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Rabbi Jonathan Yodaiken  
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Dear Rabbi Yodaiken

### **Short inspection of Yesoiday Hatorah School**

Following my visit to the school on 5 December 2018 with Mavis Smith, Ofsted Inspector, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection findings. The visit was the first short inspection carried out since the school was judged to be good in July 2014.

Based on the evidence gathered during this short inspection, I have identified a priority for improvement which I advise the school to address. In light of this priority, the school's next inspection will be a full section 5 inspection. **There is no change to the school's current overall effectiveness grade of good as a result of this inspection.**

Yesoiday Hatorah is a school that is segregated by sex. You and the governing body have worked diligently to make structural changes. The plan is to establish two separate schools, one for boys and one for girls. Your plans to accommodate these changes include forming a multi-academy trust with other local Jewish schools. However, at the time of the inspection, the school was still registered and operating as one school. Despite the plans for structural changes, leaders and governors have not put sufficient opportunities in place to allow boys and girls to mix in unstructured times. Segregation at these times is detrimental to pupils and is therefore unlawful.

You have high expectations and lead by example. You are ably assisted by the assured, enthusiastic leadership team. There is a shared sense of passion for ensuring that pupils receive the very best education. You have created an environment of care and nurture that radiates through the whole school community. Together with staff, pupils, and parents and carers, you are rightly proud of being part of Yesoiday Hatorah. You ensure that pupils feel safe and confident to flourish.

The overwhelming majority of parents who spoke with inspectors, or who responded to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, are very positive about

Yesoiday Hatorah. They say that they 'wholeheartedly recommend the school' and their children are 'left in caring and capable hands'. Parents also feel that their children are happy and 'go to school with enthusiasm'. Many are amazed at how 'you individually care about every single child'. This is impressive in such a large school.

The very large majority of staff who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire enjoy being part of the team at Yesoiday Hatorah School. They feel that it is well led and managed. Staff share your aspirations for pupils and wholeheartedly endorse the calm and orderly culture that has been created. There is a strong sense of the staff team working to achieve the very best for pupils.

At the previous inspection, the inspectors asked you to increase the achievement of pupils in writing. They asked you to give pupils, particularly the most able, harder work as soon as they are ready. They also asked you to offer pupils the chance to extend their writing skills in a range of subjects. You have successfully addressed this area for improvement. You have given pupils the skills and enthusiasm for writing across the whole curriculum. Pupils build up their writing skills methodically. Teachers are quick to spot pupils who can be stretched. They give appropriate activities to challenge their skills and thinking further. Pupils' workbooks in a range of subjects, including English, indicate that they are increasingly accomplished in writing at length. Your 'writing journey' approach equips them with knowledge, understanding and an eagerness to write. Pupils' success is evident from their progress and attainment in writing by the end of key stage 2. Progress has been well above the national average by the end of Year 6 for the last three years. Similarly, pupils' attainment at both the expected and higher standard is well above that of pupils nationally.

You were also asked to improve the opportunities in early years for children to develop their communication skills, particularly in writing. Early years staff provide a wide range of writing opportunities within designated writing areas and around the classroom. Children are confident to talk and are able to do so in English and Hebrew. During the inspection, children were happy to talk to each other and keen to tell each other what they were writing or finding out about. Children are equally confident to speak to adults. For example, they were keen to tell the inspector the names of the objects on the alphabet charts that are in the snack area.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

The safeguarding and welfare of pupils are given high priority. You and the staff team have ensured that pupils are in a safe and secure environment by promoting the clear message that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Safeguarding arrangements are thorough and reviewed regularly to ensure that they meet statutory requirements and are fit for purpose. Staff and governors undertake appropriate training that is up to date. This includes training about keeping pupils safe from radicalisation, extremism and neglect.

You and the safeguarding team offer the highest standard of vigilance and support

for vulnerable pupils. Leaders have effective relationships with the local community and external agencies and make an important contribution to the safeguarding of any vulnerable pupils.

Pupils said that they feel very safe and well cared for. They feel confident that adults will help them if needed. Pupils can talk about the ways they can stay safe in a range of situations, including personally and when using information technology. Parents feel that you and the staff keep children very safe.

