

# T'Mimei Lev School

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

T'Mimei Lev School is situated in Salford, Greater Manchester. The school was established in 1997 in rented rooms in a Jewish community centre. It is registered to provide full-time education for Jewish children, aged four to 19 years, who have behavioural and/or learning difficulties and disabilities. At present there are 12 pupils, aged six or seven years in Key Stage 1 and two pupils in Key Stage 4 who follow a tailor-made curriculum suitable for their individual needs. Nine pupils have a statement of special educational needs and two more are currently being assessed. It is the school's desire, where appropriate, to help its pupils join mainstream Jewish schools. However, the school continues to be available to accommodate any pupils whose needs are better met at a specialist school. The school was previously inspected in 2009.

## Evaluation of the school

T'Mimei Lev School provides a good quality of education, based on a good curriculum which meets its aims, enables pupils to make good progress and identifies their personal strengths. This provides a solid base for pupils' outstanding spiritual, moral, cultural and social development. The quality of teaching and assessment is good and parents and carers are extremely positive about the educational provision and the quality of communication between the school, families and local authorities. Arrangements for the welfare, health and safety of pupils are good, including comprehensive risk assessments and routines relating to supervision. The safeguarding of pupils is given a high priority by staff who are trained appropriately and fulfil their responsibilities consistently well. The school has demonstrated steady progress since the last inspection and now meets all the regulatory requirements.

## Quality of education

Overall, the school provides a good quality of education. The quality of the curriculum provided is good for both *kodesh* (religious) and *chol* (secular) provision and is based on the National Curriculum programmes of study. This curriculum is adapted to a model which reflects the Early Years Foundation Stage approach for those children with more acute special needs and/or disabilities. The curriculum is supported by appropriate planning and schemes of work that are personalised for

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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).

each pupil. The school is working towards integrating *kodesh* and *chol* with several examples of this cross-curricular work observed during the inspection. For example, counting the number of lights on the *Chanukah menorah* (Festival of Lights' candelabra) and counting the number of days from *Pesach* (Passover) until *Shavuot* (Pentecost).

The curriculum emphasises the key life skills of communication, language, literacy and numeracy. The *kodesh* curriculum focuses largely on Hebrew reading and writing, Jewish general knowledge and understanding of the *sedra* (weekly reading from the Torah). This provides a solid basis for the exceptional spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils at the school. It also prepares pupils well for life within the Jewish community. Good enrichment activities are provided which include swimming, music and regular use of the purpose-built outdoor area, which is suitably equipped with playground and climbing apparatus. These activities, coupled with the outstanding personal education, help improve self-esteem and independence skills. Older pupils' needs are addressed well through a life-skills-based curriculum from which basic literacy and numeracy skills are effectively developed. In addition, the *kodesh* curriculum is augmented by focused learning within a *yeshiva* (Talmudical college) for part of the day. As a result pupils are well prepared for their future economic well-being.

The quality of teaching and assessment is good and in the large majority of lessons pupils make good progress. Within these lessons, teachers plan interesting activities, take into account the individual learning needs of pupils and use a variety of suitable resources which engage pupils and encourage them to work well independently. Based on accurate assessment that informs pupils on how to improve, work is mainly tailored well to the range of pupils' needs. Lessons proceed at a good pace and pupils enjoy the activities presented to them within a calm and supportive learning environment. Very positive relationships are formed between staff and pupils and teachers display good subject knowledge. In the few lessons which are less successful, teaching assistants are not always deployed effectively and planning is not precise enough to take into account the learning needs of higher-achieving pupils.

The school provides high quality in-house support for pupils from health care professionals, including an occupational therapist and a speech and language therapist. In addition, a wide range of outside agencies work successfully in partnership with the school, ensuring that pupils' individual needs are met. The emphasis placed on enabling pupils to behave responsibly is evident in teaching and supervision; pupils are encouraged and given opportunities to think for themselves.

Pupils make good progress and achieve well across all areas of learning. Particularly impressive is the progress made in *kodesh* and in developing key life skills. Pupils are encouraged to excel and are praised generously when they make progress. They succeed in their studies because they are encouraged to appreciate their own unique potential.

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

The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding as a result of the school's exceptionally strong emphasis on personal development. The religious ethos of the school contributes to the creation of an environment where trust and mutual respect are steadily fostered. Pupils are helped to settle and feel part of their community. This is facilitated by well-planned transition arrangements to help pupils move up to the next class. Torah values underpin the work of the school, so that pupils' behaviour is good. Effective behaviour management supports pupils, helping them towards a growing awareness that their conduct affects others. Every care is taken to provide each pupil with an opportunity to find something in which they can excel. Attendance levels at the school are very good because pupils clearly enjoy school and love their teachers. Older pupils have meaningful work experience, for example in supporting children within an Early Years setting. This prepares them well for their future lives.

