

# Toras Emes

6 Coke Street, Salford M7 4AH

## Inspection dates

9–11 January 2018

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Inadequate

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- Leadership and management of the school require improvement. Some leaders have limited management skills. Leaders' use of pupils' performance information to hold teachers to account is not fully developed.
- Teaching requires improvement due to inconsistencies in teachers' expectations of pupils, particularly those who are the most able. Teachers do not consistently use pupils' assessment information to help inform their planning.
- Pupils' standards in secular subjects, particularly subjects other than reading and mathematics, are below what they should be.
- The role of governors is not yet fully developed.
- Some pupils do not demonstrate a pride in the school and show a lack of care for school resources. The quality of presentation of work in pupils' books is not consistently high enough. Some pupils occasionally act in a silly manner in class.
- Despite children making satisfactory progress from their starting points, a lower-than-average proportion leaves the early years having achieved a good level of development. Some staff have gaps in their knowledge of the teaching of phonics. The provision for outdoor learning is, at times, uninspiring.
- Opportunities for pupils to develop an understanding of the wider world are limited.

### The school has the following strengths

- Effective leadership of the provision for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities ensures that they make positive progress in their learning
- Leaders have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses because of their improved monitoring.
- This is an inclusive school where pupils respect each other and where equality is promoted well.
- Pupils attend well. They say they enjoy school, feel safe and clearly respect their teachers.
- The proprietor and leaders have ensured full compliance with the independent school standards.

### 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.

## Full report

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
  - further sharpening leaders' focus on teachers' accountability for their impact on pupils' learning
  - developing the management skills and experience of leaders in the early years
  - ensuring that new governors quickly develop their understanding of their roles and responsibilities.
- Improve the personal development, behaviour and welfare of pupils by:
  - reducing the incidents of silly behaviour through improvements to the quality of teaching in some year groups
  - improving the care and pride shown by pupils in the school's resources
  - promoting teachers' consistently high expectations of pupils' presentation of their work in books
  - building on the effective work to extend pupils' knowledge and understanding of the wider world to enhance further their experiences and understanding.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by:
  - developing the tracking of pupils' progress and attainment in secular (chol) subjects other than reading, writing and mathematics
  - ensuring that teachers consistently make the best use of pupils' assessment information to help to inform their planning
  - raising teachers' expectations of pupils to ensure that the most able consistently receive the challenge they deserve.
- Improve the quality of the early years by:
  - ensuring that staff in all year groups receive high-quality management
  - promoting the high-quality teaching of phonics
  - further developing the outdoor learning space to provide a vibrant and inspiring place in which children can learn
  - increasing the proportion of children attaining a good level of development.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Requires improvement

- The proprietor and leaders have ensured that all of the independent school standards are met.
- The school's leaders have a secure understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses because of their recently much improved monitoring and evaluation systems. As a result, leaders plan appropriate priorities and actions to improve the school.
- Leaders know where weaknesses in teaching lie because of their more frequent and more sharply focused monitoring. However, they have not fully developed their systematic use of pupils' and staff performance data to hold teachers closely to account for their impact on learning.
- Some leaders who are new to their posts have gaps in their knowledge of management strategies due to their limited experience. This reduces their effectiveness in leading and improving their areas of responsibility. Senior leaders have ensured that effective actions are in place to support their development.
- The leadership of reading, in English and Hebrew, and the leadership of the provision for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are strengths of the school. Leaders of these areas have secure subject knowledge that they readily share with colleagues to improve teachers' practice. They closely track the impact of actions on pupils' learning and use this information well to sharply target where their actions can have the best impact.
- Leaders' own recognition of their need to improve has resulted in the right actions being taken to address the areas of weakness identified in the last inspection report. Leaders actively seek and act upon advice and guidance from serving practitioners from local maintained schools and local Jewish faith schools and advisers from the local authority. This willingness and commitment have led to considerable school improvement.
- Leaders have improved the quality of tracking and assessment of pupils' achievement since the last inspection. Consequently, they have access to large amounts of information about pupils' attainment and progress, particularly in kodesh, reading and mathematics. The quality of assessment and the tracking of pupils' attainment and progress in other secular subjects are not as well developed.
- Leaders ensure that they meet the requirements to provide information to parents, carers and others on request, including those required by the standards on the school's website.
- This is a caring school that has the pastoral care of its pupils at its heart. Leaders and teachers strongly promote fundamental British values. Pupils learn about democracy, British institutions and a range of faiths. Pupils develop a positive spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding that prepares them well for life in modern British society. Leaders promote equality well, including the respect and understanding of all protected characteristics, such as those relating to disability, race, faith and gender identity.
- The curriculum in all year groups is broad and balanced. Many subjects are integrated into the kodesh curriculum, which is predominantly taught in the mornings. The secular curriculum, taught in the afternoons, covers a wide range of subjects, including art,

science, design and technology and humanities. The schemes of work for these subjects are rooted within the national curriculum.

