

Torah Vodaas

Julian Headon House, West Hendon Broadway, London NW9 7AL

Inspection dates

12 May 2016

Overall outcome

Unmet independent school standards identified

Reason for the inspection

- The Department for Education, following concerns raised by a number of complaints, commissioned this inspection. The emergency inspection was unannounced.
- The inspector reported against regulations within the independent schools standards relating to Part 3, Welfare, health and safety of pupils; Part 7, Manner in which complaints are to be handled and Part 8, Quality of leadership in and management of schools. He also checked the safeguarding policy and whether it was made available to parents, in reference to Part 6, paragraph 32(1)(c) of the independent school standards.
- The inspector held meetings with the principal, the proprietor, and other senior staff. Documents were examined relating to Part 7 of the independent school standards. He also checked the safeguarding policy and whether it was made available to parents, in reference to Part 6, paragraph 32(1)(c) of the independent school standards.

Main findings

- At the time of the school's last inspection, in June 2011, all of the independent school standards were met. This is no longer the case. The proprietor has failed to ensure that leaders and managers continue to meet all the independent school standards in Parts 3, 6 and 7.
- The inspector scrutinised the school's safeguarding policy. This was last reviewed by leaders and governors in September 2015. As the school does not have a website, it is required to ensure that the policy is readily available to parents. There were no copies of the policy available in the school office or reception area. The reception area did not advertise the availability of the policy or any information about the school's safeguarding officers or procedures. The policy makes reference to some statutory requirements such as different kinds of child abuse and neglect. Reference is made to preventing extremism and radicalisation, but the policy does not explicitly explain the requirements placed on staff by the 'Prevent' duty. The policy does not make reference to how allegations against members of staff, the headteacher, a governor or the proprietor will be dealt with or provide details of the local authority designated officer (LADO).
- Since the previous inspection the school has failed to follow nationally expected guidance when dealing with an allegation against a member of staff. The records for this complaint are incomplete and do not show a full investigation into the issues. The LADO was not informed of the concerns raised with the school and the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) was also not informed.
- The inspector scrutinised the school's complaints procedures. The procedures are outlined in a written policy. This was last updated in March 2016 and reviewed annually.
- The school does not have a website and does not ensure that the complaints policy is readily available for parents. The school does not advertise the availability of the policy or have copies in their reception area.
- The complaints policy does not meet the requirements of the independent school standards. The policy does not stipulate that at least three people will consider a formal complaint. It is also unclear if people who are independent of the complaint would formally consider the facts of a case. Furthermore, the policy fails to ensure that one member of the panel is independent of the management and running of the school. The policy does allow parents to informally raise a

concern or complaint with a member of staff or the school. If they are dissatisfied, they may give a formal written complaint. Further provision is made to take the complaint to a panel convened by the chair of governors. Clear timescales are set out in the policy showing how the school will respond to formal complaints. The policy shows that a complaints panel will respond in writing following the conclusion of a complaint and that the written response will include findings and recommendations. Parents are able to attend a panel hearing and may be accompanied.

- The policy states that the complaint will be treated seriously and kept confidential. It states clearly that correspondence, statements and records will be kept confidential. It also stipulates that these documents will only be disclosed in the course of the school's inspections or where other legal obligations prevail. However, the policy does not explicitly state that actions taken by the school as a result of any complaint, regardless of outcomes will be retained and kept confidential.
- The school does not ensure that leaders and managers demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role and fulfil their responsibilities so that the independent school standards are met consistently and the school does not actively promote the well-being of pupils.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school must take action to meet the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 and associated requirements.

- Ensure that arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school; and that such arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State (paragraph 7, 7(a) and 7(b)).
- The proprietor ensures that the particulars of the arrangements for meeting the standard contained in paragraph 7 are published on the school's internet website, or, where no such website exists, are provided to parents on request (paragraph 32(1) and 32(1)(c)).
- The proprietor ensures that a complaints procedure is drawn up and effectively implemented which deals with the handling of complaints from parents of pupils and which is made available to the parents of pupils:
 - where the parent is not satisfied with the response to the complaint made in accordance with sub-paragraph (e), makes provision for a hearing before a panel appointed by or on behalf of the proprietor and consisting of at least three people who were not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint
 - ensures that, where there is a panel hearing of a complaint, one panel member is independent of the management of the school
 - particulars of any action specified in sub-paragraph (4) are published
 - provides for a written record to be kept of all complaints, whether they are resolved following a formal procedure or proceed to a panel hearing, and action taken by the school as result of those complaints (regardless of whether they are upheld) (paragraph 33, 33(b), 33(f), 33(g), 33(j)(i) and 33(j)(ii)).
- The proprietor ensures that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school:
 - demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school standards are met consistently and fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met and ensure the well-being of pupils consistently (paragraph 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b) and 34(1)(c)).

School details

Unique reference number	133553
Inspection number	10019042
DfE registration number	302/6115

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.

Type of school	Jewish orthodox
School status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	5–11
Gender of pupils	Boys
Number of pupils on the school roll	335
Proprietor	Torah Vodaas Limited
Headteacher	Rabbi Klor
Date of previous school inspection	28 June 2011
Annual fees (day pupils)	£4,500
Telephone number	020 3670 4670
Email address	office@torahvodaas.org

Information about this school

- Torah Vodaas is an Orthodox Jewish primary school for boys that opened in September 2001. The school provides Jewish studies and secular education for the local Orthodox Jewish communities.
- The school relocated to the current premises in October 2013, when it received a material change inspection.
- There are 335 pupils on roll, between the ages of 5 and 11. The early years provision for 2- to 5-year-old children was registered separately in 2013 as an Early Years Centre, which is located on the ground floor of the school building. This setting is subject to a separate inspection by Ofsted under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006. A published report can be found on the Ofsted website.
- One pupil has a statement of special educational needs and/or an education, health and care plan.
- The school aims to give pupils an education that develops their knowledge of and allegiance to Judaism. It also aims to ensure that pupils are law-abiding and well prepared for secondary school.
- The school received a 'light touch' inspection in June 2011. This inspection judged that: the school provided a good quality of education; provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development was outstanding; and the arrangements for safeguarding pupils were robust. At this time all of the independent school standards were judged to be met.

Inspection team

David Storrie, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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