are given lots of opportunities to discuss and take part in lessons. You clearly enjoy your learning in both *Kodesh* and *Chol* lessons, as well as in the activities you carry out in the local leisure centre and on trips to other places.
- The staff take excellent care of you. They go to great lengths to make sure you are safe, exercise well, learn to live a healthy life and become very considerate young people.
- Your personal and religious development is excellent and I know that your parents and carers are very satisfied with what you learn.
- The principal and headteacher are keen to make your school even better. I have suggested that they do this by: making the assessment of your work in *Chol* lessons more regular; and asking your teacher to pass on records of your work to your next teacher as you move up a class at the end of the year.

I would like to thank all of the pupils who helped and talked to us during our visit. I wish you, your parents and all of the staff my very best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Peter Toft  
Lead Inspector