

# Talmud Torah Bobov Primary School

Independent school light-touch inspection report

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Reporting inspector	Jonathan Yodaiken

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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.

This was a light touch educational inspection which focused principally on the quality of education provided by the school; its provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development; the arrangements for safeguarding pupils and the improvements the school has made since its last inspection.

## Information about the school

Talmud Torah Bobov is an independent Jewish day school for boys. It opened in the Stamford Hill area of London at the behest of the late Grand Rabbi of Bobov, Rabbi Shlomo Halberstam in 1979 and is attached to the Bobov Community Centre. The school has 291 boys on roll between the ages of three and 14 years with two pupils who have a statement of special educational needs. There are 68 boys in the Early Years Foundation Stage of whom 48 receive government funding. The school was last inspected in 2008. The school aims 'to provide a solid grounding in Jewish studies, enabling the children to grow into responsible members of their community and society at large.' To this end, the school's programme of secular learning is designed to 'equip the pupils with the necessary skills' to be productive members of society. Chassidic culture and philosophy are at the core of life at the school.

## Evaluation of the school

Talmud Torah Bobov provides a good standard of education for its pupils. It is successful in meeting its aims and in enabling pupils to make good progress. The overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. The quality of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding, as is pupils' behaviour. Pupils say they are happy, enjoy lessons and appreciate the support provided by the senior leaders and their teachers. Provision for the welfare, health and safety of pupils is good and all requirements for safeguarding are met. The school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection and continues to meet with all of the regulatory requirements for independent schools.

## Quality of education

The quality of the curriculum is good. It is divided into two parts; *kodesh* (Jewish studies) and *chol* (secular studies). The well-planned and wide ranging *kodesh* curriculum, includes Talmudical studies, Jewish history with Jewish law and ethics, is a major feature of the school's provision. As a result, a spiritual ethos permeates the whole school. The school successfully promotes the progression of knowledge, skills and understanding of all relevant aspects of the Jewish religion.

The *chol* curriculum is broadly based on the National Curriculum with appropriate time set aside for literacy and numeracy every day. The curriculum is comprehensive and covers all the required areas of learning. Information and communication technology is not taught as a separate subject for Jewish cultural reasons. However, some pupils, especially older ones, complete their homework assignments and project work with the use of computers at home. The school makes provision for the technological aspect of the curriculum by incorporating this within *kodesh* lessons, for example, with links to design and technology when pupils design and erect a *Succah* (a model booth) in preparation for the festival of *Succos* (Sukkot). Much of the *chol* curriculum, especially for the older pupils, is geared to preparing them for adult life. Personal, social and health education (PSHE) is incorporated across the curriculum and is also taught discretely in citizenship lessons. There is significant cross-curricular focus on morals and responsibilities along with practical guidance on becoming dependable members of British society. Since the last inspection there has been an increase in the number of educational visits provided to support learning and further opportunities for physical education (PE). While the PE curriculum is satisfactory in Key Stage 1 provision is more limited in this phase than in other years.

Teaching and assessment are good. Teachers make effective use of the satisfactory resources that are available to support teaching and learning. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' attitudes to learning and for their good behaviour. As a result, pupils make good progress in their learning and achieve well over time. Excellent relationships between staff and pupils and mutual respect help to create a calm environment within classrooms so that pupils can concentrate and be creative. They are well supported by the teachers. Generally teachers use questioning strategies effectively to challenge pupils and to develop enquiring minds. Provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those with a statement of special educational needs, is good. These pupils make good progress because of the good support and individual attention that they receive. Individual education plans for these pupils are well-prepared and appropriately detailed.

Procedures for assessment are good. Teachers have a good understanding of pupils' abilities and regular assessments are undertaken and the information gained is used to plan lessons effectively. Particularly impressive is the way that both the headteacher and *menahel* (head of *kodesh*) test pupils regularly and use this information in planning intervention strategies for pupils who are making slower progress. Parents and carers are kept well informed of their children's progress through termly reports. Pupils' work is marked regularly, although teachers do not always write comments to identify the next steps in learning.

