

Inspection of Talmud Torah Machzikei Hadass School

1 Belz Terrace, Clapton Common, London E5 9SN

Inspection dates: 8 to 10 November 2022

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

The quality of education

Inadequate

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Inadequate

Early years provision

Good

Overall effectiveness at previous
inspection

Inadequate

Does the school meet the independent
school standards?

No

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy coming to school and learning with their friends. They like both their Hebrew and secular studies. Pupils in the primary phase enjoy learning to read and listening to stories. In early years, the curriculum is well planned and ambitious, including in early reading and phonics. This means that children acquire the knowledge they need to be prepared for their learning in Year 1.

Leaders have a clear vision of what they want pupils to achieve. However, the range of subjects that pupils learn is narrow. In the primary phase, pupils only study English, mathematics and science. They do not receive an education in other secular subjects, such as physical education and history. Once pupils reach the secondary phase, their education is narrowed further. This is because pupils only study a Hebrew curriculum, with no secular subjects taught at all.

Pupils behave well. They said that bullying is rare. They learn about bullying in assemblies and lessons and they are taught to respect each other. Pupils trust their teachers to look after them. They are confident that teachers will resolve any problems when they tell them. Leaders and staff manage any concerns about behaviour effectively. This helps to create a positive environment for learning.

Pupils said that they feel safe in school. However, leaders do not make sure that the premises are safe and well maintained. They do not keep accurate and up-to-date records of admissions and attendance. This makes it difficult for staff to know whether all pupils who should be in school are in school, and, when necessary, to take action to protect pupils' welfare.

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

Leaders, including the proprietor, have given too little attention to putting in place a suitably broad and ambitious secular curriculum. In Years 1 to 11, pupils do not gain experiences in many of the areas of education required by the independent school standards (the standards).

In the secondary phase, from Year 8 upwards, pupils study no secular subjects. While primary-age pupils learn English, mathematics and science, the curriculum in other subjects remains too limited. These weaknesses mean that pupils are unable to develop their knowledge and skills. Leaders have been told this before at previous inspections, yet their actions to secure necessary improvements in many subjects are not being taken quickly enough. Leaders have not ensured that pupils have the knowledge they need for their next steps, including for their future lives in modern Britain.

Leaders plan to broaden the range of secular subjects that they offer in the future. For example, they are planning to introduce history this year. However, the speed of development is slow.

Pupils sometimes have the opportunity to develop creatively in other subject areas. For example, pupils have learned to play African drums and to make butter. Nevertheless, these experiences do not form part of a planned and well-delivered curriculum. Instead, they are offered as one-off enrichment activities, with no consideration given to how pupils might build on or apply what they have learned.

In the primary phase, leaders have prioritised the planning and sequencing of early reading and mathematics. Leaders have invested in commercial schemes to support their work. They have organised these subjects so that pupils acquire knowledge progressively over time. Staff have received training so that they are able to deliver the schemes of work effectively. Teachers check what pupils know and remember in lessons. If they identify gaps in pupils' learning, they address these promptly so that pupils are ready to move on. Leaders piloted a new programme of learning for science last term. They are now implementing this across the primary phase and in Year 7. However, this work is at a very early stage of development.

Reading and mathematics are also a priority for children in early years. Leaders have well-developed plans that cover the seven areas of learning. These are taught with a focus on making sure that children develop knowledge in a logical manner. This means that children are prepared for their learning in Year 1. Children enjoy learning and exploring, both inside and outside the classroom. Staff enhance children's learning with enrichment activities, including outings in the local community. The learning and development requirements of the early years foundation stage framework are met.

Leaders have prioritised early reading. They understand how important this is. Children learn to read from the start of Reception Year. All staff receive regular training to teach the school's chosen phonics scheme. Pupils read books that match the sounds that they know. Teachers read to pupils daily in the Reception class. As pupils get older, they take their phonics books home to practise reading with parents and carers. Leaders check the sounds that pupils know and provide support for those pupils who need to catch up with the expectations of the phonics programme.

Leaders have put in place secure systems to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Leaders are quick to identify any pupil who may be struggling. They work with teachers to provide support for these pupils in class. When necessary, pupils receive the support of an additional adult in class or through one-to-one support from professionals, for example for speech, language and communication needs.

Pupils are taught about the importance of good friendships and how to respect one another. This is reflected in their behaviour in lessons and around school. Pupils are well behaved and polite. They listen to their teachers and one another. They play well together in the playground. Children in early years are taught how to share and take turns. Routines in lessons are well established, and learning is rarely disrupted due to poor behaviour.

Personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education is delivered through the Hebrew curriculum. This is supplemented by daily assemblies. Leaders plan the PSHE programme around themes from the Torah, which change each week. These themes are repeated each year, and pupils study the topics in more depth as they get older. Pupils learn about other faiths and life in modern Britain. They go on outings and have recently been on trips to HMS Belfast and to the Tower of London. They also learn about democracy and vote for their own class representatives, who then make suggestions to the headteacher about potential improvements to the school. Pupils are taught about ways they can be healthy. For example, they learned about oral hygiene when a dentist visited the school. In the secondary phase, outside speakers visit the school to talk about different careers available to pupils in the future.

In the secondary phase, the school's programme for relationships and sex education (RSE) and its implementation do not have regard to the Department for Education's statutory guidance on RSE. At the request of parents and carers, all secondary-aged pupils have been withdrawn from sex education. Leaders have not made sure that the curriculum covers all aspects of relationships education. Pupils are not taught the required content about different types of respectful relationships that people may have, with reference to the protected characteristics. This reduces how well pupils are equipped for life outside school.

The planned PSHE education curriculum encourages respect for all. However, it does not cover respect for all the different characteristics that people may have, and that people who have these characteristics are protected by law from discrimination.

Leaders and the proprietor have not ensured that all the standards have been met. Leaders do not have sufficient oversight of health and safety issues in the school that could cause harm to pupils. Daily checks of the premises are carried out by leaders and staff, but these do not enable leaders to identify and deal with all potential risks. Fire safety checks are conducted, and records are kept of fire drills. However, not all recommendations for improvement are then acted on in a timely way by leaders. This poses a potential risk to the pupils and adults in the building. The statutory welfare requirements of the early years foundation stage are not met.

The proprietary body is aware of its statutory responsibilities. However, it has not taken suitable or effective steps to ensure that the school meets the standards. Weaknesses found at this inspection, particularly in relation to the quality of education, have been repeatedly identified during previous inspections of the school. Many areas of the secular curriculum have been given too little priority.

The school is compliant with schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

Leaders do not maintain accurate admissions and attendance records in accordance with legislation and the requirements of the standards. Leaders and staff are unclear about which pupils should be attending the school. This means that leaders lack accurate, up-to-date information to identify and respond to concerns about pupils' attendance and welfare.

Leaders have an up-to-date safeguarding policy that references the most recent statutory guidance. The school does not have a website, but parents may request a copy of the policy from the school.

Leaders make sure that staff receive annual safeguarding training as well as refresher courses during the year. Staff are aware of their duty to keep pupils safe. They are alert to the different risks that pupils may face. Staff know how to report concerns that they have and they know that no concern is too small to mention. Pupils are taught to keep themselves safe and they know to whom they should report concerns.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and the proprietor)

- The curriculum in the primary and secondary phases lacks ambition. Pupils study a narrow range of secular subjects in the primary phase. From Year 8 onwards, pupils only follow a religious studies curriculum. This limits pupils' learning and does not prepare them for life in modern Britain. Leaders should ensure that pupils have access to a curriculum that is appropriately ambitious and ensure that this curriculum is well planned and taught.
- Weaknesses in leaders' maintenance of the admissions and attendance register pose a risk to pupils' welfare. This is because leaders and staff are unable to know which pupils are in school or should be in school and to take appropriate action in the light of any concerns that they identify. Leaders must ensure that the admissions and attendance registers are accurate and completed in line with statutory requirements. This includes ensuring that these registers record pupils' names correctly.
- Leaders and the proprietary body do not take appropriate steps to ensure that the premises are safe and suitable. Checks on the premises do not help leaders to identify risk. When risks are identified, leaders do not act effectively to reduce these risks, including those related to fire safety. Leaders must take effective steps to ensure that the premises provides a safe environment, and that timely and suitable actions are taken to address or mitigate any risks that they identify.
- In the secondary phase, the implementation of the curriculum for RSE does not have regard to the Department for Education's statutory guidance on RSE. Pupils are not taught what is required by the statutory guidance about different forms of relationships. The PSHE education programme does not promote respect for all people, including those with protected characteristics. This affects how effectively pupils are prepared for life in modern Britain. Leaders should ensure that all

aspects of the school's approach to RSE and PSHE education comply with the statutory guidance for RSE and the standards.

