

# Talmud Torah Toldos Yakov Yosef (TTTTYY) School

Independent school standard inspection report

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Reporting inspector	Chanan Tomlin

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## Purpose and scope of the inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005, 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.<sup>1, 2</sup>

## Information about the school

Talmud Torah Toldos Yakov Yosef School (TTTTYY) was established in 1986 and is situated in Stamford Hill, Hackney in North London. The school provides education for boys between the ages of three and 12 years of age. There are 222 pupils on roll none of whom has a statement of special educational needs. There are currently 33 pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage all of whom receive government nursery funding. The majority of pupils come from Yiddish speaking homes and speak English as an additional language. The school is on a split site, with the Nursery to Year 3 in one building on East Bank, and Years 4 to 7 at the Heathland Road site. Both buildings are large Victorian properties and the one for the younger pupils is part of a synagogue.

The school was opened to admit pupils from the Square Chassidic Orthodox Jewish community, but also welcomes other chassidic groups who make up approximately 30% of the school roll. The school is founded on the principle of providing a solid Orthodox Jewish education, without compromising the need for essential secular studies. The school's goal is to nurture the best qualities in each pupil and to guide them on the road to maximise their potential as community members. The school was last inspected in March 2008.

## Evaluation of the school

The quality of the education provided by the school is good and the school meets its aims. The curriculum and teaching are good and this ensures that pupils make good progress. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. The overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. The school has made satisfactory progress in developing its secular curriculum since the last inspection. Arrangements for the safeguarding of pupils are satisfactory and the school meets all of the regulations for independent schools.

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<sup>1</sup> [www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2002/ukpga\\_20020032\\_en\\_14#pt10-ch1-pb4-l1g162](http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2002/ukpga_20020032_en_14#pt10-ch1-pb4-l1g162)

<sup>2</sup> [www.opsi.gov.uk/ACTS/acts2005/ukpga\\_20050018\\_en\\_15#sch8](http://www.opsi.gov.uk/ACTS/acts2005/ukpga_20050018_en_15#sch8)

## Quality of education

The quality of the curriculum is good throughout the school. It is divided into two strands, *Kodesh* (religious studies) and *Chol* (secular studies). Provision for *Kodesh* is particularly good. It is taught in Yiddish and takes up most of the school day. In *Kodesh*, pupils make good progress in their mastery of Hebrew reading, *chumash/Rashi* (Bible and commentaries), Talmud, *Halacha* (Jewish law) and for the oldest pupils *mussar* (ethics). Study in *Kodesh* is graduated; year groups build on previous strengths and weekly quotas of learning increase according to ability. The *Kodesh* and *Chol* curricula combine effectively to ensure that all of required areas are suitably covered. For example, pupils designed and created models of different sized tabernacles while studying Talmud Tractate Succah to support their understanding of sizes and measurements and aspects of design and technology.

Time each day is devoted to *Chol* study. *Chol* elements of the curriculum provide a strong emphasis on literacy and numeracy. By the time pupils leave school, they make good progress given their starting points and achieve satisfactory levels in reading and writing English as well as in mathematics. Although pupils do not use computers at school, because of the school's policy of protecting pupils from outside influences, they develop technological skills through the school's advanced systems of recording pupils' progress and reward system and through various design and practical activities. The *Chol* curriculum is supported by commercial schemes of work for literacy, numeracy and science. Teachers devise suitable schemes of work for the other areas of learning and ensure that the curriculum is delivered effectively. Because of the long school day, extra-curricular activities are not provided. However, the school enriches its curriculum through visits to historical places of interest and museums. Pupils enjoy frequent trips out of school, both as rewards for achievement and good behaviour and to enrich learning. A residential trip at the end of the year for the two oldest year groups is considered the highlight of the year.

The school has a suitable policy for personal, social and health education (PSHE) that is embedded within the *Kodesh* curriculum. Pupils are aware of the importance of healthy eating and exercise. However, the school is not always successful in ensuring that pupils adopt healthy lifestyles. All pupils attend *yeshivos ketanos* (primary Talmudic academies) when they leave the school. They are prepared well for this next stage in their education through a very good grounding in Talmud and religious studies and through the firm, but sensitive, guidance of their teachers. The provision for physical education is adequate but it not as regular as it could be.

