

Talmud Torah London

37 Moresby Road, London E5 9LE

Inspection dates

15–17 January 2019

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Inadequate

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Since the previous inspection, leaders and proprietors have taken effective action to ensure that all the independent school standards are met.
- Leaders have improved the Chol curriculum significantly. It is now broad, and ensures that pupils achieve well in a wide range of subjects. The Kodesh curriculum continues to be a strength of the school's work.
- Outcomes are good. Assessment processes and schemes of work help teachers to plan for individual pupils' needs.
- Behaviour is good. Pupils behave well in lessons, at lunch and playtimes. They learn and play happily together.
- The presentation of pupils' work does not fully reflect the quality of its content.
- Most-able pupils are sometimes given work which doesn't build on their skills and knowledge.
- Pupils are given limited opportunities to apply their English and mathematics skills in other subjects.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well. Pupils are interested and tolerant of people who have different faiths, beliefs, families or ethnicity to their own.
- The quality of teaching across the Kodesh and the Chol curriculum is good. Teaching typically enthuses pupils and helps them to make good progress.
- The provision for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is good. Pupils receive well-targeted support and make good progress from their various starting points.
- Pupils' personal development and well-being is good. Strong, nurturing relationships underpin the school community. Pupils are kept safe. They are cherished by teachers and leaders. Parents speak highly of the school.
- Pupils are friendly and welcoming to trusted visitors. They enjoy chatting about their lives, the books they are reading, the visitors to their school and the variety of trips they take to explore London.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets the requirements of the schedule of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 and associated requirements.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further strengthen outcomes, by:
 - ensuring that the most able pupils are given tasks in mathematics which challenge them and help them to achieve the best they can
 - providing pupils with opportunities to apply their English and mathematics skills in their work in other subjects
 - making sure that pupils take care to present their written work well, and develop consistently neat handwriting in English.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders, including proprietors, have made significant improvements to the school since the time of the previous inspection. They have responded to external advice, which has helped them to evaluate their work and plan for improvement. As a result, they have successfully met all of the independent school standards.
- The headteachers provide a strong positive presence in the school. They are highly respected by staff, parents and pupils. Pupils feel secure, safe and happy in their care. There is a strong culture of learning, and pupils are confident that teachers will enable them to be successful and achieve well.
- Leaders and teachers have worked hard to balance the demands of the Chol curriculum with the requirements of Kodesh curriculum. This has resulted in a curriculum which is broad and leads pupils to achieve well in a wide range of subjects, including arts, physical education (PE), history, geography, technology and art. Curriculum plans capture steps of learning in all subjects. Leaders support teachers to check on pupils' progress from their starting points and in accordance with age-appropriate expectations.
- Leaders have secured specialist teachers for PE and the humanities subjects, which has significantly enhanced teaching. Teachers and parents said that they have noticed and appreciated the difference this has made to pupils' developing knowledge and skills.
- Pupils benefit from a good range of visits to experience all that their local area has to offer. They talk enthusiastically about their trip across the Thames, and their use of the underground. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well through these visits, and through assemblies and visitors to school. Pupils are enthusiastic when talking about the visitors who represent faiths, religions and ways of life which are different from their own.
- Leaders ensure that pupils have an understanding of the protected characteristics, as outlined in the 2010 Equality Act. The community is tolerant and respectful of difference. Pupils develop a good understanding of how to conduct their future lives as tolerant, respectful adults in modern Britain. They exemplify these British values. Pupils understand democracy well, and take part in voting activities to practise this concept.
- Leaders review summative tests each term to check on pupils' progress in reading and mathematics. They use the information to identify individuals who may need support or intervention to catch up. Leaders ensure that assessment information related to phonics (letters and the sounds they represent) groups is used robustly. For example, leaders decide swiftly whether to move pupils to a higher-attaining group or a 'catch-up' group, as appropriate.
- Curriculum leaders provide good professional development for teachers, and motivate them to improve their skills. They observe teachers and give them helpful feedback. This has ensured that teaching has improved and is now good.
- Staff are proud to work at the school, and parents are delighted with the impact the school has on their children's academic success, and personal development and well-being.

