

Toras Emes

Coke Street, Salford M7 4ZB

Inspection dates

22 November 2016

Overall outcome

The school does not meet all of the independent school standards that were checked during this inspection

Main inspection findings

Part 1. Quality of education provided

Paragraph 1, 2(1), 2(1)(a), 2(1)(b), 2(1)(b)(i), 2(2), 2(2)(d), 2(2)(d)(ii)

- The inspection in November 2015 judged the quality of education standards unmet. This was because the programme for Chol (secular) learning was less developed than for the Kodesh curriculum. In particular, there was very little information about physical education, and technical and aesthetic subjects. Commercial schemes were used to deliver the curriculum, but these were not used with knowledge and understanding, nor were they followed systematically.
- School leaders planned to provide a new written policy for English and mathematics. This would include a section on assessment and marking. The school also planned to have an extensive bespoke scheme of work for English and mathematics across the school. The school action plan was evaluated by Her Majesty's Inspector in May 2016 and was judged to require improvement. The proposed completion dates concerning the English and mathematics curriculum were inappropriate. These meant that arrangements for the two subjects would not be in place until the academic year 2016/17. Actions related to all other secular subjects, including modern technology, physical education, and technical and aesthetic subjects, were vague. The proposed actions to address pupils' opportunities to develop awareness of different people and traditions that they might meet in their lives were not specific. These did not directly address the issues raised in the inspection report about pupils' knowledge of other faiths and increasing their awareness of other people, including those with protected characteristics.
- Leaders have employed a consultant in secular education to develop a detailed curriculum and schemes of work for English and mathematics across the whole school. These schemes are complete. The implementation has been delayed because the school was closed to pupils while permission has been sought to move to the new school building. Leaders intend to implement these schemes of work as soon as pupils return to school.
- The schemes set out the resources, including textbooks, to be used in the classroom and a system for assessing pupils' skills, understanding and knowledge at a classroom level. These take account of the ages of pupils and will indicate to teachers their different

aptitudes and needs. These have not been put into place as there are no pupils presently in the school.

- No other schemes of work were available. Leaders intend to make computers available to pupils for the purpose of school work but with restricted access. A new policy on e-safety has been completed.
- The curriculum for the children in the early years has been planned so that Chol and Kodesh learning is woven together more closely. The intended Chol curriculum provides children with chances to learn to read, practise phonics and learn about number. There is an intention to set up areas where children can explore and practise their skills. Opportunities for planning according to children's interests have been built in, along with a suitable focus on national events such as Remembrance Day.
- The school has been closed for much of the autumn term and at the time of the inspection, so it was not possible for the inspector to observe the implementation of policies, schemes of work or planning at first hand. It is evident that the school, with the exception of early years, is still at a very early stage of developing a whole secular curriculum. As a result, these standards remain unmet.

Paragraph 3, 3(a), 3(c), 3(d), 3(g)

- The previous inspection report indicates that the teaching of Chol subjects including English, mathematics, history and geography was ineffective.
- A consultant has been employed to lead professional training. Teachers have received four of seven planned sessions that have been designed to increase the knowledge and skills of teachers in the new national curriculum. Training has included approaches to reading, writing, comprehension and mathematics. This training programme has been delayed due to the temporary closure of the school. However, while the school has been closed, a consultant has met with a few of the teachers to familiarise them with the new curriculum for English and mathematics.
- The English and mathematics schemes of work include planning for individual lessons and assessments so that teachers can check pupils' understanding and skills. However, not all teachers have been trained to use this system. The inspector was unable to evaluate the effectiveness of lessons or assessment on pupils' learning.
- School leaders have been unsuccessful in employing a specialist teacher of secular subjects, despite advertising on a number of occasions. Leaders have engaged two consultants, one to develop the curriculum and schemes of work, and the other to train staff in effective current teaching practice. In addition, leaders have appointed a new deputy headteacher. He will be in charge of coordinating the Chol curriculum. Leaders feel he is a strong leader and teacher and, although he does not have experience in the Chol curriculum, is eager to learn. The consultants will focus their allocated time developing his knowledge and understanding.
- Immediately following the previous inspection, the early years lead took the opportunity to visit other schools to see effective practice. She has since extended these visits to other members of her teaching team. As a result, team members now feel more knowledgeable and confident to deliver an effective early years curriculum. However, as children were not in school the inspector was unable to observe teaching. Therefore it was not possible to evaluate whether their increased confidence and knowledge is justified.

- Inspection evidence confirms that provision in the early years is effective. This is not the case elsewhere in the school. Therefore, this standard remains unmet.