## **Inspection findings**

- You and your governing body responded to the legislation regarding segregation by sex by applying for the school to become a multi-academy trust, which would lead to the current school becoming two single-sex schools. It is clear from the evidence you shared with me that this application is progressing. In the meantime, boys and girls remain segregated. Boys and girls receive the same standard of education; there is a high level of consistency and pupils benefit from the same curriculum and planning. There are similarly high expectations for both sexes educationally. Boys and girls achieve similarly. By the end of key stage 2, they regularly attain above their peers nationally. You have a large number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). These boys and girls have opportunities to be taught together.
- Nevertheless, while awaiting the de-amalgamation, you and the governing body have not taken the opportunity to put in place sufficient strategies or actions to reduce segregation, including in unstructured or informal times. As a result, boys and girls are denied the opportunity to socialise and prepare for life in modern Britain. Boys and girls do enter and exit the school building together; they mix when families car-share to bring their children to school. At events such as the school charity fair, boys and girls mingle. However, these are times when pupils are with their families and would naturally mix. These are not examples of mixing during the school day.
- You and your staff team are well aware of the slight dip in attainment and progress in mathematics by the end of key stage 2. Staff have responded to this with zeal, by putting in place a new mathematics curriculum. This reflects your pupils' learning needs and helps them build their skills and understanding. It also extends them to think about their learning and use their knowledge to solve problems and challenges. For example, pupils talk with animation about 'maths mission'. This activity has created a buzz throughout school to answer the challenging mathematical question set each week. It also gives you an excellent opportunity to involve family members. They often tell you that their evening meal conversations are dominated by whatever the 'maths mission' question might be. Evidence in pupils' books indicates that your revised approach to teaching mathematics is having a positive effect on pupils' progress and attainment.
- Pupils' attainment is comparable to national averages in writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 1. However, in reading it is just below. You have identified that pupils need to build their skills in understanding what they are

reading. To this end, you have increased the opportunities that pupils have to practise their comprehension skills. Teachers are asking more focused questions of pupils to encourage them to think more deeply about what they are reading. The school's assessment information and evidence in pupils' books indicate that pupils' comprehension skills are developing well.

- You rightly pride yourselves on offering pupils a good-quality curriculum in subjects other than English and mathematics. Curriculum leaders are enthusiastic about their subjects, and knowledgeable and hard working. The way you use subjects such as science, history and geography to build pupils' knowledge and understanding as well as to provide them with a meaningful impetus for their writing is particularly effective. Pupils say how much they enjoy their learning in wider curriculum subjects, and they respond well to the ways teachers make learning lively and engaging for them.
- Children join early years with skills and knowledge below those typical for their age, with a few well below. Children benefit from well-organised routines and an interesting range of activities. Adults give clear instructions and explanations to children to help them learn. Children enjoy their learning and are keen to engage. For example, children were visibly enthralled by hearing a 'baby owl' story read to them. Boys and girls are taught separately, but are offered the same opportunities and activities. Although the proportion of children achieving a good level of development is still below the national average, this is increasing year on year and remains a priority.
- There are a number of strengths evident at Yesoiday Hatorah. Leaders and governors are committed to providing a high standard of education to pupils. They seek ways to collaborate with other schools to improve and build on the school's practice. Leaders are generous in the time they take to share good practice with other schools locally and further afield. A striking feature of the school is the drive for improvement. Leaders welcome change and ensure that staff are at the forefront of initiatives. All staff benefit from a range of training and are encouraged to contribute to developing the school.
- Your inclusive practice toward pupils with SEND is a strength. Parents are highly appreciative of the support you offer. Typically, they say, you 'go above and beyond' for their children. Leaders work hard to ensure that pupils' learning needs are met and barriers to learning are broken down. Provision for pupils with SEND is led with expertise and passion.

### **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that they:

- provide boys and girls with opportunities to socialise together, including at unstructured and informal times of the school day
- continue to actively pursue the plan to establish two separate schools, one for boys and one for girls.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Bury. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Sue Eastwood  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During this inspection, inspectors met with you, the deputy headteacher and two assistant headteachers. We also met with curriculum leaders, the SEND coordinator, and the early years leader and team. We met with members of the safeguarding team and with the person responsible for maintaining safeguarding records. I met with four governors, including the chair of the governing body. An inspector also spoke to a leader from a local special school about your work together.

Inspectors visited lessons and scrutinised pupils' work. We took account of the 70 responses from parents to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, as well as the views of parents who talked with us before the school day. Inspectors took account of the 20 responses to Ofsted's staff questionnaire and spoke with staff during the day. Inspectors also met with four groups of pupils.

We observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school. We looked at school documents including: information about pupils' achievement; the school's self-evaluation; the school improvement plan; information related to the work of the governing body; and records relating to safeguarding.