

Inspection of Talmud Torah Yetev Lev

111-115 Cazenove Road, London N16 6AX

Inspection dates: 6 to 8 February 2024

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?

Pupils are proud of their school and enjoy their time here. They attend regularly, work hard and want to do well. Pupils behave sensibly and lessons are rarely disrupted. Pupils look out for each other and know why being kind and respectful is important. Pupils are safe and well cared for.

The school has made changes to what pupils should be taught in different subjects. New schemes of work have been introduced. However, these changes have not been planned carefully. Overall, the curriculum for secular subjects is not well thought out.

Teachers want the very best for pupils. But lessons do not routinely consider pupils' different needs and abilities. Across the curriculum pupils' learning is too variable. They do not build up their knowledge securely. As a result, in some subjects and year groups, pupils develop considerable gaps in their understanding.

Pupils do not get the chance to learn about different faiths and cultures. This limits how well they understand other people, including life beyond their immediate community. Pupils do not take part in well-planned enrichment opportunities. They look forward to special events organised yearly by the school, including the annual seaside trip. However, pupils do not get to experience sufficient opportunities to promote their personal development.

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

Over the past year or so, new governors and leaders have worked hard to understand and tackle the weaknesses that were identified at the previous inspection. Importantly, they overhauled and improved the school's safeguarding arrangements. These are now well established and record-keeping is robust. Staff are clear about the part they play in keeping pupils safe. The school's safeguarding policy is suitable and hard copies are made available to parents and carers on request.

Leaders have also started to make changes to the school's secular studies curriculum. But these changes have not been well thought out. For example, new programmes and schemes of work have been introduced in mathematics and science without considering what pupils had learned previously. There are plans in place for other subjects but, in practice, these plans are not followed consistently. In some subjects, there is too much content to fit into the time available. All this leads to a disjointed curriculum that is not routinely well sequenced. It means that in different subjects pupils often struggle to learn and remember new concepts. Their achievement is too variable across the different subjects.

Pupils' learning is better in reading. The school's phonics programme is well considered. It is planned and delivered in a way that helps the youngest pupils build up their phonics knowledge for reading and writing. Leaders have worked effectively to ensure that staff are well trained to help pupils learn to read in English,

particularly in Years 1 and 2. Leaders ensure that pupils who need more help to catch up are given support by well-trained teachers and support staff.

The new subject curriculum for English is making a difference to pupils' vocabulary and their understanding of a range of genres, including poetry. Pupils enjoy learning from high-quality texts which inspire their creativity and develop their language. Pupils remember these stories and enjoy retelling them. For example, pupils in Year 3 liked acting out the scenes of 'The Enormous Turnip', while pupils in Year 4 were inspired to use clay to recreate characters from the stories they had read. Pupils responded to the story 'King of the Sky' by creating their own impressive scenes using a variety of art materials. Through English, leaders have started to think about ways that other subjects can be emphasised. For example, pupils learned about timelines when they studied texts on 'Titanic'.

Leaders identify well pupils with special educational needs and/or abilities (SEND). They make sure that these pupils benefit from the expertise of different professionals, including occupational and speech therapists. Small-group and individual sessions take place outside of lessons which focus on pupils' targets. However, back in the classroom, staff do not have a secure understanding of how to meet pupils' needs, including pupils with SEND. Across the curriculum, strategies are not routinely used to identify and address pupils' misconceptions. This sometimes leads to errors being made and repeated by pupils.

Pupils are respectful to each other and staff. They enjoy social times and make good friends. Pupils behave well and try their best. Pupils respond well to the school's 'manners programme' where they earn cards for good behaviour. They like the special rewards at the end of the year, such as visits to the leisure park and swimming pool.

In religious studies lessons, pupils are taught about a range of important topics, including health and well-being. Lessons cover a range of suitable and relevant themes, including, in an age-appropriate way, relationships education. However, these lessons are not connected in a meaningful manner. This prevents pupils from building their understanding in these topics and themes.

Pupils look forward to whole-school events, such as the forthcoming Purim celebrations where they intend to dress up, dance and sing together. However, the school does not do enough to promote pupils' age-appropriate awareness and understanding of people with different beliefs, views or experiences to them. For example, pupils are not helped to understand about other faiths and cultures. This limits pupils' awareness of other people and their preparedness for life in modern Britain.

Pupils hear from visiting speakers, such as police officers, who tell the pupils about topics such as strangers and road safety. However, there are too few opportunities which aim to foster pupils' interests and talents through enrichment. For example, pupils do not take part in any clubs, activities or experiences beyond the academic curriculum.

