

Inspection of TTD Gur School

17 Margaret Road, Stamford Hill, London N16 6UX

Inspection dates: 29–31 October 2019

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

The quality of education

Inadequate

Behaviour and attitudes

Inadequate

Personal development

Inadequate

Leadership and management

Inadequate

Early years provision

Inadequate

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Inadequate

Does the school meet the independent school standards?

No

What is it like to attend this school?

The school provides a poor standard of education in secular subjects. Pupils struggle to learn to read because the teaching of phonics is poor. The leadership of the secular subjects, including geography and history, is weak. The programmes of study for the secular curriculum do not help pupils to gain a broad knowledge and understanding of the subjects taught.

During the inspection, pupils behaved well and appeared happy in lessons. However, inspectors could not confirm whether this was always the case because they could not speak with pupils. Parents and carers said that their children are well cared for. They praised the staff's regular communication with them. They told us that this helps them to know how well their children are doing at school. Parents value the strong focus of the school's Jewish faith ethos.

It was not possible to speak with pupils during the inspection. This was at the request of many parents. As a result, inspectors could not gather evidence about: pupils' experiences of teaching, learning and behaviour; how the school deals with bullying; how the school promotes fundamental British values and respect for others; and whether pupils feel safe. The inability to speak with pupils prevented inspectors from gathering sufficient evidence to confirm that these aspects of the school's provision met the requirements of the independent school standards.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

The teaching of early reading is weak. This is because teachers lack the knowledge of how to teach phonics. They receive limited training in phonics teaching. Children in the early years do not get off to a quick start learning their phonics. They learn to read Yiddish and only hear initial sounds in English. No children met the early learning goals in reading or writing in 2019.

Adults do not teach pupils how to blend and segment initial sounds accurately. This means that pupils get confused between the Yiddish and English languages. Adults do not correct pupils' misunderstandings. Pupils make many errors in saying sounds that adults do not correct.

The leadership of secular subjects is weak. Subject plans are too narrow. They focus mainly on the experiences of Jewish people. For example, in geography and history, plans do not match the ambitions of the national curriculum. There are no opportunities to study how Britain has influenced or has been influenced by the wider world. There are no comprehensive plans for pupils to learn about human and physical geography. The curriculum plans do not enable pupils to gain broad knowledge of history or geography.

Pupils' opportunities to learn in personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education are limited. Plans in PSHE education only exist for Years 5 and 6 and focus on a narrow range of topics, for example how to be kind to others. Pupils do not

learn about all the protected characteristics. For example, they do not learn about the roles of women in the wider society.

Discussions with leaders showed that opposing political views are considered. For example, leaders shared plans about pupils learning of the different views regarding Brexit. However, inspectors could not speak with pupils to check out their understanding of these views and other topics that they may have learned about.

Inspectors observed pupils behaving well and cooperating amicably with their peers and other adults. However, because of their inability to speak with pupils, inspectors were unable to gather sufficient evidence to judge whether the behaviour observed during the inspection was typical, and whether pupils feel safe. As inspectors could not gather sufficient evidence to confirm compliance with the relevant standards, behaviour has been judged inadequate.

In mathematics, subject plans have improved since the previous inspection. Pupils learn to develop their fluency in mental calculations. Teachers have had opportunities to develop their subject expertise in mathematics. Teachers are now clearer about what they should teach and when. This is done in a well-planned way.

Pupils are not prepared for the experiences of life in British society. Leaders do not give pupils sufficient opportunities to learn about diversity in modern Britain. Pupils learn mainly about their own culture. When they are taught about other beliefs and cultures, plans for these are superficial. There was no evidence to suggest that the school undermines British values or discriminates against pupils. However, it was not possible to speak with pupils about their understanding of British society and public institutions.

Pupils have opportunities for trips and workshops. They have regular drama sessions. Pupils take part in religious festivals. They have opportunities to sing and take part in competitions. Pupils learn about keeping fit and healthy. They learn about respect for others through visits to residential nursing homes.

The early years is poor because children do not learn to read or spell as well as they should. Children do not achieve well by the end of the early years. No child achieved the early learning goals last year. This means leaders do not ensure that they meet the statutory requirements for learning and development in the early years. Children are not prepared well enough for the secular curriculum in Year 1.

However, in the early years, children engage well with adults. There is a calm atmosphere and adults' care and guidance are obvious to see. Children enjoy the themed topics. This helps them to show interest in what they learn. For example, the theme of 'Noah's Ark' helped children to learn the names of animals and be creative through painting and sticking. The early years is well resourced. Children enjoy playing with their friends.

