

TTD Gur School

17 Margaret Road, Stamford Hill, London N16 6UX

Inspection dates

21 March 2017

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

Paragraphs 2(1), 2(1)(a), 2(1)(b)(i), 2(2)(a) and 2(2)(b)

- In June 2016, the first progress monitoring inspection of the school identified that pupils were not being taught in sufficient depth, nor covering all the required areas of learning. Schemes of work had not been revised since the full inspection in 2015. As a result, teaching activities did not cater for the range of pupils' abilities, particularly the most able.
- The school's action plan indicated that there was an ongoing review of English and mathematics and that links had been made with other Orthodox Jewish schools, so that they could assist with training and curriculum development. The plan also stated that more time had been allocated to the secular curriculum, though it did not specify how much time. It did not indicate that schemes of work for all the required areas of learning would be revised to take account of pupils' differing abilities.
- Since that time, an external consultant has been appointed to advise leaders on developing the curriculum. Following the advice of the consultant, leaders have decided to buy commercial schemes of work which cover all the required areas of learning. Staff have successfully adapted these resources to meet the needs of all pupils, including the most able.
- The requirements for this paragraph are now met.

Paragraph 2(2)(c)

- The last inspection in June 2016 found that, although pupils from Year 1 upwards were taught English, children in the early years were not given planned lessons or activities to help them learn to read and write in English. The action plan did not address this issue.
- However, children in the early years are now taught in English, including speaking, listening, reading and writing. The early years subject plans meet requirements and include a suitable range of topics. Checks are made on children's abilities and aptitudes on entry to the school. These include a questionnaire completed by parents on their children's development to date. This information is used effectively alongside the revised schemes of work to ensure that teachers plan interesting activities at the

right level for children to succeed.

- The requirements of this paragraph are now met.

Paragraph 2(2)(d)(ii) and 2(2)(i)

- The first progress monitoring inspection in June 2016 identified that the schemes of work for personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education had not been revised to prepare pupils for their future lives as British citizens. The schemes did not pay enough regard to those who may have protected characteristics as set out in the 2010 Equality Act.
- In the action plan, the proprietor stated that the PSHE policy would be reviewed in November 2016. However, actions refer exclusively to encouraging pupils to develop an understanding of their own faith and respect for other faiths. There is no indication of how the school will encourage pupils to respect other people including those who have the protected characteristics.
- Since the inspection in June 2016, the schemes of work for PSHE and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (SMSC) have been revised. Nevertheless, despite this revision leaders were not able to show that pupils in all year groups have the opportunity to study and learn about the six major world religions so that they understand how people from different faiths, cultures and backgrounds, including those with protected characteristics, contribute to life in modern Britain. Furthermore, pupils are not taught explicitly about issues such as sexual orientation. This restricts pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and does not promote equality of opportunity in ways that take account of differing lifestyles.
- The requirements for this paragraph are not met.

Paragraph 2(2)(f)

- The first monitoring inspection in June 2016 identified that this standard remained unmet. This was because the outdoor area had a limited range of resources to help children develop their physical skills and none to enable them to make progress in other areas of learning. The action plan did not address this issue. Since that time, significant investment has been made in upgrading the outside areas. These are now well kept and provide a stimulating and safe learning environment for children to learn and play.
- The requirements for this paragraph are now met.

Paragraph 2(2)(h)

- The first monitoring inspection in June 2016 identified that schemes of work had not yet been revised to cater for the needs of the most able pupils. The assessment system did not track pupils' progress from starting points or make comparisons with national progress measures. The action plan did not address this issue.
- Since that time, leaders have introduced a new commercial assessment system to track pupils' progress and provide useful analysis. Leaders have also strengthened the school's assessment procedures and this inspection showed that teachers keep meticulous daily records of pupils' progress across a range of subjects. In the pupils' books seen, the marking was in line with the school's policy. The school's records give a further insight into pupils' learning by providing photographic and other pictorial evidence of their progress.

- The requirements for this paragraph are now met.