Parents are highly supportive of what leaders and governors do for their children. Many parents wrote to inspectors to share their views. They have nothing but positive things to say about the school's work. The school involves parents in their children's learning. For example, in phonics, parents regularly help their children to learn and apply the 'sounds of the week'. Parents provide feedback on how well their children are doing and leaders act on this.

Staff said that leaders are mindful of workload and well-being. Staff can see the changes that governors and leaders are making to improve the school. New governors have brought extra capacity to the school's leadership. While they generally know what needs to be done, plans for school improvement lack rigour.

The proprietor has not ensured that the school complies with some of the independent school standards. The school complies with schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

- The changes that have been made to the secular studies subjects have not been well thought out. Subjects are not well planned or sequenced. The curriculum lacks coherence. Often, plans are not routinely followed or delivered appropriately. Where this is the case, pupils do not build the knowledge and skills they need over time. The school should ensure that a broad and rich curriculum is planned coherently. It should be clear about what pupils need to be taught in each subject and when. The curriculum must be planned and implemented across all subjects in a way that allows pupils to learn and achieve well over time.
- Staff do not routinely have the knowledge or expertise to adjust teaching to meet pupils' needs and abilities, including pupils with SEND. In lessons, pupils' individual needs are not always understood or addressed. Pupils' misconceptions are not routinely identified and this sometimes leads to pupils making mistakes or repeating errors. The school should ensure that staff have the training and support that they need to routinely identify and meet pupils' needs in lessons so that pupils can achieve well across the curriculum.
- The school's promotion of pupils' personal and wider development is not effective. Pupils are not taught about faiths and cultures other than their own. Their understanding of other people is limited. This affects how well pupils are prepared for life in modern Britain. There are too few opportunities for enrichment and for pupils to take part in a wide and rich set of experiences. The school should work with parents to establish a way in which pupils can develop an awareness and appreciation of other faiths, views and cultures. The school should ensure a wide range of opportunities is in place to foster pupils' broader development.

- Over time, the proprietor, leaders and governors, have not ensured that the school complies with all the independent school standards. Although new governors and leaders have started to make important changes to improve aspects of the school's work, some standards remain not met. The school needs to ensure that plans for improvement are well considered, carefully planned and focused on sharply improving the quality of education and pupils' broader development. The school must ensure that the independent school standards are 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	100289
DfE registration number	204/6233
Local authority	Hackney
Inspection number	10286369
Type of school	Other Independent School
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Boys
Number of pupils on the school roll	636
Number of part-time pupils	None
Proprietor	Talmud Torah Education
Chair	Shalom Cik
Headteacher	Bernard Margulies
Annual fees (day pupils)	None
Telephone number	020 8806 3834
Website	None
Email address	mail@satmar.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	31 August to 2 September 2021

Information about this school

- Talmud Torah Yetev Lev is an independent day school for the Satmar Orthodox Jewish community.
- The school's main building is located at 111 to 115 Cazenove Road, London N16 6AX. In addition, the school uses buildings at 112 Cazenove Road, London N16 6AD and 2 to 6 Chardmore Road, London N16 6JA. All buildings are located within a short walking distance from each other. They are in the Stamford Hill area of Hackney.
- The school is registered to cater for boys between the ages of two and 12 years. Currently, the school is educating pupils aged five to 11 years.
- The school is registered to admit up to 567 pupils. Currently, there are 636 pupils on roll. The school is in breach of its registration agreement.
- The school is subject to a restriction from the Department for Education which prevents the admission of any new pupils. For this reason, there are currently no children in the early years age range on roll at this school.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.
- Pupils are taught religious studies in the morning and for some of the afternoon. These lessons are taught in Yiddish. Secular subjects are taught in English and mostly delivered in the afternoons, with some teaching on Sundays.
- Since the previous inspection, the school has appointed two new governors and some new teachers to the secular studies team.
- A progress monitoring inspection took place in May 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.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- 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 and other senior leaders, including those responsible for safeguarding. The lead inspector met with four governors including the chair of governors.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, science and personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also looked at curriculum plans and spoke to staff about some other subjects, including humanities and physical education.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors held meetings with groups of pupils. Inspectors were requested not to speak to pupils about specific topics, including some aspects of relationships.
- Inspectors held meetings with staff and spoke with staff and pupils informally during lessons and at breaktimes. Inspectors reviewed the responses to Ofsted Parent View as well as the letters submitted to the lead inspector during the inspection.
- Inspectors toured the premises and visited lessons across the sites. They scrutinised a range of documentation to check the school's compliance with the independent school standards.

Inspection team

Gary Rawlings, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

David Lloyd

Ofsted Inspector

Annabel Davies

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; and
- 2(2) For the purposes of paragraph (2)(1)(a), the matters are-
 - 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.
- 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;

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;
 - 5(b)(vi) encourage respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Act; and

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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