- The school budget does not receive any additional funding for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities, physical education and sport or the pupil premium. No pupils are identified as disadvantaged and no pupils have an education, health and care plan.
- Leaders keep up-to-date records and logs of events within the school. These logs include records of incidents of bullying or inappropriate behaviour and any resulting sanctions. Records are detailed and well maintained, and include information about outcomes or any follow-up actions.
- Leaders ensure that parents are well informed about school life. Parents receive appropriate information about the progress and attainment of their children in reports and data records. Regular newsletters for parents and pupils keep them well informed.

## **Governance**

- The school's governing body is embryonic, following some significant changes to its membership since the last inspection. As a result, the roles and responsibilities of some governors, who are new to governance, are still developing.
- The proprietor is the chair of the governing body and plays a committed and active role in the strategic leadership of the school.
- Governors have ensured that all of the independent schools standards are met.
- The proprietor and governors maintain the property to a sufficiently high standard. The school site is large, safe, clean and generally tidy. The standards of lighting and acoustics are appropriate for a school. The school has a good range of resources to promote learning because governors prioritise the use of the school budget effectively. However, governors recognise that some resources have to be replaced more often than they should be because they are not well cared for by pupils.
- The proprietor and governors take rapid and effective action to bring about improvement. This includes the appointment of an acting headteacher, who has built upon the effective actions of his predecessor and accelerated the rate of improvement in the school.

## **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders and the proprietor have ensured that safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and are followed meticulously.
- The safeguarding policy takes account of current government guidance. Statutory checks are carried out on the suitability of staff to work with children, including those staff who originate from overseas. Policies are available to parents from the main school office and on the school's website.
- Leaders have taken appropriate actions to ensure that the school is a safe and secure place in which pupils can learn. Carefully controlled access ensures that pupils remain safe and secure during their time in school. Well-thought-out vehicular access at the start

and end of the day and the design of the pedestrian access to the school's car park minimise the dangers to pupils posed by parents' cars.

- Effective training ensures that staff have up-to-date knowledge of safeguarding and are vigilant about the potential risks pupils may face. Records are fit for purpose and meticulously kept. Leaders share information with parents and appropriate authorities effectively to ensure pupils' safety.
- The proprietor has ensured that the school's connection to the internet is appropriately monitored and filtered.

### Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

### Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching has improved strongly since the last inspection, but it is not yet good. The quality of teaching in some year groups is variable and inconsistent. Teachers make effective use of the recently implemented commercial schemes of work to ensure that pupils receive appropriate coverage of curricular subjects, particularly in English and mathematics.
- Jewish studies are a strength of the school. Many aspects of other subjects are taught or promoted effectively through these studies.
- Teachers, including those who work part-time, have positive and caring relationships with pupils. Teachers of Jewish studies typically have high expectations of their pupils and plan interesting and challenging learning. As a result, pupils make secure progress in their Jewish studies. However, a number of teachers, particularly in secular subjects, do not expect enough of the most able pupils.
- Many teachers make effective use of the new schemes of work that have been introduced since the last inspection to plan sequential lessons to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding. This is particularly the case in Jewish studies, mathematics and reading. However, in some subjects, some teachers do not take enough account of the range of ability in each class when planning learning activities. Consequently, opportunities for the most able pupils to develop their knowledge and understanding at greater depth are limited.
- Assessment of pupils' attainment and progress has improved considerably since the last inspection. This is particularly evident in Jewish studies, reading, writing and mathematics, where teachers assess pupils' knowledge and understanding each half term. However, in secular subjects other than English and mathematics, assessment and the tracking of pupils' progress and attainment are less secure and still developing.
- Teachers typically have secure subject knowledge and use questioning effectively to check pupils' understanding. However, on occasion, pupils have limited opportunities to consolidate and share their understanding. A small number of teachers have gaps in their knowledge of the strategies to promote effectively pupils' understanding in phonics. Leaders are aware of where these gaps lie and have implemented additional support and training. However, it is too soon to see the impact.
- The effective deployment of teachers and teaching assistants ensures that pupils are well supervised and that the teacher-to-pupil ratios meet regulatory standards.

