

Talmud Torah Chaim Meirim Wznitz School

26 Lampard Grove, London, N16 6XB

Inspection dates

16 January 2014

Reason for inspection

This inspection was unannounced. It was requested because the registration authority for independent schools had concerns about the provision made for pupils' welfare, the quality of the curriculum and teaching and pupils' progress, especially in English and mathematics.

Conclusions

Leadership and management are inadequate because too many aspects of the school's work are not meeting the regulations for independent schools.

The *Chol* (secular) curriculum is inadequate and does not meet the requirements of the independent school regulations. Pupils are making inadequate progress in English and mathematics. The curriculum is too narrow and pupils are not completing enough work in lessons or over time. Work in pupils' books is often poorly presented. Pupils do not take enough care with their work.

While some subjects are studied through the *Kodesh* (non-secular) curriculum, not enough attention is given to history, geography, science, technology, creative activities and physical education. In discussion with the inspector, pupils were unable to describe in any detail a broad range of activities that they had undertaken in these subjects, especially physical education. Pupils are not making enough progress in a range of subject-specific skills at an appropriate level.

Teaching is inadequate in the *Chol* curriculum. Teachers follow specific schemes of work in English and mathematics, which mostly comprise daily exercises in grammar and arithmetic. Teachers keep daily records of pupils' test scores. The work in pupils' books shows that they make inadequate progress. Teachers give too little attention to ensuring that work is well matched to pupils' needs. Lessons observed in the inspection lacked vigour. Pupils do not achieve enough, especially those who are least able or have least command of the English language. Scrutiny of pupils' books supports this view. Teachers do not give enough attention to developing pupils' skills in English from an early age through writing and reading for a variety of purposes, for example developing pupils' skills in narrative writing. The mathematics curriculum provides inadequate opportunities for pupils to solve problems and undertake investigations.

The Reception class had minimal resources available that would be suitable for the required wide range of activities to support both teacher-led and child-initiated learning in order to meet the demands of the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum.

The special educational needs coordinator is aware of the requirements of the small number of pupils who have a statement of special educational needs. These pupils have

individual learning plans. However, less able pupils and those with limited English were observed struggling to understand and complete their work. Teachers were not adequately meeting their needs.

Pupils' social and cultural development is inadequate. Discussions with pupils show that they have a very limited understanding of other cultures and faiths and only a sketchy understanding of public institutions and services in England. They told the inspector that they had little involvement in their local and wider community other than their immediate religious community.

Aspects of welfare, health and safety are inadequate. Safeguarding and child protection arrangements are inadequate. Appropriate checks on staff to show their suitability to work with children are carried out and recorded adequately on the single central register. Although the designated teacher for child protection and other senior staff have attended advanced child protection training, their certificates were out of date on the day of the inspection. All staff have received some training in child protection procedures. Senior staff have an adequate knowledge of the procedures that should be undertaken when concerns about children are raised. Other staff were not able to explain in detail what to do if a pupil disclosed any concerns or showed signs of abuse. Whilst all staff knew that they should inform the designated senior person if they had concerns about a pupil, they had insufficient understanding of specific procedures, for example how to record what a pupil might say or who to contact if allegations were made against senior staff. School documentation and policies for child protection are insufficiently detailed.

There are times throughout the day when the supervision of pupils is inadequate. During these periods pupils can be noisy, over-boisterous and are able to access areas of the building that are out of sight of the staff on duty. The Reception class was observed on more than one occasion without direct adult supervision. Attendance registers are not marked appropriately.

The length of break times is adequate. During the inspection, pupils were generally well behaved on the playground. Activities observed included some 'tag' games or, more commonly, groups of pupils chatting and wandering around. Other than the enclosed play area, used by the attached nursery, there is no equipment or outdoor furniture to support a range of more creative or sporting activities to meet pupils' differing needs and interests. Pupils are allowed to stay in the school building at break times, but supervision is inadequate and this can lead to a somewhat chaotic environment.

Pupils said that behaviour was good most of the time and that disrupted lessons were not common. They were able to describe the sanctions used when poor behaviour occurred. Usually this meant having to stand outside the classroom or some form of detention. Occasionally, pupils are sent home for the day if there is a serious misdemeanour, although there was no record of any recent serious misbehaviour or incidents. Some pupils told the inspector that there had been incidents where a teacher had given a small 'slap' with the hand and others said that this was sometimes threatened as a punishment. Pupils told the inspector that bullying was rare. In discussion with the inspector, pupils showed that they had a very limited understanding of bullying and were unaware, for example, of bullying using mobile phones or computers, because many of them had little or no access to such equipment.