The quality of teaching and assessment is good. Teachers have high expectations, challenge pupils effectively and motivate them to learn. They adopt appropriate methods and strategies that enable pupils to develop good working habits. As a result, pupils make good progress in their learning and achieve very well over time. Relationships between staff and pupils and between the pupils themselves are outstanding. There is mutual respect and self-discipline that leads to an environment

throughout the school where the pupils can concentrate on their work, show willingness and keenness and make good progress.

*Kodesh* teachers plan their lessons well. Teachers' planning for *Chol* lessons is satisfactory and has improved since the last inspection. Planned activities are now better matched to the needs of the majority of the pupils in each class. However, there is a lack detail in some *Chol* plans as to how the needs of differing groups of pupils will be met. On occasions, this weakness limits the progress of some of the more-able. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well integrated into all lessons and make good gains in their learning over time. Teachers make adequate use of the satisfactory range resources that are available to them. Overall, there are too few training opportunities for teachers to enable them to develop their practice.

Procedures for assessment are good. There are regular assessment opportunities in lessons that help inform the focus of teaching during the lesson. Teachers' marking of pupils' work usually provides helpful comments to advise them on the next steps in learning, but there are some minor inconsistencies in the quality of marking. The head of *Chol* tests pupils regularly and uses this information to plan intervention strategies for pupils and classes who are making slower progress. Regular reports to parents and carers provide them with detailed information about their children's achievement and progress.

## **Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils**

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is outstanding and their behaviour is good. Spiritual development is at the core of the ethos of the school. Pupils pray daily in the morning and afternoon and lessons are replete with references to spirituality. The school day revolves around practices that remind pupils about their religious responsibilities at every moment. These include ritual washing, blessings before and after eating, and a distinctive mode of dress. Pupils are proud of their culture and this helps them appreciate the importance of others maintaining their own cultural traditions. *Kodesh* teaching places a strong emphasis on moral behaviour, morality and acceptable social behaviour. Pupils have a very keen awareness of what is right and wrong and they apply this to their interactions with adults and visitors, both in school and outside.

Pupils have extremely positive attitudes towards learning and enjoy lessons, especially when they are lively and interactive. In questionnaires returned during the inspection one pupil wrote, 'I love my school,' and another wrote, 'I love the teacher of our class – he gives me very interesting lessons.' Pupils behave very well in classes and their attendance is very good. They are respectful, kind and courteous. They know what is expected of them and act accordingly.

Pupils learn about public institutions and services and respect for the law of the land as a religious precept and also through history and PSHE. This is supplemented by

trips and frequent class discussions about life in Britain. Pupils gain knowledge of other faiths and cultures through class discussions in both *Kodesh* and *Chol* and through geography. They are taught to respect others as is evident in the way that they treat visitors and those who work in the school. The school is effective in promoting a climate of tolerance and harmony. Pupils grow in self-confidence when they help arrange school activities such as Purim festivities and celebratory meals and through taking an active part in lively debates during Talmud lessons. They contribute to the school community through choir performances and by arranging and setting up the *Chumash Seuda* (Torah commencement celebration) and the end of year prize giving event.

## **Welfare, health and safety of pupils**

Provision for the welfare, health and safety of the pupils is satisfactory, and in the Early Years Foundation Stage it is good. All the required policies and procedures, including those for first aid and health and safety, are in place and are suitably implemented. The procedures relating to safeguarding and child protection meet all regulatory requirements. All necessary risk assessments for the premises and outside trips and visits are satisfactorily carried out. Termly fire drills take place, fire equipment is checked and admission and attendance registers comply with requirements.

Although the school has a policy that promotes healthy lifestyles, it is not consistently implemented. Pupils are encouraged to eat healthily, however, a good number of older pupils were observed during break eating unhealthy foods such as crisps, biscuits and cake. The provision for physical education is adequate. However, the school is taking measures to improve its frequency. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are well cared for and are provided with fruit, milk and drinking water daily. The school has prepared a three-year accessibility plan that fulfils its duties under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, as amended.

## **Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors**

The school's procedures for checking the suitability of all proprietors, staff and others fully comply with the regulations. Criminal Records Bureau checks for staff and adults who are in contact with children are suitably carried out. Safe recruitment procedures are fully implemented. Records are kept meticulously and the single central register is maintained in accordance with requirements.