- Since the previous inspection, the school has opened a Year 4 class and moved site. The registration authority agreed that these two material changes could be considered as part of this inspection. The inspector judged the site to be safe and secure, and appropriate to accommodate the 38 pupils who are on roll. Pupils in the Year 4 class make good progress. Therefore, it is recommended that the registration authority agree to both material changes.

Governance

- The proprietors have worked effectively with leaders to improve the school significantly and ensure that the independent school standards have been met. They have sought and reacted positively to external advice to ensure that the school is now a good school.
- Proprietors have secured a safe, appropriate site for the school, which meets the needs of pupils between the ages of five and nine. They understand their duties with regard to safeguarding and ensure that they receive appropriate training.
- Proprietors keep records of their meetings with school leaders. They support and challenge the work of leaders effectively. Proprietors have invested a great deal of time and resources to ensure that the curriculum is now broad and balanced.
- Proprietors have high expectations and share a strong vision for the future of the school. They are reflective and understand fully the need to inform the Department for Education of any changes they may wish to make to the age range of the pupils at the school, or to the location of the school.
- Leaders have ensured that the new site is suitable for accommodating the current number of pupils on roll. Teaching meets the needs of learners up to the age of nine years old.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The new site is secure, and systems are in place, which fully protect the premises. Leaders are highly vigilant in this respect. Closed-circuit television cameras ensure that no one enters the building without being cleared to do so. Leaders act immediately to address even the smallest issues relating to site safety.
- The school's safeguarding policy is up to date and takes account of the latest statutory guidance. It is available for parents from the school office.
- Staff and leaders are well trained. They are clear about potential risks to children and how to identify children at risk of harm. Staff are consistent in their understanding of the school's referral system and how to use it.
- Leaders ensure that policies are readily available to parents.
- Designated leaders for safeguarding ensure that their training is kept up to date. They are rigorous in their record-keeping to safeguard pupils. Leaders are proactive in working with external services to secure the support and help needed for children in need. They are relentless in their support of families who may be facing challenging circumstances.
- Pupils learn about how to keep themselves safe from harm when they are outside school.

They understand road safety procedures and 'stranger danger'.

The school's progress towards meeting standards that were not met at the previous inspection.

The following independent school standards are now met:

Part 1. Quality of education provided

- 2 The standard in this paragraph is met if–
 - 2(1)(a) the proprietor ensures that a written policy on the curriculum, supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work, which provides for the matters specified in sub-paragraph (2) is drawn up and implemented effectively; and
 - 2(1)(b) the written policy, plans and schemes of work:
 - 2(1)(b)(i) take into account the ages, aptitudes and needs of all pupils, including those pupils with an EHC plan.
 - (2) For the purposes of paragraph (2)(1)(a), the matters are: 2(2)(a) full-time supervised education for pupils of compulsory school age (construed in accordance with section 8 of the Education Act 1996), which gives pupils experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical and aesthetic and creative education
 - 2(2)(d) personal, social, health and economic education which:
 - 2(2)(d)(i) reflects the school's aim and ethos; and
 - 2(2)(d)(ii) encourages respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Act;
 - 2(2)(i) effective preparation of pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British society.
- 3 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that the teaching at the school:
 - 3(a) 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
 - 3(g) 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.