The proprietorial body of the school has failed to ensure that the school meets basic legal requirements. A significant number of the independent school standards are

not met. Leaders do not have an accessibility plan which sets out how disabled pupils will be able to access facilities and activities at school. This is in breach of schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

Leaders do not have the capacity to improve the school. Leaders rely too much on external advice. They seek advice on how to meet the independent school standards and improve the curriculum. However, this is haphazard. Although leaders are aware that the curriculum is too narrow, their plans to improve it are weak.

The principal has too many responsibilities. Beyond him, leadership in the secular subjects does not exist. The secular subjects are poorly taught, and pupils do not receive an acceptable standard of education.

The proprietorial body continues to breach its registration agreement. The school has pupils above the age of seven and has over 100 pupils more than its registration allows. Staff do not have the subject knowledge to teach pupils secular subjects above the age of seven.

Leaders have ensured that the independent school standards that relate to the safety and upkeep of the school site are met.

The proprietorial body has made noticeable improvements to the provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders know the needs of pupils with SEND well. They liaise with teachers to meet these pupils' needs. Leaders' use of external agencies to support pupils with SEND is much improved. For example, pupils receive speech and language support. Staff and parents value these improvements.

Staff enjoy working at the school. They said that their workload was managed well. Staff who spoke with inspectors gave varying accounts of the professional development opportunities that they receive.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are judged as not effective.

Inspectors were unable to gather sufficient evidence to confirm that safeguarding was effective because they were not able to speak with pupils about whether they felt safe at school.

Leaders understand their statutory responsibilities. They ensure that staff training is up to date. Staff know how to manage concerns, including using external agencies.

Leaders shared that pupils are taught about personal safety. For example, pupils are taught about stranger danger and how to keep safe on bicycles. However, leaders' understanding of how well the curriculum teaches pupils to be safe is weak.

During the inspection, leaders made some administrative changes to the single

central record of suitability checks carried out on staff. This ensured that the record was compliant with statutory requirements.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and proprietor)

- The teaching of reading and writing in the early years is weak. The teaching of phonics is particularly weak. Children in the early years and Years 1 and 2 do not learn phonics well and do not learn to read quickly enough. Teachers do not have the knowledge and skills to teach this. Leaders should ensure that all adults responsible for teaching phonics have comprehensive training. Leaders should also ensure that the school meets all the statutory requirements for learning and development in the early years framework.
- The curriculum is weak in secular subjects. It does not enable pupils to build knowledge progressively. The aims for subjects, including history and geography, are not ambitious. It does not provide pupils with the experiences to appreciate the rich heritage of Britain or other places in the wider world. Leaders should ensure that planning in secular foundation subjects at least meets the aims and ambitions of the national curriculum. The school should address this by giving pupils well-developed opportunities to learn about history and geography.
- Pupils' opportunities to learn about other cultures different to their own are limited. The school should address this by carefully planning opportunities for pupils to learn about the rich and diverse cultural heritage of British society.
- Leaders have some plans for pupils to learn about in PSHE education in Years 5 and 6. These cover basic topics. Pupils do not learn about the roles of women. Leaders should ensure that there is a comprehensive PSHE education programme that allows pupils to learn about the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010.
- Leaders should ensure that the school's safeguarding policy has been updated to include the latest government guidance about safeguarding. Leaders should have greater oversight of how pupils are taught to be kept safe. This should ensure that pupils learn about the potential risks they may encounter and how they should respond.
- Leaders do not ensure that all the independent school standards are met. Leaders should develop the capacity of leadership at the school so that leaders can fulfil their responsibilities effectively. In particular, the principal should be supported so that secular subjects are led effectively. Leaders should ensure that all staff have the appropriate subject expertise to teach the secular subjects well.
- The proprietor body does not ensure that the school complies with schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010. Leaders should address this so that a comprehensive accessibility plan is in place.

How can I feed back my views?