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- Opportunities for pupils to enhance their personal experiences beyond their local community are limited. Experiences of the wider world, such as a visit to a local zoo, where pupils adopted a lion, help them to learn and develop. However, the frequency of such experiences beyond the school grounds is low.
- Pupils are attentive and have positive attitudes to learning. However, they typically do not take a lead in driving their own learning. This is compounded on occasion in some classes by limited opportunities for pupils to consolidate their learning through the application of newly taught knowledge and skills.
- Pupils who spoke with inspectors say that they enjoy coming to school because their teachers help them to learn and are always available to address any worries or concerns they might have.
- Leaders and teachers make effective use of their strong relationships with pupils and parents to promote fundamental British values. This includes the promotion of the understanding of democracy and British institutions. Pupils who spoke with inspectors were confident in explaining how our country's hereditary monarchy differed from the systems of elected presidents found in other countries. Pupils develop a good understanding of democracy through the election of school councillors. Leaders promote tolerance and inclusion well. Pupils have a good understanding of all the protected characteristics found within our society.
- The Jewish faith and culture underpin the school's ethos. This enables pupils to develop their self-confidence well. Pupils and staff embrace Hebrew teaching and demonstrate tolerance and respect for others of different faiths, cultures and beliefs.
- Pupils know how to keep safe within the community because of the effective teaching they receive and appropriate advice given by visitors, for example from the emergency services.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Pupils' conduct around the school is typically of a high standard. However, in some lessons where teaching is less effective and does not provide sufficient challenge, pupils sometimes behave in a silly way.
- Pupils are polite and typically exhibit a high level of respect for each other and adults. However, some pupils do not show the same level of respect for the school's resources. This results in some resources being frequently broken or damaged. On occasion, in some pupils' books, the standard of presentation of work is not as good as it should be.
- Attendance is in line with the national average for all groups of learners.
- Pastoral support is a strength of the school. Pupils say that teachers help them to learn and deal with any concerns they might have. Pupils who spoke with inspectors had

difficulty in recollecting any incidents of bullying and were confident that staff would deal effectively with any incidents that might occur.

- Parents overwhelmingly support the school and recognise its strengths in the pastoral care of their children.

### Outcomes for pupils

### Requires improvement

- Inconsistencies in the quality of teaching have an impact on pupils' outcomes. Consequently, the progress that pupils make and their attainment require improvement.
- Work in pupils' books shows that the development of pupils' knowledge and understanding in secular subjects other than English and mathematics is inconsistent. This is closely linked to the quality of teaching they receive and the lower expectations of some teachers. Scrutiny of pupils' books also highlights that, on occasion, the most able pupils do not receive the challenge they need to develop their knowledge and understanding of concepts at greater depth.
- In the early years, children make satisfactory progress from their starting points. However, some do not close the gaps they have in their development, particularly in those relating to communication, language and literacy and technology, to attain a good level of development by the time they leave the early years. In 2017, the proportion of children who left the early years with a good level of development was below the national average.
- In key stage 1 and key stage 2, pupils make good progress in Jewish studies because they are well taught. Improvements to the curriculum and the more systematic teaching of skills in English and mathematics have rapidly improved pupils' progress and attainment. As a result, greater proportions of pupils now leave the school having attained similarly to national expectations for their age. Attainment and progress in writing are not as strong as in reading and mathematics, and below those which are expected for their age.
- Pupils read widely and often because senior leaders have ensured that pupils have frequent opportunities to read in class. Leaders' encouragement of a varied diet of different authors and genres, which goes beyond their own culture, has resulted in pupils developing a range of favourite authors. Those pupils who met with the inspector were eloquent and confident readers.

