

# Torah Vodaas

Brent Park Road, London NW9 7AJ

## Inspection date

14 November 2023

## Overall outcome

**The school meets all of the independent school standards that were checked during this inspection**

## Main inspection findings

### Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

*Paragraphs 7, 7(a), 7(b), 32(1)(c) and national minimum standard 3.7*

- At the school's previous inspection in February 2023, inspectors found that leaders' knowledge of statutory safeguarding guidance was weak. For example, leaders were not aware of their duties to inform the local authority designated officer (LADO) about allegations against members of staff. At that time, record-keeping procedures lacked rigour. Child protection information, including concerns about pupils' welfare, was not recorded clearly or in sufficient detail. The lack of detail meant that leaders did not have clear, concise and up-to-date records of pupils' all-round circumstances. In addition, and as a result of the weaknesses in safeguarding, the school did not meet the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the early years foundation stage.
- The school's post-inspection action plan outlined a range of suitable and timely actions. Leaders acted swiftly and with urgency to address the weaknesses and to put things right.
- This inspection found that leaders have a secure understanding of the latest statutory safeguarding information. Leaders have overhauled all record-keeping procedures. Records now show clearly the actions leaders have taken to address any safeguarding and welfare concerns about pupils. Leaders have improved the referral process so that staff are clear about how to record and report their concerns. Leaders have introduced a centralised system where leaders responsible for safeguarding keep a careful check on pupils' well-being.
- The designated safeguarding lead and others with safeguarding responsibilities have undertaken additional training to improve their knowledge. They have liaised with the LADO to strengthen their understanding of thresholds and procedures for reporting concerns about staff, including allegations.
- Discussions with staff and pupils demonstrate a positive culture of safeguarding which exists within the school. Pupils said they feel safe and well cared for. Staff understand their roles in keeping pupils safe from harm.
- The school's safeguarding policy is appropriate. Hard copies are available to parents and carers. The school does not have a website.

- These independent school standards (the standards) are now met.

#### *Paragraph 11*

- At the previous inspection in February 2023, leaders were not able to show that the school's health and safety policy was implemented effectively. This was because some of the documentation related to checks on the school's premises was not made available during the inspection.
- The school's post-inspection action plan included a range of appropriate actions. Leaders acted with urgency to make all records available. Leaders undertook a range of additional actions to further strengthen the school's health and safety arrangements.
- This inspection found that leaders had implemented their intended actions. Records are kept in school and are readily available. Documentation shows that leaders ensure that all the required site safety and maintenance checks are carried out. Leaders have devised a series of internal procedures which allow them and governors to keep on top of what needs to happen and when. Leaders have refined roles and responsibilities so that everyone is clear about who should do what. They ensure that the caretaker, for example, completes the required daily checks.
- Leaders commissioned the services of the local authority to check and audit the school's health and safety arrangements. Leaders acted swiftly to any recommendations that were suggested. This inspection found that the site continues to be well maintained. Leaders have improved some aspects of the building to ensure that staff and pupils can move around safely.
- These standards are now met.

#### *Paragraph 15*

- Until the time of the February 2023 inspection, leaders did not know that they must notify the local authority when pupils leave the school and when they are removed from the school's admissions register. At the time of the previous inspection, there were gaps in the register and leavers' destinations were not completed in full.
- This inspection found that leaders have liaised with the local authority to sharpen their understanding of these arrangements. Leaders have ensured that the admissions register meets requirements and contains the required information. Leaders have appointed a specific member of staff to monitor and maintain the register.
- These standards are now met.

### Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

#### *Paragraphs 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b) and 34(1)(c)*

- At the previous inspection, leaders and governors had not made sure that all of the standards were consistently met. They took the inspection findings seriously and took swift action during the inspection to start to address the weaknesses identified in relation to safeguarding. They established an action plan during the previous inspection in order to put things right as soon as possible.
- The school's subsequent action plan submitted to the Department for Education (DfE) demonstrates that leaders and the governing body continued to take the inspection findings seriously. They have taken a range of suitable actions to address all the weaknesses identified.

- This inspection found that the governing body supports leaders and holds them to account. For example, governors with responsibility for health, safety and safeguarding meet regularly with leaders to discuss and scrutinise the school's arrangements. Leaders have commissioned local authority audits for safeguarding and health and safety. They have acted on all advice and suggestions given. Leaders' actions have all been well considered and timely.
- These standards are now met.

## **Compliance with regulatory requirements**

The school meets the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements that were checked during this inspection. This included the standards and requirements that the school was judged to not comply with at the previous inspection. Not all of the standards and associated requirements were checked during this inspection.

### **The school now meets the following independent school standards**

#### **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.
- 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].

#### **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**

- 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.

## School details

Unique reference number	133553
DfE registration number	302/6115
Inspection number	10303479

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

Type of school	Independent school
School status	Independent day school
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Boys
Number of pupils on the school roll	336
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Torah Vodaas Ltd
Headteacher	Rabbi Y Feldman
Annual fees (day pupils)	£4,500
Telephone number	0203 670 4670
Website	None
Email address	office@torahvodaas.org
Date of previous standard inspection	28 February to 2 March 2023

## Information about this school

- Torah Vodaas caters for Orthodox Jewish boys aged between three and 11 years.
- The school's most recent inspection was a standard inspection which took place in February 2023.
- The school does not make use of alternative provision.
- An early years setting is located on the same site as the school. This is called Torah Vodaas Early Years Centre. It is registered and inspected separately.
- The school is registered to admit a maximum of 350 pupils.

## Information about this inspection

- This 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.
- The school's most recent inspection took place in February 2023. At that time, the school was judged as inadequate. The standards were not all met.
- The DfE required the school to submit an action plan. This was reviewed by Ofsted in June 2023 and subsequently accepted by the DfE.
- This inspection was the first progress monitoring inspection since February 2023. It was carried out without notice.
- The inspector held meetings with leaders, including representatives of the proprietor. The inspector spoke with groups of pupils and staff. He reviewed documentation related to safeguarding and health and safety. The inspector reviewed the single central record of staff suitability checks. He toured the premises and looked at a range of documentation to check the school's compliance with the previously unmet standards.

## Inspection team

Gary Rawlings, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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