

# Talmud Torah Machzikei Hadass School

98 Clapton Common, Clapton Common, London E5 9AL

## Inspection date

26 May 2016

## Overall outcome

**Independent school standards not met**

## Context of the inspection

- The inspection was the school's second progress monitoring inspection since its last full inspection in November 2014, and was conducted without notice.
- On 15 July 2015, an emergency inspection was carried out by Ofsted, when a number of regulations were found not to be met.
- The Department for Education wrote to the school on 21 March 2016 to confirm that the action plan submitted on 25 January 2016 had not been approved.
- The inspection focused on the school's progress in those parts of the action plan relating to Parts 1, 2, 3, 6 and 8 of the independent school standards.
- The inspector held discussions and conducted two learning walks with the proprietors and senior leaders. He also scrutinised a wide range of documentation and toured the new school building.

## Main findings

### Quality of education provided

- At the time of the last inspection, the school did not meet a number of the standards in this part. This was because leaders did not consider how all curriculum areas should be developed and taught to meet the needs of all pupils. Also, that the medium- and long-term planning at key stages 1 to 4 did not adequately identify or provide a broad and balanced curriculum.
- The school's curriculum policy and statement have been revised and approved by governors.
- Schemes of work for literacy and numeracy have been revised and strengthened for children in the Reception classes and for pupils in Years 1 to 5, and contain suitable strategies for medium- and long-term planning. They are based on commercial schemes which give more detail and provide resources and strategies to meet pupils of different abilities in the school, including those with an education, health and care (EHC) plan. A specialist consultant has been appointed to advise on the primary curriculum. Two former Ofsted inspectors have provided advice and guidance on other aspects of the curriculum. However, schemes of work are not yet fully in place for all year groups and all subjects. Leaders intend this to be completed during the next academic year. In particular, schemes of work for science and physical education are yet to be revised and implemented.

- The previous inspection reported that careers guidance was limited and that no provision was made for boys to consider or progress to a range of different career paths. School leaders have introduced the 'World of work' programme. The purpose is to enable pupils to make informed choices about a broad range of career options, and to encourage them to fulfil their potential. Since the last inspection, a paramedic and a police officer have given talks to children in the early years, and children have visited a number of local grocery stores. Visits from outside speakers such as an accountant, an electrician and a civil servant have provided pupils with impartial careers advice and guidance.
- Careers education is now planned and taught across key stages 1 and 2 as part of the cross-curricular Kodesh/personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum. Leaders strongly encourage pupils to engage in work experience, either at a factory or in an educational setting, for at least two weeks every year from Year 9 onwards. They have also invited members of the Orthodox Jewish community, who have themselves attended university and forged successful careers in a range of fields, to speak to pupils. This is designed to show pupils the compatibility of various career paths with that of the Orthodox Jewish way of life.
- The careers curriculum is now broader and more balanced and enables pupils to see greater opportunities ahead, such as studying for further qualifications and going to university. It now complies with this aspect of the standard.
- Not all the requirements for this standard are met.

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

- The last inspection reported that the school failed to meet a number of the independent school standards relating to promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Leaders have taken action towards addressing the unmet standards in this part.
- Pupils continue to show respect towards themselves and to others in their community. Since the last inspection, leaders have begun the process of mapping out all the cross-curricular topics covered during Kodesh lessons. Trips and visits across all year groups have been carefully woven into schemes of work in order to underpin the topic being studied. During visits to classrooms, pupils were observed discussing confidently respect for one another and for those of different faiths and religions. However, this aspect is not currently part of the planned curriculum but is due to be rolled out shortly to staff for evaluation.
- The school's ethos is based on its founding principle of 'unconditional adherence to the Shulcan Aruch (code of Jewish law)'. This means that pupils are shielded from learning about particular differences, such as sexual orientation. In practice, across the curriculum this means that the explicit teaching of all the protected characteristics, specifically those that relate to gender or sexuality, is avoided. The school's culture is clearly focused on teaching pupils to respect everybody, regardless of difference. For example, during a visit to a classroom, the inspector observed pupils being taught about a reference in the Torah to the equality of men and women, and how this was a basic human right. Leaders and proprietors recognise the requirement to consider the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010, and are engaged in ongoing dialogue with government officials regarding this and other issues. However, they acknowledge that as they do not teach pupils explicitly about all the protected characteristics and do not intend to, the related standards continue to be unmet.

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

- At the time of the last inspection, the school did not comply with two of the independent school standards in relation to the safeguarding of pupils. This was because the school's safeguarding policy was not compliant with the Secretary of State's most recent guidance, 'Keeping children safe in education', July 2015. Inspectors found that it did not address such issues as child sexual exploitation, faith abuse, forced marriage and preventing radicalisation.
- The school's safeguarding children and safer recruitment and child protection policies have been updated and now meet current requirements. All staff have received training in the 'Prevent' duty and been given the school's anti-radicalisation policy.