Pupils use a steep metal fire escape to access the playground. Pupils of different age

groups sometimes congregate on these steps during break times and this presents a potentially unsafe situation, especially in wet weather when the steps are slippery. Pupils confirmed that they had carried out fire drills. The school's lead first aider has an up-to-date certificate of training. Records of accidents had only been kept for the current month. There were no records of previous incidents where first aid had been administered.

There is no specific and well-marked entrance that indicates how visitors should enter the school or where the reception is. The procedure for signing-in visitors is inadequate. The school buildings are adequately maintained, but they are untidy both inside and out because there is litter and untidy storage of materials. The area for the waste bins outside is unlocked and therefore open to the pupils, a concern raised in previous inspections.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school requires improvement and must take action to meet The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010 ('the Regulations'), and associated requirements.

Ensure that the <i>Chol</i> curriculum is fully supported by detailed schemes of work to reflect all the required areas of learning.	paragraph 2(1)
Ensure that the curriculum provides pupils with appropriate experiences of learning in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social and aesthetic and creative subjects.	paragraph 2(2)(a)
Ensure that subject matter is appropriate for the ages and aptitudes of pupils including those who have a statement of special educational needs.	paragraph 2(2)(b)
Ensure that pupils who have statements of special educational needs are provided with an education that fulfils all the requirements of the statement.	paragraph 2(2)(e)
Ensure that the curriculum enables all pupils to make at least adequate progress in all the required areas of learning and especially in English and mathematics.	paragraph 2(2)(i)
Ensure that teaching enables pupils to make progress according to their ability in all the required areas of learning especially in the <i>Chol</i> curriculum.	paragraph 3(a)
Ensure that all lessons encourage pupils to show interest in their work and to think and learn for themselves.	paragraph 3(b)
Ensure that all teachers show a good understanding of the aptitudes, needs, and prior attainments of the pupils and ensure that these are taken into account in the planning of lessons.	paragraph 3(d)
Encourage pupils to contribute positively to the lives of those living and	5(a)(iii)

working in the locality in which they are situated and to society more widely.

Provide pupils with a broad general knowledge of public institutions and services in England.

paragraph
5(a)(iv)

Improve pupils' knowledge and understanding of other faiths and cultures.

paragraph
5(a)(v)

Encourage a wider understanding of British democracy.

paragraph
5(a)(vi)

Improve the rigour of arrangements for safeguarding and promotion of the welfare of pupils.

paragraph 7

Ensure that that the written policy to promote good behaviour amongst pupils sets out appropriate sanctions to be adopted in the event of pupils misbehaving. Ensure that it is implemented effectively and that no form of corporal punishment is used or threatened.

paragraph 9

Ensure that pupils are more aware of the different types of bullying that could occur, including bullying using mobile phones and computers.

paragraph 10

Ensure that procedures to ensure the health and safety of pupils are implemented effectively.

paragraph 11

Ensure that staff are deployed in such a way as to ensure proper supervision of all pupils at all times.

paragraph 15

Ensure that all attendance registers are properly marked at the start of each morning and afternoon session.

paragraph 17

Ensure that all aspects of the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage are fully met for the Reception class.

Sections 1, 2
and 3

Inspection team

Daniel Towl HMI, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about this school

- Talmud Torah Chaim Meirim School is situated in the predominantly Jewish area of Stamford Hill, North London.
- It was established in 1979. Since then it has grown from six pupils to the current roll of 230 boys.
- Pupils in the main school are aged between five and 12 years and there is a nursery that caters for children from the age of two years that is registered separately.
- The school is owned by the CMA Trust and serves the strictly observant (*charedi*) Jewish community. The school charges no fees and relies on voluntary contributions.
- The majority of pupils have English as an additional language. The school has three pupils with statements of special educational needs. The curriculum is divided into two distinctive strands, Jewish studies (*Kodesh*), and secular studies (*Chol*).

School details

Unique reference number	100296
Inspection number	433431
DfE registration number	204/6377
This inspection was conducted at the request of the registration authority for independent schools. It was carried out under section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005.	
Type of school	Orthodox Jewish
School status	Independent School
Age range of pupils	5–12 years
Gender of pupils	Boys
Number of pupils on the school roll	230
Proprietor	CMA Trust
Headteacher	Rabbi Samuel Hoffman
Date of previous school inspection	29 November 2012
Annual fees (day pupils)	N/A
Telephone number	0208 806 0898
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