

# Inspection of Talmud Torah Chaim Meirim Wiznitz School

26 Lampard Grove, London N16 6XB

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Inspection dates: 28 to 30 June 2022

## **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 boys who attend this school enjoy their learning here. However, leaders have not prioritised the secular curriculum sufficiently. While pupils study a wide range of subjects in the secular curriculum, leaders have allocated too little time to teaching these subjects and planning is often weak. This means that pupils do not learn secular subjects in depth.

Leaders have started to make necessary changes to the school's curriculum. There have been some improvements since the previous inspection. Staff now teach pupils to read using a sequenced phonics programme. Again, however, leaders have not allocated enough time to teaching early reading. This makes it difficult for pupils to build the reading fluency needed to be successful in other subjects that are taught in English.

Pupils behave well around the school, including at breaktimes. Staff are quick to sort out any incidents of bullying or disruption. Staff follow a consistent approach to supporting pupils' behaviour.

Leaders broaden pupils' experience through various educational visits. For example, pupils engage in outdoor activities such as canoeing. Pupils feel valued and part of the school's community.

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

Leaders have increased the range of secular subjects that pupils learn since the previous inspection. However, staff do not have time to teach secular subjects in sufficient depth. This means that pupils' knowledge in these subjects is poor. Staff do not develop pupils' English language skills well enough. As a result, pupils struggle to understand when lessons are taught in English. The quality of education in the secular curriculum continues to be weak.

Staff follow a structured programme to teach mathematics, but spend little time each week teaching mathematics. This means that teaching does not cover the planned subject content. Pupils understand some basic mathematics, but their knowledge is limited. Pupils in Year 6, for example, have learned how to divide three-digit numbers. However, they could not apply this learning to solving word problems. Staff do not check carefully what pupils know and understand. This means that lessons do not build effectively on what pupils have learned previously and remember.

Since the previous inspection, leaders have adopted a phonics programme to support pupils who are learning to read in English. Staff identify any pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, who have gaps in their understanding. These pupils receive focused support with reading. However, leaders do not ensure that pupils have frequent opportunities to practise their reading skills. For example, pupils in Years 1 and 2 have only one or two reading sessions in school

each week. This means that pupils struggle to remember what they have learned and do not build reading fluency and confidence. Books that pupils read are closely matched to the sounds that they have learned in reading lessons. However, pupils are not able to use these reading books beyond the classroom to practise their reading further.

Other subjects in the secular curriculum are taught during lessons in Jewish studies. There is very little structure or coherence to the secular subject curriculum content. Planning does not take the needs of all pupils into account. In subjects such as history, leaders have not given careful thought to what pupils should be taught and when. For example, pupils learn about historical events, but not in any detail. Staff do not teach pupils how to look at different sources of historical evidence, or to think about how and why there may be contrasting interpretations of the past. As at the time of the previous inspection, pupils' knowledge is limited.

Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school so that learning is not interrupted. Staff encourage pupils to be kind and to contribute to society. For example, pupils have opportunities to sing for audiences at school and at a nearby nursing home. Pupils are taught personal, social and health education through Jewish studies lessons. However, tolerance of, and mutual respect for others are not encouraged because pupils are taught extremely limited details about faiths and cultures other than their own.

Leaders organise educational outings for pupils to help extend their learning. Leaders have developed a relationships education policy that is available to parents and carers on request, in line with current statutory guidance. They have consulted parents about the planned policy. However, pupils are not being provided with the full relationships education programme. For example, pupils are not taught that others' families may look different from their own families.

Leaders do not prioritise staff training or professional development. Although staff said that leaders support them well and consider their workload, staff have limited time to work with colleagues and share ideas.

The proprietor body does not sufficiently hold leaders to account for the quality of education. Although leaders have introduced the teaching of phonics, the proprietor body has not challenged school leaders to address all weaknesses identified in the secular curriculum since the previous inspection.

Leaders comply with schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010. They have an accessibility plan in place to remove barriers to education, as well as to ensure that the building is accessible.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders maintain accurate records of pre-employment checks made on staff's suitability to work with pupils. These checks meet statutory requirements.

Staff receive regular safeguarding training. They know about different risks to pupils' welfare and what they should do if they have any concerns. Leaders take appropriate action to deal with any potential safeguarding issues that arise.

Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe, including when online. They know that they can speak to their teachers if they have any problems, or can use one of the 'worry boxes' to express their concerns.

Safeguarding policies are available to parents on request from the school office and by email. Leaders make sure that the safeguarding policy includes the most up-to-date government guidance.

