

Inspection of TTD Gur School

17 Margaret Road, Stamford Hill, London N16 6UX

Inspection dates: 12 to 14 July 2022

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

The quality of education

Inadequate

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

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?

Pupils study a secular curriculum that is too limited. They study religious education in Yiddish for almost all of the school day. The only other subjects consistently taught are English and mathematics. Pupils also study some science. The arrangements to teach pupils to read in English are poor. Pupils miss out on learning in a range of areas, including creative, technological and physical education. They also miss out on enrichment activities, such as clubs.

Pupils attend school regularly. They enjoy the occasional reward trips. Pupils said that leaders deal with any incidents of bullying quickly. Pupils generally behave well and do their best but teachers' expectations are variable. As a result, pupils' behaviour, especially on corridors and in the early years, is inconsistent.

Although staff are caring and supportive, the school's safeguarding arrangements are not effective and do not have regard to the relevant statutory guidance.

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

The school's secular curriculum is narrow. Only a small amount of time is devoted to teaching pupils in English. Pupils study English and mathematics for a total of an hour and a half each day, on Mondays to Thursdays. Every five weeks, English is replaced with science lessons for the week. No other secular subjects are available. As well as a limited curriculum offer, the time between science lessons means that pupils struggle to remember what they have learned. Leaders do not understand how to plan the curriculum so that pupils learn well. Teachers of the secular curriculum generally teach all subjects, but leaders do not provide them with the training they need to teach these subjects well. The quality of curriculum planning and assessment is too basic, or in some cases, does not exist. Even where planning is more organised in mathematics, it ends in Year 6. It is not clear what pupils in Year 7 are expected to learn.

Early years provision is weak. The school's lack of resources is most obvious in this part of the school. Nursery and Reception classrooms are not the vibrant, exciting places to play and learn that they could be. They contain furniture and resources that are tatty and worn. The 'reading corners' contain mostly damaged books, including those suitable for older readers. The outdoor learning areas for the two Nursery classrooms consist of a barren concrete corridor and a space that contains tricycles and see-saws. Staff are not trained well enough to enable them to understand how to plan, facilitate and support children's learning. Children are not well prepared for Year 1.

Leaders have not taken the steps they said they would at previous inspections, to improve the teaching of reading. There is no phonics programme. Staff are not trained. Children in the early years are not encouraged to speak, play or learn in English. The quality of reading books available to pupils is poor throughout the

school. Many staff in the early years cannot speak English. Consequently, some of the school's oldest pupils struggle with their reading.

Leaders do not provide pupils with enrichment opportunities beyond preparing for, and celebrating, religious festivals. For example, there are no extra-curricular clubs. Pupils between the ages of seven and 12 attend the school. This is contrary to the conditions of the school's registration. This concern is exacerbated by the lack of any arrangements to provide pupils of secondary age with impartial careers information, advice and guidance. There is no provision for physical education at all, including changing and shower facilities for pupils of secondary age. These weaknesses limit pupils' personal development.

Pupils are not well prepared for life in modern British society. They are respectful, polite and eager to learn. Some were excited to talk to inspectors about their school. Pupils especially enjoy their religious education. The oldest pupils felt well prepared for their next steps. They learn about British values. However, they are taught very little about faiths and cultures other than their own. The manner in which pupils are taught about the diversity of modern Britain does not encourage tolerance and respect for other faiths, cultures or people who are different to the pupils at the school. The curriculum content is not suitable for the older children placed at the school, particularly those of secondary age. Leaders redact some information from the curriculum, such as information about evolution and reproduction.

The school has a policy for relationships education and has consulted with parents and carers but has made no progress in implementing relationships and sex education since the previous inspection.

Leadership and governance are in a state of flux. Members of the proprietor body, who also fulfil a governance role, are no longer active. They are in the process of being replaced. The headteacher for the secular curriculum is also going to be replaced. The school intends to employ a new, more senior headteacher to oversee the entire school. None of these positions have been filled. The outgoing chair of the proprietor body intends to appoint new proprietors quickly. Those likely to take over as proprietors understand the need for urgent change. An initial action plan is in place and external support has been commissioned.

This is the eighth consecutive inspection to judge many of the independent school standards to be not met. These standards mostly relate to the quality of education, pupils' social and cultural development, and safeguarding.

The school's work to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is a relative strength. This area is well led. Pupils' needs are identified early, and are well catered for. Pupils, including those with education, health and care (EHC) plans, receive a range of effective therapeutic and learning support in the school's SEND department. These pupils are included well in the life of the school. However, leaders do not ensure that statements of income and expenditure are provided annually to all placing authorities for pupils with EHC plans.

Staff say that they have no concerns about their workload or well-being. They feel well supported.

Since the previous inspection, leaders have complied with the Department for Education's restriction notice and stopped admitting new pupils.

Leaders have produced and implemented a basic accessibility plan. The school is therefore compliant with schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

The school's safeguarding and staff recruitment policies reflect the latest national guidance and are available from the school's office. However, leaders have a poor understanding of their content. They do not follow their own procedures to recruit staff, including in relation to application forms, interviews and references. Leaders had not read and followed the guidance on completing barred list checks for applicants who needed them. These were completed and recorded during the inspection.