- The proprietary body and leaders have not ensured that all the independent school standards have been met. Leaders must ensure that all the independent school standards are consistently met.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	100294
DfE registration number	204/6331
Local authority	Hackney
Inspection number	10242728
Type of school	Other independent school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	3 to 16
Gender of pupils	Boys
Number of pupils on the school roll	649
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Moreshet Hatorah Ltd
Chair	Rabbi Baumgarten and Rabbi Klein
Headteacher	Rabbi Abeless
Annual fees (day pupils)	None
Telephone number	0208 800 6599
Website	None
Email address	compliance@belzlondon.com
Date of previous inspection	6 July 2021

Information about this school

- Talmud Torah Machzikei Hadass School is an independent Jewish day school for boys.
- The school caters for children from age three in early years and pupils up to age 12 at 1 Belz Terrace, Clapton Common, London E5 9SN. Pupils aged 12 to 16 attend at 87 Lampard Grove, London N16 6XA.
- Leaders make no use of alternative provision.
- The school's most recent inspection was an additional inspection that took place in July 2021. The most recent standard inspection was carried out from 28 to 30 January 2020.
- The Secretary of State for Education imposed a restriction on the school on 17 January 2022. The restriction is still in force. The restriction means that the proprietor must not admit any new pupils to the school from 17 February 2022.

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.

- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, a representative of the proprietary body, the compliance officer and other staff. Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation provided by the school to check compliance with the independent school standards. They also toured the school's premises.
- Inspectors did deep dives in early reading, mathematics, science and PSHE education. Inspectors visited lessons, reviewed pupils' work, met with pupils to discuss their learning and met with subject leaders and teachers. Inspectors also listened to pupils read. The curriculum in other subjects was considered as part of the inspection.
- Through discussions with leaders, the proprietary body representative, pupils and staff, inspectors considered how effectively pupils are safeguarded. Inspectors also looked at records related to safeguarding, including records of employment checks carried out before staff are appointed.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils. Pupils' behaviour in lessons and at playtimes was observed. At the request of leaders, inspectors did not ask pupils

about specific aspects of the PSHE education and RSE curriculums, including some of the subject content set out in the statutory guidance for RSE.

- Inspectors spoke to a range of staff about safeguarding, pupils' behaviour and staff workload. Inspectors looked at the responses to Ofsted's survey of parents, Ofsted Parent View. There were no responses to Ofsted's surveys for pupils or staff.

The school's progress in meeting previously failed standards

During the inspection we checked whether the school now meets the independent school standards that it was judged to have failed at its previous progress monitoring inspection on 6 July 2021.

- The outcome of this part of the inspection is: **the school continues to not meet all of the previously failed standards.**

Information about the progress monitoring inspection

- This part of the inspection was carried out at the request of the registration authority for independent schools. The purpose of the inspection was to monitor the progress the school has made in meeting the independent school standards and other requirements that it was judged to not comply with at its previous inspection. It was carried out without notice.
- The Department of Education requested that the inspectors consider whether particular independent school standards contained within parts 1, 2 and 8 and are now met.
- This was the school's second progress monitoring inspection since the school's previous standard inspection in January 2020. The first progress monitoring inspection took place in July 2021 and found that the school did not meet all of the standards that were checked during the inspection.

The school now meets the following standards

Part 1. Quality of education provided

- 3 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that the teaching at the school—
 - 3(c) involves well planned lessons and effective teaching methods, activities and management of class time;
 - 3(e) demonstrates good knowledge and understanding of the subject matter being taught;

Inspection team

Mark Smith, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

John Lamborn

His Majesty's Inspector

Phil Garnham

His Majesty's 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)(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];

- 2A(1) The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor–
 - 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

- 3 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that the teaching at the school–
 - 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;

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)(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.
- 11 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that relevant health and safety laws are complied with by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written health and safety policy.
- 12 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.
- 15 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that an admission and attendance register is maintained in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006[13].
- 16 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that–
 - 16(a) the welfare of pupils is safeguarded and promoted by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written risk assessment policy; and
 - 16(b) appropriate action is taken to reduce risks that are identified.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

- 25 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that the school premises and the accommodation and facilities provided therein are maintained to a standard such that, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of pupils are ensured.

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.

The school failed to meet the following statutory requirements of the early years foundation stage

The safeguarding and welfare requirements

3.55. Providers must ensure that their premises, including overall floor space and outdoor spaces, are fit for purpose and suitable for the age of children cared for and the activities provided on the premises. Providers must comply with requirements of health and safety legislation (including fire safety and hygiene requirements).

3.65. Providers must ensure that they take all reasonable steps to ensure staff and children in their care are not exposed to risks and must be able to demonstrate how they are managing risks. Providers must determine where it is helpful to make some written risk assessments in relation to specific issues, to inform staff practice, and to demonstrate how they are managing risks if asked by parents and/or carers or inspectors. Risk assessments should identify aspects of the environment that need to be checked on a regular basis, when and by whom those aspects will be checked, and how the risk will be removed or minimised.

3.77. A daily record of the names of the children being cared for on the premises, their hours of attendance and the names of each child's key person.

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