Paragraph 3, 3(a), 3(b) and 3(c)

- The first monitoring inspection in June 2016 found that teachers did not plan activities well enough to meet pupils' needs in reading, writing and mathematics. In the action plan, the proprietor and leaders stated that they intended to provide further support and training for underperforming and new staff. The plan also made it clear that regular meetings between these teachers and the headteacher would be the main vehicle for improving lesson planning.
- Effective new assessment arrangements have been introduced which have had a positive impact on pupils' achievement.
- In addition, the headteacher now keeps very detailed records of his discussions with members of staff about the progress of the pupils in each class. These records show that teachers' planning has improved since the last inspection in June 2016. For example, plans now record pupils' current rates of progress, any identified areas of concern, follow-up actions and the outcomes of such actions. This enables teachers to plan interesting activities that meet pupils' needs. External consultants have run well-considered training sessions for teachers on topics such as planning activities for pupils of different ability levels and strategies for effective teaching and assessment. In addition, considerable investment has been made in procuring new resources such as cameras, a telescope and a surveyor's laser measuring instrument to provide a more stimulating learning environment. All of these initiatives are having a beneficial effect in enabling pupils to make progress and achieve well.
- Evidence gathered from pupils' books and from the school's assessment information confirmed that pupils make progress. As a result, pupils are becoming more confident in thinking for themselves.
- The requirements of this paragraph are now met.

Paragraphs 3, 3(d), 3(f), 3(e), 3(g) and 4

- The last monitoring inspection in June 2016 identified that the pupils' differing needs, particularly those of the most able, were not being met and that there were weaknesses both in the tracking of progress and in the use of data to compare the school's achievement with national figures.
- In the action plan the proprietor outlined various actions, which focus primarily on how teachers should assess pupils' work, mainly through marking. The action plan did not, however, address precisely all of the weaknesses in assessment identified at the time of the last inspection.
- There is now helpful assessment practice in place for teachers to use in their planning. During the inspection, leaders were able to show convincing evidence that teachers are now given information about pupils' earlier attainment. Staff make effective use of this information to make comparisons with national data and to ensure that they plan activities at the right level for pupils to succeed.
- Staff have also received appropriate training, so that they have the right resources to plan effective lessons. They have been supported in developing their methodology, for example in teaching reading, by an external consultant. Scrutiny of lesson planning indicates that it is of much higher quality than previously and provides for a range of

teaching methods to engage pupils in their learning. Visits to lessons showed that teachers' good subject knowledge and good quality classroom resources inspire pupils with enthusiasm for learning.

- The requirements of these paragraphs are now met.
- Not all the requirements for this part are met.

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

Paragraph 5, 5(a), 5(b), 5(b)(i), 5(b)(iv), 5(b)(v) and 5(b)(vi)

- The first progress monitoring inspection in June 2016 identified that the school had begun to map out themes in different subject areas to promote fundamental British values actively and enable pupils to study different cultures, faiths and religions. However, the inspection also found that pupils were not being taught explicitly about the full range of protected characteristics, particularly about gender and sexuality.
- In the action plan the proprietor outlined several strategies to address the failures identified at the time of the last inspection. However, the plan did not address all the aspects highlighted and timescales lacked a sense of urgency, with many having no definitive end date. The plan also stated that the proprietor has been engaged in ongoing discussions with the Department for Education (DfE) and will not take action to meet all the requirements in part 2 until he has received feedback from the DfE about the curriculum and the content of schemes of work.
- Since that time, several strategies have been put in place, as stated in part 1. Pupils have visited the Citizenship museum in Hackney where they attended workshops on road and fire safety, the care of animals and healthy eating, to improve their self-knowledge and self-esteem. However, opportunities for pupils to visit and learn about British institutions and services are too few.
- 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 between people, such as sexual orientation. The school's culture is clearly focused on teaching pupils to respect everybody, regardless of difference. Leaders and proprietors recognise the requirement to teach about the protected characteristics as set out in the Equality Act 2010, and are engaged in ongoing dialogue with government officials regarding this and other issues. For example, during the inspection the inspector was shown corridor displays outside the early years classrooms that portray seven out of the nine protected characteristics. However, leaders acknowledge that they do not teach pupils about all the protected characteristics, particularly those relating to gender re-assignment and sexual orientation. This means that pupils have a limited understanding of the different lifestyles and partnerships that individuals choose in present-day society.
- As a result, the related standards continue to be unmet.
- Not all the requirements for this part are met.