Paragraph 4

- A system for checking on pupils' learning at a class level has been developed in English and mathematics. There is no indication that any robust system had been put in place for leaders to be able to check or track pupils' progress overtime.
- By contrast, assessment now appears to be strong in the early years. The early years lead has conducted baseline assessment on all new children, either at their homes or in nursery settings. As a result, she has a clear indication of the starting points of all the children. She has also set up a system for checking their progress through the year. She knows who is 'on track' and who needs additional support in order to meet their learning needs. For the first year ever, pupils have gained a good level of development in the early years; in 2016, 50% of children did so.
- Inspection evidence confirms that provision for assessment in the early years is effective. This is not the case elsewhere in the school. Therefore, this standard remains unmet.

Part 2. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

Paragraph 5, 5(a), 5(b), 5(b)(vi)

- The inspection in November 2015 judged the standard about pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development not to be met. This was because pupils were offered very few opportunities to learn about other faiths. Neither were pupils offered opportunities to develop awareness of the full range of different people they may meet in their lives, including those with protected characteristics.
- The evaluation of the school's action plan concluded that the actions identified required improvement. This was because proposed actions were not specific and did not directly address the issues raised in the inspection report.
- School leaders reiterate that a core value of the school is one of tolerance, being non-judgemental and respectful of all people. They struggle to match this aspect of the independent school standards to their convictions. As a result, they are no further forward in increasing pupils' knowledge of other faiths or increasing their awareness of other people, including those with protected characteristics. However, leaders acknowledge that other similar faith schools had been able to reconcile this standard with their beliefs. As a result, they are open to finding a way forward to help them address this standard. However, this action has not yet started.
- This standard remains unmet.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraph 6, 7(a), 7(b)

- The standards for welfare, health and safety of pupils were not met at the time of the November 2015 inspection because written references were not always obtained before employing new members of staff.

- Written references are now required for all new employees. Consequently, governance now follows statutory guidance concerning safeguarding. The risk of appointing a person who is unsuitable to work in the school is much reduced.
- Leaders are diligent in ensuring that they fulfil all premises standards and are very mindful of welfare and safety. Risk assessments are complete. Professionals such as fire safety officers and the local authority early years department officers have visited the school to ensure that the school meets welfare and safety requirements. Leaders have welcomed these visits and acted swiftly on any advice.
- The safeguarding policy is in the process of being updated to reflect changes made to national requirements issued by the Secretary of State in July 2016. All staff were trained at the beginning of the autumn term on the changes to ensure that their knowledge about safeguarding is current. The headteacher has been on 'Prevent' training and shared this information to staff.
- The standards about welfare, health and safety are met.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Paragraph 22, 23(1), 23(1)(a), 23(1)(b), 23(1)(c), 23(2)

- The proposed premises' toilet facilities include four separate rooms with toilets, with four toilets in each facility. Two of these rooms are located downstairs and two upstairs. Each cubicle has a separately lockable door and there are wash basins supplied with hot and cold water. These facilities are suitable for the number of pupils currently on roll. Therefore toilet provision is likely to be sufficient. There is appropriate separate provision for staff.
- The premises have changing and shower facilities.

Paragraph 24(1), 24(1)(a), 24(1)(b), 24(1)(c), 24(2)

- Leaders have identified a room that will be designated as the medical room. However, it is not presently in a fit state to be used as it has not been refurbished. Leaders have temporarily designated a room that will eventually be a staff room as the medical room. This room is suitable accommodation to provide for the medical or therapy needs of pupils. It has a sink, is close to a toilet, and a bed can easily be housed in the space available.

Paragraph 25

- The proposed premises are in a good state of repair. The heating system is functioning. A small amount of building work and tidying remains to be completed but this is scheduled to be done before pupils start their education at the premises.

Paragraph 26

- The proposed premises have a number of large rooms that are suitable for teaching and other school activities.

Paragraph 27, 27(a), 27(b)

- The rooms inside the proposed premises are well lit by natural light and effective ceiling lights.

- There is extensive external lighting around the premises and near to the main entrance. A sensor-controlled light is available to illuminate the area intended for use as the school's playground.

Paragraph 28(1), 28(1)(a), 28(1)(b), 28(1)(c), 28(1)(d), 28(2), 28(2)(a), 28(2)(b)

- The proposed premises have supplies of hot and cold water in all washing facilities, and properly functioning toilets. The temperature of the hot water supply is appropriate. There were no signs to indicate which cold water taps provide drinking water. The headteacher stated that these would be installed before the new building opens.

Paragraph 29(1), 29(1)(a), 29(1)(b)

- The proposed premises have a purpose-built, hard-surfaced area for pupils' play and physical education activities. There is additional space for car parking which is easily cordoned off from areas that pupils may use. To avoid congestion of traffic, leaders intend to use separate entrance and exit gates.
- The perimeter of the school grounds is fenced on all sides, providing suitable security. The entrance and exit gates will have security guards on duty all day.