### Early years provision

### Requires improvement

- Leadership and teaching in some aspects of the early years are inconsistent and variable in quality. Consequently, the early years provision requires improvement.
- Some managers are relatively new to their roles and have limited experience of leadership. Senior leaders are aware of this and have actively sought appropriate additional support to ensure sustained improvement from experienced practitioners in local schools and the local authority.
- Leaders have brought about some considerable improvements to the early years provision since the last inspection. These include improvements to the overall quality of teaching and better levels of resources in school, such as new English and mathematics curriculum

materials. Another considerable improvement is the implementation of a new assessment and tracking system. This ensures that leaders establish the attainment of children on entry to the school and can frequently evaluate their progress.

- The quality of teaching is inconsistent. Nearly all teachers have a secure knowledge of the early years curriculum. However, a very small number of staff have gaps in their knowledge, particularly relating to the teaching of phonics. Where teaching has the most positive impact, for example in the nursery, teachers and teaching assistants ensure that the environment is consistently well organised, vibrant and an engaging place in which to learn. Teachers and teaching assistants typically make good use of questions to engage children in learning and to develop their language skills. Some teachers do not make the best use of the resources and outdoor space available to them to promote learning well. At times, provision in the outdoor learning areas is bland and uninspiring.
- Children enter the school at different stages of development. Most enter with levels of development below those typical for their age. This is particularly evident in the areas of development linked to communication, language and literacy, technology and understanding of the world. Children make satisfactory progress from their starting points. However, on leaving the early years, some children have not made enough progress in communication and language and literacy to ensure that they reach a good level of development. Early years leaders recognise the need to improve the teaching of language skills, including phonics, and are taking the appropriate actions to improve its quality.
- Parents are well informed about how their children are developing because of the strong relationships between staff and parents. Prominent, up-to-date displays of information about current planning and learning activities and frequent newsletters keep parents regularly up to speed about school events.
- Children are kept safe because well-trained staff are vigilant and implement well the school's welfare and child protection policies. They act quickly to address any concerns and keep parents well informed. Children receive high-quality pastoral support and typically behave well.
- Leaders ensure that all welfare regulations are met. The environment is secure and safe. The ratios of staff to children meet requirements.

## School details

Unique reference number	136503
DfE registration number	355/6058
Inspection number	10038933

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	Other independent school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	5 to 7
Gender of pupils	Boys
Number of pupils on the school roll	187
Number of part-time pupils	6
Proprietor	Mrs Suzanne Guttentag
Chair	Mrs Suzanne Guttentag
Headteacher	Simon Roberts
Annual fees (day pupils)	Voluntary contribution
Telephone number	0161 804 9713
Website	<a href="http://www.torasemes.co.uk">www.torasemes.co.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:torasemes@live.co.uk">torasemes@live.co.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	17–19 November 2015

## Information about this school

- Toras Emes is an Orthodox Jewish independent school for boys in the Salford area of Manchester.
- It currently has 187 pupils aged three to 11 years on roll, although its registration with the Department for Education is for up to 17 pupils, aged five to seven.
- No pupil has a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan.

- The school opened in March 2011 and has recently moved to much larger, refurbished premises.
- The school aims to 'provide an excellent education guided by the principles of a true Toradik Chinuch' (Torah education).
- The school was last subject to a full inspection in November 2015.
- A new acting headteacher took up post in September 2017. The previous headteacher is still part of the school teaching and leadership staff.
- The school has a nursery as part of its early years provision. This was previously registered and inspected separately from the school. The registration of the nursery changed in 2015 and it is now inspected as part of the school.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in kodesh and secular lessons.
- Inspectors toured the school's premises accompanied by senior staff and the proprietor.
- The behaviour of pupils was observed throughout the school day.
- Inspectors held discussions with the acting headteacher, the coordinator for the provision for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities and leaders of English and Hebrew, reading and the Reception class. Inspectors spoke informally with other members of staff.
- Inspectors met formally with two groups of pupils and had informal conversations with others.
- Inspectors met with the chair of the governing body, who is also the proprietor, and other governors.
- There were two responses to the Ofsted online survey, Parent View. Inspectors also reviewed the responses made by 54 parents to a paper copy of the same questions. Inspectors also considered the responses to Ofsted's staff questionnaire.
- School policies and other documentation provided by the school were examined to check compliance with the independent school standards and to provide other inspection evidence. Records, including those relating to safeguarding, attendance and behaviour, were also reviewed.
- The school's information on pupils' progress and attainment was considered.
- Inspectors examined pupils' exercise books and early years children's learning journeys.

## Inspection team

John Nixon, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

John Shutt

Ofsted Inspector

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