Staff are caring, and pupils have trusted adults they can go to for help. However, staff do not receive regular training and updates. This limits their ability to identify signs of potential concern and recognise when to report these.

Pupils' learning about keeping themselves safe, beyond 'stranger danger' and road and cycle safety, is too limited.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and proprietor)

- The arrangements for leadership and governance are in a state of flux. There is a lack of clarity as to who is actively responsible for the school's leadership, management and governance. Leaders should work together at pace to appoint to the vacant proprietor body and senior leadership positions.
- Safeguarding is not effective because leaders do not know, and do not implement, their own policies. The safer recruitment process is weak. Staff are not trained and updated regularly enough, including how to teach pupils about keeping themselves safe. Leaders should take action to improve safeguarding arrangements. They must ensure that all aspects of safeguarding, including the recruitment process and training for staff, pay regard to the latest statutory guidance.
- The secular curriculum is too narrow. Leaders should significantly broaden the range of subjects offered to ensure that pupils learn in all the required areas. They should ensure that a suitable curriculum policy is in place, supported by curriculum plans in all subjects.

- The arrangements to teach pupils to read in English are poor. Leaders should realise their plans to train staff to teach a phonics programme from the start of Reception. Leaders should increase opportunities for pupils to speak, read and write in English. Leaders should also ensure older pupils are provided with the required support to catch up with their reading.
- There is no professional training available to teachers. Leaders should introduce a suitable professional development offer for teachers to ensure that they have the required expertise to plan, teach and assess well in the subjects they teach. The training programme should also include strategies for the consistent management of pupils' behaviour.
- There is a lack of resources in the school, especially in the early years. There is a lack of suitable reading books in English. Too many resources, including books, are tatty and damaged. Leaders should ensure that all areas of the school, including all subjects, are well resourced, and that these resources are well cared for. Leaders should significantly improve the early years classrooms and outdoor learning areas.
- Pupils' personal development is limited by the lack of extra-curricular provision for pupils to learn and develop their talents and interests, such as in the creative arts or sports. There are no arrangements to provide pupils of secondary age with regular, impartial careers information, advice and guidance. Leaders should ensure that there are more opportunities to support pupils' personal development.
- The school does not have a relationships and sex education programme. The relationships education policy for primary-aged pupils contains inaccuracies, does not have regard to the relevant statutory guidance and has not been implemented.
- The curriculum policy, plans of work and content delivered for PSHE do not teach respect and tolerance for all groups of people. The teaching of differences, including about other faiths, beliefs and cultures, is too limited. Some topics are avoided and redacted. Leaders should review and strengthen their approach to preparing pupils more suitably for the diversity of modern British society.
- The school does not provide physical education. In addition, there are no changing room and shower facilities for pupils of secondary age. Leaders should ensure that all pupils access physical education and that secondary-aged pupils have access to suitable facilities.
- Leaders should ensure they provide placing authorities with annual statements of income and expenditure for all pupils with EHC plans.
- Many independent school standards and early years foundation stage requirements are not met, as listed in the annex to this report. Leaders should ensure that they know all these requirements and take action to ensure that they are all met consistently.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted

Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

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

If you are the provider and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

School details

Unique reference number	138101
DfE registration number	204/6005
Local authority	Hackney
Inspection number	10226767
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	244
Number of part-time pupils	None
Proprietor	Talmud Torah D'chasidei Gur Limited
Chair	Abraham Schreiber
Headteacher	Israel Najman
Annual fees (day pupils)	Variable
Telephone number	020 8806 5774
Website	None
Email address	ttdgur@gmail.com
Dates of previous inspection	29 to 31 October 2019

Information about this school

- TTD Gur School is an independent Orthodox Jewish school in Hackney.
- The school is operating beyond its registration agreement. The school is registered for up to 140 boys between the ages of three and seven years. The school has 245 pupils on roll, including boys aged up to 12.
- The school is currently subject to enforcement action. A restriction on admissions was imposed by the Department for Education so that no new pupils were to be admitted to the school after 22 September 2021. At the February 2022 progress monitoring inspection, some pupils had started school when they should not. This is because leaders were using the admission register as a de facto 'waiting list'. The school was therefore in breach of the restriction order. This practice has stopped. No new pupils have been admitted to the school since the February 2022 inspection.
- The school's previous standard inspection took place in October 2019. Two progress monitoring inspections have taken place since then, in March 2021 and February 2022. This is the fourth consecutive standard inspection judging the school's overall effectiveness to be inadequate.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors 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.

- This standard inspection was conducted with one day's notice.
- Inspectors completed deep dives in these areas: reading, science, personal, social, health and economic education, and Jewish history. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, looked at pupils' work, spoke to teachers, and spoke to some pupils about their learning. Inspectors also heard pupils read.
- Inspectors considered a range of evidence to consider pupils' safety, personal development and behaviour. They spoke with a range of pupils. In line with leaders' request, inspectors did not ask pupils questions about relationships and sex education.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, the school's SEND leader, and the chair of the proprietor body.