- Pupils have participated in 'stranger danger' workshops and leaders have produced a helpful pupil- and parent-friendly booklet, in Yiddish and English, in order to help to keep pupils safe. In addition, a booklet in Hebrew and English, entitled 'Kidscape keep safe code!', has been provided for staff so that they are aware of the latest guidance.
- At the time of the last inspection, the school's admission register did not contain all the required details. This has now been rectified and, as a result, the admissions register meets requirements. It is now kept electronically and is regularly updated by a senior member of staff.
- Leaders have a good understanding of the reporting requirements regarding the need to inform the local authority if a pupil is missing in education.
- The school meets all the requirements for this standard.

### **Provision of information**

- At the time of the last inspection, the school did not meet all the requirements for this standard because the wording within the safeguarding policy provided to parents on request was out of date. This has now been rectified and the updated safeguarding policy complies with the Secretary of State's most recent guidance. Consequently, the requirements for this standard are met.

### **Quality of leadership in and management of schools**

- Leaders and proprietors have worked effectively towards addressing the unmet standards identified at the last inspection. As a result, three standards have been met in full, and a good deal of progress has been made towards meeting the remaining unmet standards.
- Nevertheless, school leaders and proprietors have not ensured that all the standards are fully met and, as a result, the standards relating to leadership and management remain unmet.

## **Compliance with regulatory requirements**

### **The school must take action to meet The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 and associated requirements**

- The proprietor must ensure that a written policy on the curriculum, supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work is drawn up and implemented effectively; and that the written policy, plans and schemes of work take into account progression from one year to the next across different key stages (paragraphs 2(1), 2(1)(a), 2(1)(b)(i), 2(1)(b)(ii)).
- The proprietor must ensure that there are detailed plans focused on practical skills and appropriate resources to ensure that pupils experience linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical and aesthetic and creative education elements of the curriculum (construed in accordance with section 8 of the Education Act 1996) (paragraph 2(2)(a)).
- The proprietor must ensure that the PSHE education encourages respect for people, paying particular regard to those who may have protected characteristics as set out in the 2010 equality Act (paragraphs 2(2)(d), 2(2)(d)(ii)).
- The proprietor must ensure that the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils at the school actively promotes respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs; and enables them to contribute more widely to society through an appreciation of other cultures, with particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Equality Act (paragraphs 5, 5(a), 5(b), 5(b)(v), 5(b)(vi)).
- The proprietor must ensure that the persons with leadership and management responsibilities demonstrate good skills and knowledge relevant to their role, and fulfil these responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently; and they actively promote the well-being of pupils (paragraphs 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b), 34(1)(c)).

## Inspection team

David Scott, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

## Information about this school

- Talmud Torah Machzikei Hadass School is an independent Charedi (strictly orthodox) Jewish boys' school, founded in 1973 and situated in the Jewish community in Hackney, North London.
- Most boys belong to the Belz Chasidic community and the majority speak Yiddish as their first language. Kodesh (Jewish studies) is taught in Yiddish. Chol (secular studies) is taught in Yiddish but supported by English. In the early years, boys are taught through a combination of English and Yiddish.
- The school is open six days a week, from Sunday to Friday, with the majority of time being devoted to the teaching of Kodesh studies. These lessons provide cross-curricular input, to which elements of the Chol curriculum are linked.
- The school is guided by the principles of Torah (Jewish law) and the ethos of Torah values. The school's ethos has an unconditional adherence to the Shulchan Aruch (code of Jewish law) and has an emphasis on respect and tolerance.
- There are 627 pupils on roll. Eight pupils have a statement of special educational needs or an EHC plan. There are 126 children in the early years.
- The school's main premises are at 98 Clapton Common. Currently, key stages 3 and 4 pupils are taught at the Lampard Grove site. The school is undertaking a major building project which is due to be completed by the end of 2016, and will provide state-of-the art facilities, including 27 purpose-built classrooms. In the interim, some pupils on the Clapton Common site are being taught in temporary units.
- At the time of the inspection, the holiday celebration of Lag B'Omer was taking place and, as a consequence, pupils in Years 7 to 11 were at home.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	100294
<b>Inspection number</b>	10017942
<b>DfE registration number</b>	204/6331

This inspection was conducted at the request of the registration authority for independent schools. It was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008.

<b>Type of school</b>	Orthodox Jewish
<b>School status</b>	Independent school
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Boys
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	627
<b>Proprietor</b>	Moreshet Hatorah Limited
<b>Chair</b>	Rabbi J Baumgarten Rabbi A Klein
<b>Headteacher</b>	Rabbi C Silbiger
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	15 July 2015
<b>Telephone number</b>	0208 800 6599
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