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

- 5 The standard about the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils at the school is met if the proprietor:
 - 5(a) actively promotes the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching has improved significantly since the time of the previous inspection. The impact of this on pupils' achievement in the range of subjects taught is clear. This is evident in pupils' books, in displays in classrooms and during interactions between pupils and adults in lessons.
- Teachers have created a positive culture for learning across the school.
- The teaching of the Kodesh curriculum promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education well. Pupils know the difference between right and wrong. They articulate a strong belief in justice and equality. Teachers ensure that pupils understand the complex moral dilemmas, which stories within their religious studies present.
- A strong feature of learning in the Kodesh curriculum is the beautiful singing which teachers model and pupils emulate.
- Teachers of the Chol curriculum have worked with commitment to improve their skills in teaching a range of subjects, in addition to reading, writing and mathematics. They have responded well to the support from leaders, and have successfully implemented teaching plans and in these subjects.
- Provision for pupils with SEND is a strength of the school. Individuals make good progress from their varied starting points.
- During mathematics lessons, teachers typically challenge pupils to explain their thinking and reasoning. This helps most-able pupils to articulate their skills and knowledge and to enable the lower-attaining pupils to stretch their thinking. However, starting points in lessons for all pupils are typically similar. The most able pupils would benefit from work that matches more precisely their starting points. This would to help them make the best possible progress that they can.
- The demands of the curriculum mean that pupils complete a large volume of work in the range of subjects taught. Pupils' presentation of work does not always reflect the quality or depth of its content. Leaders have recognised that pupils have not developed a consistent joined-up handwriting style. As a result, they have introduced a programme to support pupils' development in this aspect of their work.
- Teachers ensure that pupils read widely and often. They have been successful in encouraging parents to read with their children at home, which they do on a regular basis. Reading records provide a good overview of the strong progress that pupils make.
- While pupils benefit and make progress in a broad range of subjects, teachers have not yet been successful in maximising opportunities for pupils to apply their developing mathematics, reading and writing skills across different subjects. For example, geography work on building structures did not focus on helping pupils to apply the work that they had completed on shape in mathematics.
- The teaching of phonics supports pupils' developing reading and writing skills. Pupils are grouped according to ability, and teachers ensure that teaching meets their needs and helps them to make good progress.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development is good.
- Pupils have a positive attitude to learning and to school. They try their best and are tenacious when they meet challenges in their learning. They typically help each other out and support each other's efforts.
- Pupils show that they respect all people and show interest in people whose lives are different to theirs. They articulate a good understanding of the need to respect people from different ethnicities, and talk maturely about the injustice of themes they study in history, such as slavery.
- Pupils understand that there are families who do not reflect their own family structure. They talk proudly of their sisters who have talents and skills, and they talk confidently about successful women in equal measure to their admiration for high-achieving men.
- Books show that pupils reflect and respond positively to visits from people who have different faiths or beliefs. They support a range of charities, and spoke of 'always helping people in need', whether they share the Jewish faith or not.
- Pupils are welcoming and sociable. They voluntarily shared books, stories and food with the inspector, and even allowed her to try to score at basketball! Pupils have an endearing sense of humour and are kind and considerate to each other, and to adults and visitors.
- A special feature of lunchtime at Talmud Torah is when individual pupils have an opportunity to sing prayers of thanks on the microphone, and their schoolmates join in with gusto. The inspector was welcomed during lunchtime, and invited to enjoy a delicious traditional dish during the inspection. Pupils explained their lunchtime routines, and the reasoning behind the tasty vegetarian dish. This is an inclusive, welcoming school community.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils behave well in lessons, at play and at lunchtimes, when boys of all ages mix together socially. During lunchtimes, the school exemplifies a sociable, harmonious, lively community. Pupils and staff talk and play together. They enjoy each other's company.
- Pupils show maturity in discussions about 'right and wrong', and understand and live by their teachers' guidance, such as 'two wrongs don't make a right'. As a result, they quickly solve minor disputes, usually without the need for adult intervention.
- Pupils attend regularly, and this reflects how much they enjoy school.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils in key stage 1 make strong progress in phonics from their various starting points.
- At the end of Year 2 in 2018, pupils attained in line with pupils nationally in reading,

writing and mathematics.