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

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and their behaviour are outstanding. Pupils are very polite and courteous to visitors and considerate towards each other. Relationships are respectful and consequently pupils feel safe and secure

and are confident about asking for help and support should a concern arise. There is great *achdus* (unity) at the school with many pupils stating that 'we are like one big family.' Pupils make an exceptional contribution to the Jewish community. For example, twice a year pupils take part in major charity events and often visit the elderly in a local retirement home. Older pupils provide a bookbinding service for the community at large. They love their *kodesh* studies, practical mathematics and reading in English. Pupils' excellent social skills, coupled with their ability to work with one another in real-life scenarios, contributes well to the skills needed for adult life. Older pupils organise an annual Purim *Spiel* (show) which is performed in the autumn term and organise fundraising events to support those who are less fortunate than themselves. Pupils' exceptional spiritual development is evident in their ability to be very reflective and in the way they say Psalms for the recovery of those who are unwell. The school promotes the moral values of pupils very well through the *kodesh* curriculum as well as through work in PSHE and citizenship which helps them to know the difference between right and wrong. Pupils have a great respect for their own religious culture. They pray with sincerity and devotion, singing beautifully. Pupils display a good understanding and appreciation of other cultures because they are taught to show respect and tolerance for those of different faiths and cultural traditions.

### **Safeguarding pupils' welfare, health and safety**

Provision for safeguarding, including welfare health and safety is good. The school meets all of the regulations. All the required recruitment and vetting checks have been carried out on staff and others. The single central register contains all of the required information. All staff, including the designated officer, have undergone appropriate child protection training. Pupils say that they feel safe and secure. Satisfactory risk assessments are in place for activities on and off site. Fire risk procedures are fully in place and meet requirements. The school has a three-year plan that meets the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, as amended.

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

The overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage is good because there are appropriate activities for children in all areas of learning. There is a good provision and the good leadership and management of the setting results in good outcomes.

They enter with social and personal skills that are typical for their age but with few skills in literacy and numeracy. Children's personal development and behaviour are outstanding because all adults ensure the safeguarding, welfare and well-being of each child in school and provide a high level of care, support and guidance. They make good progress through the Nursery and Reception class, entering Key Stage 1 with social and personal skills above the levels of those typically expected for their age.

Teaching is consistently good. The high ratio of teachers to children ensures that children get good individual attention and are well supported. Each class has teaching assistants who work well alongside the key workers in organising a range of appropriate learning activities. There is good support for the less able children and appropriate challenge for the more able. Relationships are outstanding between teachers and children. This helps children to settle quickly, develop confidence and feel safe. Teachers' weekly planning is detailed and includes a wide range of interesting activities which stimulate and engage children. Activities are sometimes based on the Jewish calendar, in particular Jewish festivals, and on the weekly *Sedra* (weekly portion of the Torah). All six areas of learning are covered indoors and literacy and numeracy skills are taught effectively. The outdoor curriculum is effective in promoting children's creative, aesthetic and physical development but opportunities to further develop literacy and numeracy skills outside are sometimes missed. Good links are made between the *kodesh* and *chol* curricula which has a good impact on children's learning. Assessment strategies are good and children are assessed regularly against the Early Years Foundation Stage profile when they start and subsequently within a continuous assessment policy linked to teacher observation and parental input, which are well recorded.

All safeguarding procedures are in place and rigorous health and safety checks are carried out daily on the premises. The children's welfare and safety have high priority. Induction procedures for new staff are effective. Appropriate risk assessments are made for all journeys. There is good communication with parents who value the dedication of the staff.

## **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:

- extend the provision for physical education to provide greater opportunities for pupils in Key Stage 1
- consider introducing aspects of information and communication technology in a way that is culturally appropriate
- ensure that teachers' marking includes advice on pupils' next steps in learning.

## 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>	Jewish Boys School		
<b>Date school opened</b>	9 July 1979		
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3-14		
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Boys		
<b>Number on roll (full-time pupils)</b>	Boys: 291	Girls: 0	Total: 291
<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: 2	Girls: 0	Total: 2
<b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>	£ 0		
<b>Address of school</b>	Talmud Torah Bobov Primary School 87 Egerton Road London N16 6UE		
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 88091025		
<b>Email address</b>	Molly.Kay@bobovcommunity.com		
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Pomerantz		
<b>Proprietor</b>	Rabbi Halberstam		