Paragraph 30

- The standards in this part are likely to be met by the school if the DfE decides to approve the implementation of the proposed changes of premises.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraph 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b), 34(1)(c)

- The standards for leadership and management were not met at the November 2015 inspection. The majority of these standards remain unmet.
- The school's leaders have been active in addressing the unmet standard related to safeguarding, immediately seeking written references for staff, which are now on file and have been built into management practice.
- Leaders have been conscientious about ensuring that all premises standards are met. They have a good working knowledge of standards requirements and building regulations and have been thorough in ensuring that these are met.
- Leaders have taken action to tackle some of the other unmet standards. However, they have not yet implemented many of these actions fully. The secular curriculum areas, other than English and mathematics, remain vague and underdeveloped. Leaders are struggling to address the standard requiring pupils to have knowledge of other faiths and to develop awareness of different people they may meet in their lives, including those with protected characteristics.
- Early years is well led. There has been a very active response to the unmet standards detailed at the last inspection. From documentation offered as evidence and discussion with the early years leader, it is clear that much has improved.
- However, as a whole school, the standard related to leadership and management of the school remains unmet.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school does not meet the requirements of the schedule to The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements that were checked during this inspection. This included the standards and requirements that the school was judged to not comply with at the previous inspection. Not all of the standards and associated requirements were checked during this inspection.

The school does not meet the following independent school standards

Standards that were not met at the previous inspection and remain unmet at this inspection

- Paragraph 1,2(1), 2(1)(a), 2(1)(b), 2(1)(b)(i), 2(2), 2(2)(d), 2(2)(d)(ii)
- Paragraph 3, 3(a), 3(c), 3(d), 3(g)
- Paragraph 4
- Paragraph 5, 5(a), 5(b), 5(b)(vi)
- Paragraph 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b), 34(1)(c)

The school now meets the following independent school standards

- Paragraph 6, 7(a), 7(b)
- Paragraph 22, 23(1), 23(1)(a), 23(1)(b), 23(1)(c), 23(2)
- Paragraph 24(1), 24(1)(a), 24(1)(b), 24(1)(c), 24(2)
- Paragraph 25, 26, 27, 27(a), 27(b)
- Paragraph 28(1), 28(1)(a), 28(1)(b), 28(1)(c), 28(1)(d), 28(2), 28(2)(a), 28(2)(b)
- Paragraph 29(1), 29(1)(a), 29(1)(b)

School Details

Unique reference number	136503
DfE registration number	355/6058
Inspection number	10026235

This inspection was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, 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.

Type of school	Orthodox Jewish faith school
School status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	5 to 7
Gender of pupils	Boys
Number of pupils on the school roll	154
Proprietor	Mrs Suzanne Guttentag
Chair	Mrs Suzanne Guttentag
Headteacher	Rabbi Simon Roberts
Annual fees (day pupils)	Voluntary donation
Telephone number	01617 921368
Website	None
Email address	csguttentag@gmail.com
Date of previous standard inspection	17–19 November 2015

Information about this school

- Toras Emes is an Orthodox Jewish independent school for boys in the Salford area of Manchester.
- It currently has 154 pupils aged three to 11 years on roll, although its registration with the Department for Education is for up to 17 pupils, aged five to seven.
- No pupils have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan.
- The school opened in March 2011 and is in the process of moving to much larger, refurbished premises. As a result of moving premises, and while awaiting permission to educate pupils on the new site, there are no pupils in school.

- The school aims to 'provide an excellent education guided by the principles of a true Toradik Chinuch' (Torah education).
- The school was last inspected in November 2015.
- The school has a Nursery as part of its early years provision. This was previously registered and inspected separately from the school. The registration of the Nursery changed earlier in 2015 and it is now inspected as part of the school.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out at the request of the registration authority for independent schools. The purpose of the inspection was to monitor the progress the school has made in meeting the independent school standards and other requirements that it was judged not to comply with at its previous inspection. This was the school's first monitoring inspection.
- The inspection was also commissioned by the DfE to determine the suitability of the new school premises.
- Following the previous standard inspection, the school prepared an action plan. This plan was not approved by the DfE.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, proprietor and the early years leader. She also met with the person in charge of managing the single central record and a consultant employed by the school to develop and improve the Chol curriculum. Upon request, she spoke to a former member of the governing body.
- The inspector was shown round the proposed new school premises, both inside and outside.
- The inspector looked at a range of documents regarding safety and safeguarding including risk assessments, school policies and the single central record. She also examined the school's action plans and documents related to the development of the revised Chol curriculum.
- The inspector examined the school's safeguarding policy.
- The inspection was conducted without notice to the school.

Inspection team

Sue Eastwood, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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