

FULL INSPECTION REPORT FOR BETH MIDRASH LEMOROTH-JEWISH TEACHERS' TRAINING COLLEGE

UKVI LICENCE No: 02JYGYE56

Education oversight inspection of private further education colleges on behalf of the Home Office's division of United Kingdom Visas and Immigration (UKVI)

The overall inspection findings for this college

UKVI Standards for

courses and qualifications are	MET
teaching, learning and assessment are	MET
the cultural and moral development of students are	MET
welfare, health and safety are	MET
the effectiveness and suitability of staff are	MET
financial sustainability, leadership and governance are	MET
premises and accommodation are	MET
information and complaints are	MET

Compliance with UKVI Standards

The college meets all the UKVI Standards

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INTRODUCTION

Purpose and scope of the inspection

Mainland Education is an approved educational oversight body authorised by the UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) section of the Home Office to inspect privately funded further education colleges in England, with a Steiner, Montessori or Eurythmy basis or background, or with a clear religious purpose. Inspection is designed to assess the college's compliance with the Standards for colleges agreed with the Home Office. These Standards cover the quality of education and welfare provided to all students, including those from overseas who are sponsored by the college for Tier 4 visas, and, where applicable, those who are under eighteen or are vulnerable adults. On-site student accommodation, where provided, is assessed for compliance with the Standards but is not subject to a full boarding inspection. Inspection provides objective and reliable reports on the extent to which colleges meet the Standards. By placing reports in the public domain, the information they contain is available to students, the UKVI, and the wider community.

Inspection takes account of the context of each individual college, and of how it evaluates its own performance and demonstrates its success. It helps colleges, their staff and trustees/governors/proprietors to recognise and build on their strengths and to identify and remedy their weaknesses in relation to compliance. The inspection also takes account of the college's financial performance over the last two years for new providers and since the last inspection for established providers. An assessment is also made of the college's financial sustainability going forward, on the basis of information provided by the college. Prospective students, their parents and agents should make their own enquiries into the financial viability of institutions before accepting a place.

Colleges are subject to a full inspection once every four years which is conducted by two inspectors over two days. In the intervening years, colleges receive an interim inspection and are kept under review. All reports state whether or not the college continues to meet the agreed Standards.

The last full inspection of Beth Midrash Lemoroth – Jewish Teachers' Training College was conducted in 2016 and the last Interim inspection in 2019, both by the School Inspection Service, which Mainland Education Ltd has now replaced.

Characteristics of the college

Beth Midrash Lemoroth - Jewish Teachers' Training College (JTTC) opened in Gateshead in 1944. It is an internationally recognised training college for girls and young women between the ages of 16 and 21. Students are trained in Torah studies, including training of teachers for orthodox Jewish educational settings, particularly schools. The college works in partnership with Gateshead College, a local further education (FE) college, to provide A level and Level 3 vocational courses. About two thirds of the students come from the UK; the remainder are from Europe, the United States and Israel as well as a small number from a range of other countries. There are 470 students on roll of whom 40 are sponsored under Education oversight inspection of Beth Midrash Lemoroth-Jewish Teachers' Training College

Tier 4. All students live in college accommodation. The responsibility for governance rests with two trustees one of whom is the Principal.

SECTION A: Main Findings and Actions Required

Main findings

Beth Midrash Lemoroth - Jewish Teachers' Training College meets all the UKVI Educational Oversight Standards. It is a thriving establishment run very successfully by a well-established team of dedicated educators. The courses are well matched to the needs of students and reflect the orthodox Jewish ethos of the college, as well as equipping them with good academic and vocational skills. Teaching is of high quality, drawing on the scholarly expertise of rabbis as well as the subject skills of secular teachers. Students are keen and conscientious learners and achieve high standards. They show great enjoyment in their learning and are rightly proud of their achievements. Highly developed systems of assessment are a strength of the provision, with meticulous records helping students to understand how to make further progress. There is a strong emphasis on the students' moral and cultural development. Students are socially confident and respectful of others. Exceptional provision is made for the welfare, health and safety of students. Safeguarding procedures are up to date and meet the current requirements in full. The required checks are made on the suitability of staff, and records are well maintained. Safety checks on the buildings and fire safety checks are regular and thorough, meeting requirements. The college finances are in good order and are carefully managed. A very professional and capable team of senior staff is led by the principal who drives improvement and leads by example. Premises and accommodation are of good quality and are well maintained. Students are well informed about their courses. They enjoy and value their time at the college and hold it in very high regard.

