

Tribal
Kings Orchard
1 Queens Street
Bristol, BS2 0HQ

T 0300 123 1231
Text Phone: 0161 6188524
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk

Direct T 0117 311 5307
Email: rachel.evans@tribalgroup.com



15 April 2015

Rabbi Shmuel Karasik
Headteacher
Lubavitch Junior Boys School
135 Clapton Common
Hackney
London
E5 9AE

Dear Rabbi Karasik

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Lubavitch Junior Boys

Following my visit to your school on 14 April 2015, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection findings. Thank you for the help you gave me and for the time you made available to discuss the actions you are taking to improve the school since the most recent section 5 inspection.

The visit was the second monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in January 2014. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Senior leaders and governors are not taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the last section 5 inspection. The school should take immediate action to:

- hold all school leaders rigorously to account for their actions
- ensure that weak practice is addressed swiftly and improvements made within short, clearly identified timescales
- carefully monitor the progress of groups of pupils, ensuring that any gaps in achievement are identified swiftly and addressed.

Evidence

During the inspection, meetings were held with the headteacher and other senior leaders, a governor and representatives of the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. The school action plan was evaluated. Together, we made short visits to lessons in Years 1 to 6 covering aspects of the national curriculum. Short visits to Kodesh lessons were also undertaken. I scrutinised a number of documents, including minutes of governing body meetings, reports from the local authority, information about safeguarding and curriculum planning. I also examined information regarding checks on the quality of teaching.

Context

Since my first visit, one teacher has left the school. Her replacement started work on the day of this visit. The new deputy headteacher took up post in September 2014. A literacy co-ordinator has been employed part-time to work alongside teachers delivering the national curriculum. A new associate headteacher has recently been employed on a temporary basis in order to provide additional support and capacity to the leadership team.

Main findings

There have been a number of changes to the leadership team since my last visit. The support you had brokered from the local authority, including the work of the associate deputy headteacher, ceased at the end of the summer term. New arrangements for the support of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, and for the promotion of literacy have been put in place. These changes have resulted in instability and the pace of improvement has stalled. The new deputy headteacher's leadership of curriculum development has had insufficient impact. As a result, there is not enough cohesion between those who teach the Kodesh curriculum in the morning and those who teach national curriculum subjects in the afternoons. The two teams of teachers teach differently and there is a lack of a joined-up approach. Pupils recognise this. In addition, some teachers rely heavily on published books and schemes without taking full account of the needs of pupils in their teaching group.

Governors have some understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses but have not acted swiftly to address weak practice. They have commissioned additional support in an attempt to support pupil progress but are more reticent when tackling the underperformance of staff.

The quality of teaching is improving, but remains inconsistent. Where teaching is stronger it is having a positive impact on the achievement of pupils. However, these improvements vary from class to class. Improvement is more rapid in Reception and Key Stage 1 than in Key Stage 2. The lack of cohesion between the two teams of teachers is preventing pupils from making more rapid gains in their learning. Leaders

use a range of strategies to check on the quality of teaching. Judgments made by teachers about the achievement of pupils are independently checked and are accurate.

Leaders and teachers have more information about the achievement of pupils, and are starting to use this when planning lessons. However, leaders do not compare the performance of groups of pupils, such as those who speak English as an additional language, with that of their peers. Therefore, gaps in performance are not identified and acted upon in a timely manner.

Whilst the attitudes to learning of the majority of pupils have improved considerably since the last section 5 inspection, the oldest pupils continue to be less engaged in their learning. This results in some silliness and off-task behaviour during lessons which is not consistently challenged by teachers and other adults.

The recently-arrived associate headteacher is providing additional capacity and support to senior leaders. She has already gleaned an accurate picture of the schools strengths and areas for development. There has been insufficient time for her work to have impacted on the progress of the school.

Ofsted may carry out further visits and, where necessary, provide further support and challenge to the school until its next section 5 inspection.

External support

The very significant level of day-to-day support previously provided by the Hackney Learning Trust has been reduced as the school seeks to become more self-reliant. However, leaders and governors continue to receive regular input from the learning trust's leadership and management adviser providing considerable support and significant challenge. The adviser also encourages leaders to develop capacity within the school through deeper links with other schools in the local area.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for Hackney.

Yours sincerely

Gaynor Roberts
Her Majesty's Inspector