Part 6. Provision of information

Paragraph 32(1) and 32(1)(c)

- The school's comprehensive and effective safeguarding policy reflects the Secretary of State's latest guidance, 'Keeping children safe in education' (September 2016), and 'Working together to safeguard children' (March 2015). The school does not have a website but this policy and all others are available upon request from the school's office.
- The requirements for this paragraph continue to be met.
- The requirements for this part continue to be met.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

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

- The proprietor and senior leaders have made good progress towards meeting the unmet independent school standards. They have made a considerable investment and commitment to improving the fabric of the school, including the outside learning environment and classroom resources. They have also appointed staff and consultants to help them make the improvements required to meet more of the independent school standards.
- Leaders, including the proprietors, have successfully addressed a large number of issues relating to the quality of education provided.
- Staff in leadership posts have the necessary skills and knowledge and an increasingly good understanding of their roles and responsibilities in addressing the remaining unmet parts of the standards highlighted at the last inspection in June 2016. Nevertheless, there is still work to be done to ensure that all the requirements of the independent school standards are met.
- The requirements of this paragraph remain unmet.
- The school does not meet the requirements for this part.
- This inspector was asked to consider the school's proposal to increase the age range and increase the number of pupils on roll. The required schemes of work and suitable resources have been prepared to reflect the proposed increase in the age range and number of pupils, and the building has the capacity to accommodate such an expansion. However, this inspection does not recommend the proposed extension in the age range from three to seven years to three to 10 years and a rise in the number of pupils on roll from 140 to 220. This is because the school does not yet meet all the independent school standards. The inspector found that pupils are being educated beyond the school's agreed registration age limit of seven and are over the agreed limit of 140 pupils.

Statutory requirements of the early years foundation stage

- The inspection in June 2016 identified that the school did not comply with several requirements related to the early years framework. The evaluation of the school's action plan carried out in December 2016 stated that there is 'no conclusive first-hand evidence to suggest that the proprietor has ensured that all the requirements in Part 1 and assessment requirements in Part 2 have been resolved.'
- As indicated under the relevant sections in Part 1, the school now complies fully with all the requirements of the early years foundation stage.

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

- Ensure that the personal, social, health and economic education encourages respect for people, paying particular regard to those who may have protected characteristics as set out in the 2010 Equality Act (paragraph 2(2)(d)(ii)).
- Ensure that detailed plans are in place to ensure that pupils have the opportunity to learn about life in British society (paragraph 2(2)(i)).
- 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 develop their self-esteem, to acquire a broad understanding of British institutions and to understand other cultures, with particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Equality Act (paragraph 5, 5(a), 5(b), 5(b)(i), 5(b)(iv), 5(b)(v) and 5(b)(vi)).
- 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 (paragraphs 34(1), 34(1)(a) and 34(1)(b)).

The school now meets the following independent school standards

- 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) and 2(1)(b)(i)).
- Ensure that detailed plans are focused on practical skills and appropriate resources to ensure 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)).
- Ensure that detailed plans are in place to enable pupils to acquire speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills (paragraph 2(2)(b)).
- Ensure that detailed plans are in place, where the principal language of instruction is a language other than English, for lessons in written and spoken English (paragraph 2(2)(c)).
- Ensure that for pupils below compulsory school age, a programme of personal, social, emotional and physical development and communication and language skills is provided (paragraph 2(2)(f)).
- Ensure that detailed plans are in place to enable all pupils to learn and make progress

(paragraph 2(2)(h)).