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The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

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School details

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| Unique reference number | 138101 |
| DfE registration number | 204/6005 |
| Local authority | Hackney |
| Inspection number | 10115254 |
| Type of school | Other independent school |
| School category | Independent school |
| Age range of pupils | 3 to 7 |
| Gender of pupils | Boys |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 242 |
| Proprietor | Talmud Torah D'chasidei Gur Ltd |
| Headteacher | Israel Najman |
| Annual fees (day pupils) | Variable |
| Telephone number | 020 8806 5774 |
| Website | The school does not have a website |
| Email address | ttdgur@gmail.com |
| Date of previous inspection | 20–22 February 2018 |

Information about this school

- The school's previous full standard inspection took place in February 2015, when the school was judged to be inadequate.
- The school is registered for up to 140 pupils between the ages of three and seven. The school continues to breach the school's registration agreement by having 242 pupils on roll, some aged between seven and 11.
- Pupils study Jewish religious studies for the majority of time in school. This is taught in Yiddish. The secular curriculum is taught in English.
- The principal was appointed after the last standard inspection in February 2018. The previous principal is now the head of Kodesh.
- The school building shares its site with a yeshiva.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008. The purpose of the inspection is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

The school has failed to meet the independent school standards. These are the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

- We looked in particular at the quality of the curriculum in mathematics, phonics, history and PSHE education.
- We used an interpreter to understand lessons taught in Yiddish.
- We met with school leaders and external advisers throughout the inspection. We also met with trustees from the proprietor body. Inspectors met with members of staff.
- We scrutinised a wide range of documentary information in order to check on the statutory requirements of the independent school standards. This included checking the school's risk assessments, attendance information and safeguarding training.
- We were not able to meet with pupils across the school to discuss their work or to find out what they thought about behaviour, bullying and the wider opportunities for learning at the school.

Inspection team

Noeman Anwar, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Lucy Nutt

Ofsted Inspector

Annex. Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school failed to meet the following independent school standards

Part 1. Quality of education provided

- 2(1) 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 subparagraph (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 education, health and care plan.
- 2(2) For the purposes of paragraph (2)(1)(a), the matters are-
 - 2(2)(d) personal, social, health and economic education which-
 - 2(2)(d)(ii) encourages respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Act[9];
 - 2(2)(h) that all pupils have the opportunity to learn and make progress; and
 - 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(b) 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;
 - 3(c) involves well-planned lessons and effective teaching methods, activities and management of class time;
 - 3(d) 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;
 - 3(e) demonstrates good knowledge and understanding of the subject matter being taught;

- 3(j) does not discriminate against pupils contrary to Part 6 of the 2010 Act[10]; and
- 3(h) utilises effective strategies for managing behaviour and encouraging pupils to act responsibly.

■ 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(b) ensures that principles are actively promoted which-
- 5(b)(i) enable pupils to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence;
- 5(b)(ii) enable pupils to distinguish right from wrong and to respect the civil and criminal law of England;
- 5(b)(iii) encourage pupils to accept responsibility for their behaviour, show initiative and understand how they can contribute positively to the lives of those living and working in the locality in which the school is situated and to society more widely;
- 5(b)(iv) enable pupils to acquire a broad general knowledge of and respect for public institutions and services in England;
- 5(b)(v) further tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions by enabling pupils to acquire an appreciation of and respect for their own and other cultures;
- 5(b)(vi) encourage respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Equality Act;
- 5(b)(vii) encourage respect for democracy and support for participation in the democratic process, including respect for the basis on which the law is made and applied in England;
- 5(c) preclude the promotion of partisan political views in the teaching of any subject in the school; and
- 5(d) take such steps as are reasonably practicable to ensure that where political issues are brought to the attention of pupils
- 5(d)(i) while they are in attendance at the school;
- 5(d)(ii) while they are taking part in extra-curricular activities which are provided or organised by or on behalf of the school; or

- 5(d)(iii) in the promotion at the school, including through the distribution of promotional material, of extra-curricular activities taking place at the school or elsewhere.

■ **Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils**

- 7 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that-

- 7(a) arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school; and
- 7(b) such arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State.

- 9 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor promotes good behaviour among pupils by ensuring that-

- 9(b) the policy is implemented effectively.

- 10 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that bullying at the school is prevented in so far as reasonably practicable, by the drawing up and implementation of an effective anti-bullying strategy.

■ **Part 8. Quality of leadership and management of schools**

- 34(1) The standard about the quality of leadership and management is met if the proprietor ensures that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school-

- 34(1)(a) demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their roles so that the independent school standards are met consistently;
- 34(1)(b) fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently; and
- 34(1)(c) actively promote the well-being of pupils.

■ **Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010**

- Paragraph 3 of schedule 10 requires that schools have an accessibility plan in place. The school does not have an accessibility plan in place.

The school must meet the following early years learning and development requirements

- 1.4 Support children in their learning and development in literacy.

1.5 Children have activities and opportunities to develop their communication and language; literacy development that encourages children to links sounds and letters and begin to read and write.

1.7 Ensure that children have sufficient opportunities to learn and reach a good standard in English language.

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