- Pupils with SEND in all year groups make strong progress because bespoke provision meets their individual needs. Adults are deployed well to support their learning, and leaders monitor the progress that these pupils make carefully and frequently.
- Pupils make good progress in their religious studies because teaching is strong. It inspires and motivates them to achieve the best they can.
- Pupils enjoy reading, and make good progress in reading fiction and non-fiction texts. They choose to read information books together at lunchtimes with enthusiasm. Pupils share and discuss interesting facts that they find. They are keen to share the content of the collaborative books they produce as a result of visits out of school, or visitors to school.
- Pupils' work and teachers' records show that pupils make progress in all subjects taught. In a relatively short timescale, teachers have implemented new curriculum plans to promote pupils' progress. Pupils have made progress from their starting points in all subjects taught, and leaders articulate the need to continue to evaluate pupils' progress over time.
- Pupils need further support to develop fluent, consistently joined-up handwriting.
- Most-able pupils in the school achieve well. However, their progress could be strengthened further if tasks set precisely identified their individual starting points and challenged them even more.
- The oldest pupils are well prepared to move to the next year group when they leave the school.

School details

Unique reference number	142572
DfE registration number	204/6012
Inspection number	10055490

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	Jewish Orthodox boys school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	5 to 9
Gender of pupils	Boys
Number of pupils on the school roll	38
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Talmud Torah London Ltd
Chair	Alexander Halpert
Headteacher	Rabbi C Schachter
Annual fees (day pupils)	Variable according to the context of the family
Telephone number	020 3322 7879
Website	none
Email address	talmudtorahlondon@gmail.com
Date of previous inspection	27–29 June 2017

Information about this school

- Talmud Torah is a Jewish faith school taking pupils from the Orthodox Chassidic community of Hackney, in north London.
- The school was granted registration for 20 boys from the ages of five to seven in February 2016. Leaders' vision is to 'encourage the enthusiasm and joy of learning through a creative curriculum and a holistic approach to education, which reflects Orthodox Jewish values'.
- In June 2017, the school was graded inadequate at the end of a full standard inspection.

- In April 2018, a progress monitoring inspection took place. The school did not meet all of the independent school standards that were checked during this inspection.
- In September 2018, the action plan which leaders submitted did not meet requirements.
- Since the previous full standard inspection, the school has relocated to its new site on Moresby Road. The school currently has 38 boys on roll, between the ages of five and nine.
- Pupils learn in Yiddish when the Kodesh curriculum is taught, and in English when the Chol curriculum is taught.
- A small number of pupils have an education, health and care (EHC) plan, or are currently being assessed to secure a plan. The school has a few pupils with SEND or who are receiving short-term interventions.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out by the registration authority for independent schools. The inspection was carried out without notice. The inspection consisted of a full standard inspection and a progress monitoring inspection. Two material change proposals were also considered. The material changes considered the suitability of the new site on Moresby Road, and to assess its suitability in providing education for pupils up to the age of nine years old.
- The inspector carried out observations in lessons with leaders, and undertook a tour of the site. The inspector met regularly with the headteacher of the Kodesh curriculum and met with the headteacher of the Chol curriculum, and the two curriculum leaders.
- The inspector met with the proprietors, and had short meetings with the school's administrator.
- The inspector had telephone conversations with the school's independent adviser and with the specialist sports teacher.
- The inspector reviewed the school's information about pupils' achievement and scrutinised a large sample of pupils' books.
- The inspector talked with pupils during lessons, as they moved around the building, at lunchtime and at playtimes. The inspector held a discussion group with some Year 4 pupils.
- The inspector met with a group of staff to discuss their work and efforts to safeguard pupils.
- Meetings were held with the proprietor and school leaders to discuss the school's safeguarding arrangements. The inspector reviewed a wide a range of documentation regarding the leadership of the school, and the actions taken to ensure that the independent school standards were met.
- The inspector reviewed curriculum plans for all the subjects taught.
- There were 13 responses to Parent View, which the inspector considered, alongside discussions with parents when they brought their children to school.

Inspection team

Ruth Dollner, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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