- Ensure that teaching enables pupils to acquire new knowledge and make good progress according to their ability so that they increase their understanding and develop their skills in the subjects taught (paragraph 3, 3(a)).
- Ensure that teaching fosters in pupils self-motivation, the application of intellectual, physical and creative effort, interest in their work and the ability to think and learn for themselves (paragraph 3, 3(b)).
- Ensure that teaching involves well-planned lessons and effective teaching methods, activities and management of class time (paragraph 3, 3(c)).
- Ensure that teaching shows a good understanding of the aptitudes, needs and prior attainments of the pupils, and ensures that these are taken into account in the planning of lessons (paragraph 3, 3(d)).
- Ensure that teaching demonstrates good knowledge and understanding of the subject matter being taught (paragraph 3, 3(e)).
- Ensure that teaching utilises effectively classroom resources of a good quality, quantity and range (paragraph 3, 3(f)).
- Ensure that teaching demonstrates that a framework is in place to assess pupils' work regularly and thoroughly and use information from that assessment to plan teaching so that pupils can progress (paragraph 3, 3(g)).
- Ensure that a framework for pupil performance to be evaluated, by reference to the school's own aims as provided to parents or national norms, or to both, is in place (paragraph 4).

School details

Unique reference number	138101
DfE registration number	204/6005
Inspection number	10030986

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 day school
School status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Boys
Number of pupils on the school roll	190
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Talmud Torah D'Chasidei Gur Ltd
Chair	Mr Y Traube
Headteacher	Rabbi Y Esterzohn
Annual fees (day pupils)	Variable depending on the ability of parents and carers to pay
Telephone number	020 8806 5774
Website	No website
Email address	ttdgur@gmail.com
Date of previous standard inspection	1–3 December 2015

Information about this school

- The Talmud Torah D'Chasidei Gur is an independent day school that is currently registered to accept boys between the ages of three and seven years. All the boys are part of an Orthodox Chassidic Jewish community in North London. The school was established in 2010.
- Most boys speak Yiddish as their first language but are also very familiar with English. Kodesh (Jewish studies) is taught in Yiddish. Chol (secular studies) is taught in 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 learning from different subject areas and are linked to elements of the Chol curriculum.

- At the time of the last standard inspection in December 2015, its overall effectiveness was judged to be inadequate. A progress monitoring inspection took place in June 2016, which judged that a number of independent school standards were still unmet. This is the second progress monitoring inspection to see if the school meets all the independent school standards.
- 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.
- The proprietor decided to relocate the school to its current premises in September 2015 to accommodate the growing number of pupils. It now occupies part of a former college premises in Stoke Newington.
- The school is registered to admit 140 pupils and there are currently 190 on roll. There are 69 children in the early years, 49 of whom attend the Nursery class and receive government funding. All pupils attend full time.
- Five pupils have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care (EHC) plan.
- There were no responses to the Ofsted online survey (Parent View).
- The school does not have a website but all the required policies are available from the school office upon request.
- The aim of the school is to provide a solid grounding in Jewish studies, enabling pupils to grow into responsible members of the community, sufficiently equipped to maintain the tradition of their forefathers.

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.
- The inspection was carried out without notice.
- The DfE wrote to the school on 18 January 2017 to confirm that the action plan submitted on 28 September 2016 had not been approved.
- This second progress monitoring inspection focused on the school's progress in those parts of the action plan relating to Parts 1, 2 and 8 of the independent school standards and standards 1 and 2 of the statutory requirements for the early years.
- The inspector was also asked to consider the school's proposed increase in age range from three to seven years to three to 10 years and an increase in the number on roll from 140 to 220.
- The inspector held discussions with the headteacher, senior leaders, a governor and two external consultants. He scrutinised a wide range of documentation related to the independent school standards, including teaching plans and schemes of work. He also made three visits to classrooms and the outdoor areas to observe learning, accompanied by senior leaders and a governor. The inspector also reviewed key documents and policies, including those related to safeguarding and child protection.

Inspection team

David Scott, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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