## **Premises and accommodation at the school**

The quality of the school's premises and accommodation across the two sites is good and promotes effective learning. The classrooms are of a suitable size for the age and number of pupils and there are an appropriate number of washrooms and toilets. The general décor of the buildings is good. The quality of provision for

outdoor play on both sites, including the Early Years Foundation Stage, is satisfactory. The premises provide a safe environment for the pupils.

### **Provision of information**

The school complies with all of the regulations in its provision of information to parents, carers and others. Weekly *Kodesh* and annual *Chol* reports are sent to parents and carers. Reports provide suitable information on their children's progress, attainment and behaviour. Many parents and carers returned completed questionnaires and the overwhelming majority expressed very positive views about the school.

### **Manner in which complaints are to be handled**

The procedures for handling complaints are clear and concise, and comply fully with the requirements.

### **Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

The overall effectiveness and outcomes in the Early Years Foundation Stage are good. Children make good progress from their individual starting points. By the time they leave the setting, their skills and abilities are in line with expectations. Children really enjoy learning; this was evident in their smiles and enthusiasm during morning prayers. Relationships are good at all levels and children work and play together well. Children make good progress in their personal and social development and this is reflected in their good attitudes to learning. Children behave well in classrooms and outdoors; they are inquisitive but respectful to adult visitors.

Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good and the good teaching results in good outcomes. Teachers work together well to ensure that all children take an active role in initiating activities to promote successfully their independence. There is a good emphasis on developing basic communication, language and literacy skills. Consequently, children develop a firm foundation of basic skills that prepare them well for future learning. Adults provide positive role models and bring lessons to life through opportunities for singing and acting. Classroom resources are good, but the resources in the outdoor play area, although sufficient, are more limited in their range.

The curriculum is planned well and there is a good range of opportunities for children to gain experiences in all of the required areas of learning. There is a good balance between adult-led and child-initiated activities. The school has developed good partnerships with parents and carers and newsletters are sent home every week. Children are very well cared for and they readily approach adults if they have any concerns or worries. Children learn about healthy lifestyles; they eat fresh fruit and drink milk daily.

Leadership and management are good. The leader of the setting understands its strengths and areas for development. She works well with staff to ensure that planning follows early years requirements and that milestones are charted carefully in order to ensure children make good progress.

## **Compliance with regulatory requirements**

The proprietor has ensured that the school meets The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, schedule 1 (‘the Regulations’)

## **What the school could do to improve further**

While not required by regulations, the school might wish to consider the following points for development:

- develop more effective ways of promoting healthy lifestyles and ensure physical education is regularly provided
- provide better opportunities for staff development to further improve the quality of teaching, and further improve *Chol* lesson planning so that the needs of more-able pupils are met more consistently
- improve the range of curriculum resources in the school and in the outside area of the Early Years Foundation Stage.



## Inspection judgements

outstanding	good	satisfactory	inadequate
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### The quality of education

Overall quality of education		✓		
How well the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of pupils		✓		
How effective teaching and assessment are in meeting the full range of pupils' needs		✓		
How well pupils make progress in their learning		✓		

### Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Quality of provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	✓			
The behaviour of pupils		✓		

### Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The overall welfare, health and safety of pupils			✓	
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### The quality of the Early Years Foundation Stage provision

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage		✓		
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage		✓		
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage		✓		
Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage		✓		

## School details

<b>School status</b>	Independent		
<b>Type of school</b>	Orthodox Jewish		
<b>Date school opened</b>	1986		
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–12 years		
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Boys		
<b>Number on roll (full-time pupils)</b>	Boys: 222	Girls: 0	Total: 222
<b>Number on roll (part-time pupils)</b>	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
<b>Number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs</b>	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
<b>Number of pupils who are looked after</b>	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
<b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>	£ 2,496		
<b>Address of school</b>	14 Heathland Road, London N16 5NH 47 Eastbank Road, London N16 5FZ		
<b>Telephone number</b>	0208 802 1348 0208 800 8010		
<b>Email address</b>	tyyschool@yahoo.co.uk		
<b>Headteacher</b>	Rabbi A Friesel		
<b>Proprietor</b>	Toldos Yaakov Yosef Institution Trust		