- Inspectors met with the school’s safeguarding leader and reviewed a range of safeguarding documentation, including the pre-appointment checks on staff.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of evidence to check compliance with the independent school standards.

Inspection team

James Waite, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Karen Matthews

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 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(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)(b) that pupils acquire speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills;
 - 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(1);
 - 2(2)(e) for pupils receiving secondary education, access to accurate, up-to-date careers guidance that–
 - 2(2)(e)(i) is presented in an impartial manner;
 - 2(2)(e)(ii) enables them to make informed choices about a broad range of career options; and
 - 2(2)(e)(iii) helps to encourage them to fulfil their potential;
 - 2(2)(f) where the school has pupils below compulsory school age, a programme of activities which is appropriate to their educational needs in relation to personal, social, emotional and physical development and communication and language skills;
 - 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.
- 2A(1) The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor–
 - 2A(1)(a) ensures that every registered pupil who is provided with primary education at the school is provided with relationships education,

- 2A(1)(b) ensures that every registered pupil who is provided with secondary education at the school is provided with relationships and sex education, except in so far as the pupil is excused as mentioned in sub-paragraph (2),
 - 2A(1)(d) in making arrangements for the purposes of paragraphs (a), (b) or (c), has regard to any guidance under section 80A of the Education Act 2002 that applies in relation to the provision of education by maintained schools,
 - 2A(1)(e) makes and keeps up to date a separate written statement of its policy with regard to the provision of education as required by each of paragraphs (a) and (b).
- 2A(2) Arrangements made by the proprietor for the purposes of sub-paragraph (1)(b) must ensure that where a pupil’s parent requests that the pupil is wholly or partly excused from sex education provided as part of relationships and sex education, the pupil is so excused until the request is withdrawn, unless or to the extent that the head teacher considers that the pupil should not be so excused.
- 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(f) utilises effectively classroom resources of a good quality, quantity and range;
 - 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; 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(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;
- 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)(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; and
- 5(b)(vi) encourage respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Act.

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.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

- 23(1) Subject to sub-paragraph (2), the standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that–
 - 23(1)(c) suitable changing accommodation and showers are provided for pupils aged 11 years or over at the start of the school year who receive physical education.

Part 6. Provision of information

- 32(1) The standard about the provision of information by the school is met if the proprietor ensures that–
 - 32(1)(h) where a pupil wholly or partly funded by a local authority (except where funding is solely for free of charge early years provision in accordance with the duty contained in section 7 of the Childcare Act 2006) is registered at the school, an annual account of income received and expenditure incurred by the school in respect of that pupil is provided to the local authority and, on request, to the Secretary of State.

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; and
 - 34(1)(c) actively promote the well-being of pupils.

Early Years Foundation Stage

- 1.6. Educational programmes must involve activities and experiences for children, as set out under each of the areas of learning.

Communication and Language

The development of children’s spoken language underpins all seven areas of learning and development. Children’s back-and-forth interactions from an early age form the foundations for language and cognitive development. The number and quality of the conversations they have with adults and peers throughout the day in a language-rich environment is crucial. By commenting on what children are interested in or doing, and echoing back what they say with new vocabulary added, practitioners will build children’s language effectively. Reading frequently to children, and engaging them actively in stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems, and then providing them with extensive opportunities to use and embed new words in a range of contexts, will give children the opportunity to thrive. Through conversation, story-telling and role play, where children share their ideas with support and modelling from their teacher, and sensitive questioning that invites them to elaborate, children become comfortable using a rich range of vocabulary and language structures.

Literacy

It is crucial for children to develop a life-long love of reading. Reading consists of two dimensions: language comprehension and word reading. Language comprehension (necessary for both reading and writing) starts from birth. It only develops when adults talk with children about the world around them and the books (stories and non-fiction) they read with them, and enjoy rhymes, poems and songs together. Skilled word reading, taught later, involves both the speedy working out of the pronunciation of unfamiliar printed words (decoding) and the speedy recognition of familiar printed words. Writing involves transcription (spelling and handwriting) and composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech, before writing).

- 1.13 For children whose home language is not English, providers must take reasonable steps to provide opportunities for children to develop and use their home language in play and learning, supporting their language development at home. Providers must also ensure that children have sufficient opportunities to learn and reach a good standard in English language during the EYFS, ensuring children are ready to benefit from the opportunities available to them when they begin year 1. When assessing communication, language and literacy skills, practitioners must assess children's skills in English. If a child does not have a strong grasp of English language, practitioners must explore the child's skills in the home language with parents and/or carers, to establish whether there is cause for concern about language delay.

- 3.7. Providers must have regard to the government's statutory guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' and to the 'Prevent duty guidance for England and Wales'. All schools are required to have regard to the government's 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' statutory guidance, and other childcare providers may also find it helpful to refer to this guidance. If providers have concerns about children's safety or welfare, they must notify agencies with statutory responsibilities without delay. This means the local children's social care services and, in emergencies, the police.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

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