

# Inspection of Talmud Torah Chaim Meirim Wiznitz School

26 Lampard Grove, London N16 6XB

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Inspection dates: 12–14 November 2019

## **Overall effectiveness**

**Inadequate**

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The quality of education

**Inadequate**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Good**

Personal development

**Inadequate**

Leadership and management

**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 quality of education at the school in secular subjects is poor. Pupils do not learn to read or communicate in the English language well enough. Pupils do not gain a deep enough understanding of public institutions. They do not learn about other cultures, faiths or beliefs. The curriculum is not ambitious enough. Pupils do not learn about history or geography other than that related to the school's own faith ethos.

Pupils behave well. The school is a calm and orderly environment. Pupils show respect to each other and adults. They enjoy coming to school. Pupils like opportunities in the wider curriculum. For example, they take part in Jewish faith celebrations and in singing competitions.

Bullying is rare at the school. When it does occur, leaders deal with this swiftly. Pupils feel safe in the school. They trust adults to deal with any concerns.

Parents and carers are supportive of the school. They value pupils' opportunities to learn about the Jewish faith. Parents said that staff's regular communication with them was a key strength.

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

Pupils' ability to read English fluently is very limited. Although pupils make a positive start learning initial sounds, teachers do not build on pupils' phonics knowledge to help them to blend the sounds to read words. Pupils are not able to read simple sentences fluently. Pupils do not remember unfamiliar words they have learned before. They struggle to read simple books. Pupils have poor pronunciation and recognition of what they are reading. In Years 6 and 7, pupils make many mistakes in their reading of words and sentences.

Leaders have not created a language-rich environment. Pupils struggle to communicate using the English language. They cannot express themselves well enough. This includes using everyday words in their learning. This is a failure of the school's English teaching.

History and geography subject plans are too narrow. The curriculum plans lack ambition. They fall well short of the aims of the national curriculum in England. Pupils only learn Jewish history in depth. They do not have an understanding of British history or that of other countries. Pupils' geography learning links to themes in the Talmud. Pupils' understanding of geographical features and different continents is very limited. Leaders have begun to think about how to broaden the history planning. However, this is at a very early stage of development.

Leaders' plans to help pupils to appreciate and learn about other cultures, faiths and beliefs are sporadic. Pupils do not have an understanding of cultures other than their own. When they have visitors to the school, almost all are from a similar faith to

them. This severely limits pupils' understanding of the wider society in which they live.

The personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education plans do not take into account all of the protected characteristics. Leaders have clear plans of what pupils should learn in each year. For example, pupils in Year 1 learn about the importance of being kind to guests. Pupils learn about the importance of 'respecting everyone'. Pupils have some experience of learning about democracy and government. For example, they debated different points of views about Brexit. However, pupils' understanding of the British government is poor.

Mathematics and science subject plans have been in place for over a year. These are well structured. Pupils learn to calculate and use decimals. However, pupils have very few opportunities to use their mathematical knowledge to solve problems or to reason mathematically. In science, pupils spoke about doing experiments linked to their learning about electricity and oxygen. However, pupils' use of scientific vocabulary is not strong.

Pupils' past experiences in physical education (PE) were not well structured. Leaders have made positive improvements in PE plans this year. This is intended to give pupils a broader experience of games and competitive sport.

The curriculum leaders' vision for an ambitious curriculum is hampered by the lack of teachers' subject knowledge. Staff have not received subject-specific training. As a result, they do not have the skills required to deepen pupils' learning in topics they teach.

Leaders have not ensured that the school meets the requirements of all the independent school standards. The proprietorial body continues to breach its registration agreement. The school admits pupils over the maximum limit that its registration allows.

Leaders' compliance with health and safety policies and procedures is strong. They know about their responsibilities for site safety.

Leaders have improved some areas of the school since the last inspection. For example, safeguarding is effective. Leaders have an accessibility plan and comply with schedule 10 of the Equality Act. The proprietorial body has a basic understanding of leaders' actions. The use of an external adviser to support the proprietorial body in understanding the school's safeguarding duties has been positive.

Provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities has improved. Leaders use external agencies to meet pupils' needs. Regular social groups help pupils with their speech and language development. However, the school's weak English curriculum does not support these pupils to communicate as well as they should.

Pupils enjoy the opportunities they receive in the wider curriculum. They learn to sew and make things out of wood. They take part in music lessons and everyone joins in. Pupils take part in music competitions with external judges. Some sing in the choir. Pupils take part in many celebrations as part of the school's ethos. Pupils learn about different jobs, including the roles of the emergency services. They enjoyed listening to a pilot talk about his job. Pupils like their trips, including when they go on hikes. However, the pupils' experiences of life outside their immediate community are very limited.

Pupils' behaviour has improved a lot since the last inspection. They have a strong sense of individual responsibility. Teachers encourage pupils to care for each other and others. For example, older pupils act as mentors to younger ones when they are ready to start reading the Torah. Pupils move around the school sensibly. They interact well with adults.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have a good understanding of updates to statutory requirements. They update policies and train staff regularly. As a result, staff know how to raise concerns, including using external agencies if they need to.