Overall Main Finding	Compliance	Outcome for the College
The college meets UKVI requirements.	It meets all the Standards.	It will receive interim checks and a further full inspection in four years

Actions Required

- **No action is required**

SECTION B: Detailed evaluation of the standards

Standards for courses and qualifications

The Standards for courses and qualifications are met. The courses on offer are well matched to students' needs and lead to qualifications which meet the definition of an approved qualification for UKVI purposes. All students complete the courses and the vast majority achieve qualifications, often with good grades. Students entering the college have completed GCSE or equivalent study at Level 2 and their prior subject knowledge is gained through their Jewish educational background. Students are aware that the college awards its own JTTC Diploma to graduates of the Teaching Course at the end of their third year, as well as offering an Awards for Training and Higher Education (ATHE) Diploma at Level 3, both at a suitable level for Tier 4 students. The college is registered as an ATHE centre and an ATHE monitoring visit at the start of 2023 confirmed that requirements were being met. Through a very active and well organised partnership with Gateshead College the college offers on-site a range of A level and vocational courses including Mathematics, English, Biology, Art, History, Hebrew, Business Education, Book-keeping and Health and Social Care. All of these courses are available to Tier 4 students. The partnership with Gateshead College also provides the opportunity for students to gain educational qualifications in their final year to provide accredited initial teacher training.

The college provides clear information about the level of English required to join the courses. Before they are admitted to the college all Tier 4 visa students must show a suitable level of competency in English to meet UKVI requirements. Students are paired up with a native speaker to provide individual English language support, and an ESOL course leading to the Cambridge certificate in English is taken by some students. All students are full-time, and classes, tutorials and supervised study provide full-time study which is well in excess of the required minimum of 15 hours per week. The courses are carefully monitored by the principal and senior staff to ensure that they are compatible with the declared orthodox Jewish religious ethos of the college.

Standards for teaching, learning and assessment

The Standards for teaching, learning and assessment are met. The college provides teaching of a high quality. It is effective, stimulating, challenging, well-planned, and delivered with pace and often good humour. The rabbis teaching all aspects of Jewish Studies are well-qualified, knowledgeable and experienced teachers who are frequently leading experts in their field. Their explanations are clear and authoritative. The students are respectful, engaged, listen carefully and make useful notes, know their way around the Torah and have good research skills. They are encouraged to both ask and answer questions during the lectures, and they do so willingly, although the acoustics and arrangement of the rooms are such that their questions and responses are not always clearly audible to other students. In the course of the day, the students are exposed, in smaller class groups, to a range of different but equally effective teaching styles, which enable them to

demonstrate practical and creative skills alongside the application of intellectual effort. The teacher training element of the final year course contains strong opportunities for practice in local schools and nurseries. Well-focused tuition is given to non-native speakers to develop and improve their English, while appropriate support is provided for any student with a special learning difficulty. In this way, all students can access all elements of the compulsory courses and any optional ones they choose.

The students learn well and take pride in the presentation of their work in response to the college's careful monitoring and uniformly high expectations. Notes from lectures are thorough, and work in assignments shows good levels of understanding. A notable feature of the students' work is the high quality of their handwriting which is neat and legible. The students enjoy working on challenging personal research projects and the outcomes are exceptional. For example, one assignment within the ATHE course is a research project on an aspect of Jewish life. This leads to beautifully presented projects with fine hand-made cover designs and well researched, in-depth studies. The girls are rightly proud of these projects which allow them to carry out complex study as well as expressing their own personality and individuality. These projects are seen by the students as treasured possessions and they take them with them on leaving the college.