It is a delight to see the joy on the pupils' faces when they are involved in *davening* (daily prayers) or carrying out other rituals of the Jewish faith, for example, the way in which pupils say *berochos* (blessings before eating food). Music and singing play an important part in the learning process and inspire the pupils at the school. A range of educational outings, for example trips to the science museum and the farm at Heaton Park, enrich the cultural and social experiences of pupils. Pupils are engaged in charity work and like to give to worthy causes. They fully appreciate their own culture and their respect for, and awareness of, other cultural traditions is evident, for example, in their dealings with adults who work in or visit the school.

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

The school makes good provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety. All the required policies and procedures are in place and are implemented effectively. Staff are diligent and are trained to appropriate levels in child protection procedures. Thorough and regular assessment ensures that staff identify and address any areas of risk. Fire safety is given a high priority; all required checks on fire safety equipment are up-to-date and completed diligently.

Pupils understand the importance of looking after themselves and have many opportunities to be physically active, including participation in swimming. There is a suitable policy for first aid and all associated procedures and routines are robust. Comprehensive records are kept of incidents and accidents. The school fulfils its duties under the Equality Act 2010.

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

The school has appropriate procedures to ensure the suitability of staff and proprietors who work with pupils at the school. All the required details and checks on staff are recorded in a suitable single central register.

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

The school is housed within a community centre which also accommodates a separate nursery school and other adult activities, including acts of worship, fitness training and swimming. Staff are alert to the issues of working in a community building and take appropriate steps to ensure the safeguarding of pupils. The main building is substantial and in good condition, and provides a suitable environment for safe and effective learning. Classrooms are bright and cheerful, well maintained, with beautiful displays celebrating pupils' work. Furniture and fittings are suitable and age appropriate. There is appropriate provision for a medical room.

## **Provision of information**

The school provides all the required information for parents and carers through its prospectus and informative weekly newsletters. It operates an 'open door' policy and parents are warmly welcomed into school to discuss issues pertaining to their children. In this way parents have access to the full range of school policies. The school offers many opportunities for parents to share in their children's school experience, for example, during school events and *Chanukah* parties. Reports for parents are very informative and offer parents clear and concise information about pupils' progress, attainment and behaviour. Each pupil has a home-to-school 'Link Book' in which both teachers and parents enter comments. This is a successful means of communication. Parents who responded to the inspection questionnaire expressed a high level of satisfaction with the school's educational provision.

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

The school's policy and procedures for handling complaints meet the regulations.

## **Compliance with regulatory requirements**

The proprietor has ensured that the school meets all the requirements of 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 planning of lessons and topics, so that clear lesson objectives and targets provide a consistently high level of challenge appropriate to the capabilities of higher achieving pupils.
- train and deploy teaching assistants and carers in a way which maximises their contribution, so that the needs of all pupils can be consistently met in full.

## 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>	Special school for Jewish pupils with behavioural and/or learning difficulties and disabilities		
<b>Date school opened</b>	1997		
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4-19 years		
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed		
<b>Number on roll (full-time pupils)</b>	Boys: 12	Girls: 1	Total: 13
<b>Number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs</b>	Boys: 8	Girls: 1	Total: 9
<b>Number of pupils who are looked after</b>	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
<b>Annual fees (childcare)</b>	£25,000		
<b>Address of school</b>	Manchester Jewish Community Centre Jubilee School Bury Old Road Manchester M7 4QY		
<b>Telephone number</b>	0161 795 2253		
<b>Email address</b>	torahtots@btconnect.com		
<b>Headteachers</b>	Mrs Mina Gold and Mrs Yael Chocron		
<b>Proprietor</b>	Mr Gershon Glickman		



**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.**

3 May 2012

Dear Pupils



### **Inspection of T'Mimei Lev School, Manchester, M7 4QY**

Thank you for your warm welcome when I visited your school. I enjoyed my visit, including the opportunity to see you at work and to talk with a number of you about your school experiences. The inspection judged that the T'Mimei Lev School provides you with a good quality of education and helps you in your academic and personal development. I was particularly pleased to see:

- the good progress which many of you are making in all subjects
- the good teaching provided within school which makes your lessons interesting, and that staff help you so kindly
- your beautiful manners and the respect which you show to each other and to adults
- the special way you daven, I was so happy to see your beautiful davening with such joy on your faces
- your high attendance at school, well done! This tells me that you really enjoy coming to school
- the good opportunities provided for you to improve your English and mathematics and the exceptional spiritual, moral and social development, which encourages you to do mitzvos with love and helps you to make good choices based on true Torah values.

To bring about further improvement I have asked the proprietor and staff to continue to develop the school by making sure that lessons always have a sufficient level of challenge for higher achievers and that teaching assistants and carers always support you appropriately.

With best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Dr Jonathan Yodaiken  
Lead inspector