Leaders teach pupils about keeping safe, for example on public transport. Pupils know about personal safety. Although pupils do not use the internet in school, pupils know the potential risks of social media.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and proprietor)**

- Pupils do not learn to use their knowledge of phonics to read words well enough. Pupils are not fluent when reading. Leaders should ensure that pupils have regular opportunities to read books. These books should match their phonics skills. Pupils in key stages 2 and 3 should read widely. Leaders must ensure that these pupils are able to read books that match their reading ability.
- Pupils' communication skills in English are poor. Pupils are not able to understand or speak in everyday English. Leaders should address this to ensure that pupils have rich opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills across the school day. The school should ensure that pupils are able to understand subject-specific vocabulary, particularly in science.
- Leaders have supported staff through some external training. However, this training is generic. As a result, staff do not have the subject knowledge to be able to teach subjects in depth. Leaders should ensure that staff receive subject-focused training to deepen their understanding.
- Pupils have opportunities to become fluent with their mathematical calculations.

However, teachers do not regularly expect pupils to use their knowledge to solve problem-solving questions. This limits pupils' achievement in mathematics. Leaders should ensure that teachers are trained in how to teach an ambitious mathematical curriculum which has high expectations for all pupils.

- History and geography are taught through links to topics that match pupils' learning in Kodesh. These subjects do not have ambitious aims. This limits pupils' knowledge of British and other history. Leaders should ensure that the planning of geography and history meets the ambition of the national curriculum. The school should provide pupils with rich experiences to learn about different historical interpretations in depth. Leaders should identify the key knowledge they expect pupils to learn in each year group in history and geography.
- Pupils do not learn about cultures different to their own in depth. As a result, they do not appreciate differences in faiths or beliefs in modern Britain. Leaders should ensure that they have well-planned opportunities for pupils to learn about the diverse cultural heritage in their local area and beyond.
- Leaders have thought about what they want pupils to learn in PSHE education. However, these plans do not take account of pupils learning about diversity in modern Britain. Leaders should ensure that the PSHE education scheme takes into account pupils learning about the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010.

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

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## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	100296
<b>DfE registration number</b>	204/6377
<b>Local authority</b>	Hackney
<b>Inspection number</b>	10092433
<b>Type of school</b>	Other independent school
<b>School category</b>	Independent school
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 13
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Boys
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	263
<b>Proprietor</b>	Chaim Meirim Association Community Nursery (CMA Community Nursery LTD)
<b>Headteacher</b>	S Hoffman
<b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>	£7,500
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8806 0898
<b>Website</b>	The school does not have a website
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:hteacher@ttwiznitz.co.uk">hteacher@ttwiznitz.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	9–12 January 2018

## Information about this school

- The school's previous full standard inspection took place in January 2018, when it was judged to be inadequate.
- The school is registered for up to 237 pupils between the ages of four and thirteen. The school continues to breach the school's registration agreement by having 263 pupils on roll.
- Pupils study Jewish religious studies for the majority of time. The secular curriculum is taught in English.
- The principal was not available for the inspection. The deputy headteachers were in charge. The school has separate senior leaders for Jewish religious studies, for secular subjects and for compliance.
- An interpreter was used by the inspectors to understand lessons taught in Yiddish

and to speak with pupils.

- The school no longer admits pupils in the early years. The school starts with pupils in Year 1.

## **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.

The school has applied to the Department for Education (DfE) to make a material change to its registration. This involved increasing the school's maximum number of pupils from 237 to 450. At the DfE's request, we checked whether the school is likely to meet the relevant independent school standards if the DfE decides to approve the change. This part of the inspection was carried out under section 162(4) of the Education Act 2002.

- The outcome of this part of the inspection is: The school is unlikely to meet the relevant independent school standards if the material change relating to the school provision is implemented. This is because the premises have not been renovated to enable more pupils to attend. If leaders make the planned renovations, there would be sufficient capacity for 400 pupils to attend the school.
- We looked in particular at the quality of the curriculum in reading, history, mathematics and PSHE education. We also considered other subjects as part of looking at the quality of education.
- We met with senior leaders and staff. We met with the chair of the proprietorial body. An inspector had a telephone conversation with an external adviser.
- We scrutinised a wide range of documentary information. We used these to check on the statutory requirements of the independent school standards. This included checking logs of safeguarding training, attendance registers, bullying and behaviour logs, risk assessments, and health and safety audits.
- We met with pupils across the school to discuss their work and to gather information about their learning and their views on behaviour.

## **Inspection team**

Noeman Anwar, lead inspector

David Davies

Her Majesty's Inspector

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(2)(b) that pupils acquire speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills;
  - 2(2)(d)(ii) encourages respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Act;
  - 2(2)(h) that all pupils have the opportunity to learn and make progress;
  - 2(2)(i) effective preparation of pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British society;
  - 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(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.

#### **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)(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 Act.

### **Part 8. Quality of leadership in 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 role 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.

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