### **What does the school need to do to improve? (Information for the school and proprietor)**

- Leaders and the proprietor body have not ensured that secular curriculum thinking has identified all the key subject content that pupils need to know and the order in which it should be taught. Leaders do not give sufficient time to the teaching of the secular curriculum. Teachers do not have time to teach or assess these subjects effectively. Teachers' professional development time is limited. As a result of these weaknesses, pupils' knowledge and understanding in secular subjects are limited. Leaders and the proprietor body must ensure that pupils have the opportunity to study a wide range of secular subjects in sufficient depth, following a sequence of learning that helps them to build up cumulative knowledge securely over time.
- Leaders do not give sufficient time to the teaching of early reading. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 do not build up reading fluency quickly enough. Staff have the knowledge to teach phonics effectively. However, pupils do not have sufficient time to practise and embed what they are learning. This means that pupils do not read as well as they should. Leaders should ensure that enough time is allocated to reading across the school.
- Leaders do not develop pupils' English language skills well, including in speaking and listening. As a result, pupils find it difficult to communicate in English and to understand lessons that are taught in English. This hinders pupils' learning. Leaders and the proprietor body should ensure that pupils' English language skills are developed effectively.
- Leaders and the proprietor body do not ensure that pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. Pupils have limited knowledge of cultures and religions other than their own. Pupils are not taught relationships education in line with the school's own policy and statutory guidance. Leaders should ensure that the personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum helps pupils to gain an understanding and appreciation of different cultures and religions. They should

ensure that the PSHE and relationships education programmes cover all age-appropriate aspects of statutory guidance and are delivered fully.

- The proprietor body has not made sure that the independent school standards are met consistently. It has not provided leaders with the support and challenge needed to address all the weaknesses identified at the time of the previous standard inspection. This has contributed to leaders' failure to secure and maintain improvements, particularly to the secular curriculum. The proprietor body must improve its oversight of leaders' work. This includes making sure that the school complies consistently with all the independent school standards.

## **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 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	100296
<b>DfE registration number</b>	204/6377
<b>Local authority</b>	Hackney
<b>Inspection number</b>	10226752
<b>Type of school</b>	Other independent school
<b>School category</b>	Independent school
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	5 to 13
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Boys
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	263
<b>Number of part-time pupils</b>	0
<b>Proprietor</b>	Chaim Meirim Association Community Nursery (CMA Community Nursery Ltd)
<b>Chair</b>	Ephraim Gottesfeld
<b>Headteacher</b>	Gittle Koppenheim (Acting Headteacher)
<b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>	£7,500
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8806 0898
<b>Website</b>	None
<b>Email address</b>	cmz@wiznitz.co.uk
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	12 to 14 November 2019

## Information about this school

- This is an independent day school for boys of Orthodox Jewish faith.
- The school does not include provision for children in early years. A separately registered nursery, CMA Nursery (EY314096), operates at the same address.
- Leaders have decided to close the secondary phase of the school temporarily. All pupils on the school roll are currently aged five to 11 years.
- The school's curriculum includes Kodesh (Jewish studies) as well as secular subjects (Chol). The majority of the school day is allocated to the teaching of the Kodesh curriculum and is not taught in English.
- Leaders do 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 was the first routine inspection the school had received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders, and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, members of the proprietor body and members of staff.
- Inspectors did deep dives in early reading, mathematics, PSHE and history. Inspectors discussed these subjects with staff, looked at pupils' work, visited lessons and spoke with pupils. Other subjects were considered as part of this inspection.
- Leaders requested that inspectors did not ask certain questions about relationships education. A member of school staff was present whenever inspectors spoke with pupils.
- Inspectors checked records of the checks on staff suitability and reviewed documentation, including documentation relating to safeguarding, health and safety, fire safety and risk assessment. Inspectors held meetings with the leaders with responsibility for safeguarding. Inspectors spoke with staff and pupils about safeguarding.
- Inspectors toured the premises to check compliance with aspects of the independent school standards.

- Inspectors observed social times at break- and lunchtime and spoke to pupils about their experiences at school.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted Parent View and considered written comments received from parents.

### **Inspection team**

Adam Vincent, lead inspector

Her Majesty's 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)(c) where the principal language of instruction is a language other than English, lessons in English, except where this matter does not apply in respect of a school which provides education for pupils who are all temporarily resident in England and which follows the curriculum of another country;
  - 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)(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)(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;
- 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(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;

## **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)(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;

## **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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