The quality of assessment is exceptional. It occurs regularly and is thorough, fair and consistent. The girls are, deservedly, given praise for their efforts and achievements, as well as helpful pointers for further improvement. They are all aware of the progress they make. The tutors provide excellent opportunities for the girls to seek help or discuss their work on a one-to-one basis. Their commitment to the students' learning and progress is commendable, and the focussed or random selection of students' notebooks for scrutiny keeps the girls on their toes and ensures that they make consistently useful notes during the lectures.

Standards for cultural and moral development of students

The Standards for the students' cultural and moral development are met. The students have good social skills and engage readily in discussion with their peers, their tutors and with visitors to the college. They show good humour and resilience. Their understanding of their own strengths and personalities develops very well through the reflective nature of the Torah courses and the practical work they undertake in other academic and vocational courses. In addition, their experience of boarding within a large group helps to develop responsibility and tolerance. They learn to live with and help other students, and they frequently take on roles of responsibility such as monitors and leaders.

The students follow the orthodox Jewish codes of conduct and behave responsibly within the college and the community. They know the importance of showing respect for others, including those from different cultural traditions. They regularly go out of college to undertake voluntary work, for example helping in local primary schools and assisting parents with respite care for children with special needs. They go out into the local area and make visits to towns and cities in the region, adding to their awareness of different cultures. The college ensures that students

are aware of the nature of any threats they might encounter and how to respond to them. Staff know that any indications of radicalisation are to be dealt with immediately.

Standards for welfare, health and safety

The Standards for welfare, health and safety are met. The college has the required health and safety policies and implements them thoroughly through clear and well-established procedures and practices. Good maintenance of buildings and grounds helps to ensure that health and safety requirements are met. Fire safety monitoring, including fire alarm checks and fire drills, is regular and carefully recorded.

The students are exceptionally well looked after. All staff are mindful of their well-being, but on a daily basis their welfare is cared for by two knowledgeable matrons with the right blend of experience, care and common sense. The matrons and their families live in at either end of the boarding accommodation. They are on duty during the day and are always on call during the night for any emergency, which is reassuring for parents. The matrons know the girls well and are a great source of practical support and sound advice to them. The students' medical needs are well cared for; they are registered with a doctor and a number of trained First Aiders are on site. Nourishing meals are provided; the laundry system works well; and the boarding houses are kept clean by a team of dedicated cleaners employed by the college.

The college has a clear, comprehensive and detailed Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy which complies with the latest government guidance. It covers the procedures specific to JTTC and reflects orthodox Jewish culture. It is implemented fully. All staff have undertaken basic safeguarding training and understand that they all have responsibility for safeguarding students. They know how to handle information disclosed by or about a student or a member of staff, and where to refer their concerns.

The roles of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and his Deputy (DDSL) are clearly understood. Both have undertaken Level 3 interagency training, as have the matrons and two other senior members of staff, and they know local systems for making a referral. There are established contacts with local agencies such as the police, medical services and the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). The college seeks external guidance and help for students when needed, for example with physical or mental health emergencies. The girls say that there is always someone available to whom they could turn with any worries about themselves or others. The college has a clear system for recording and monitoring child protection matters and low-level concerns.

Other linked policies for example for student welfare, campus and online safety, and preventing bullying, support good safeguarding practice in the college, and there is a clear and sensible crisis management plan which has considered actions in the event of terrorist attack. The college has a good level of security for its premises and buildings, and CCTV with long storage facilities for footage is in operation in public areas. Visitors are checked in and out of college appropriately and supervised where necessary. The college has a procedure for recording

whether students are on the premises during their free time, but managers are investigating further use of their electronic systems to improve its reliability.

The students are not allowed to have mobile telephones, tablets or personal laptops: they use the school telephones and the computers in the IT suite for their work and research, where access to approved internet websites is 'white listed' for their safety and protection. The college offers a course on staying safe online to all students, but it is optional, and it is recommended that this course be made compulsory for all students to help them prepare for life in the modern world when they leave the college.

The college maintains accurate admissions and attendance registers, and any absences are followed up quickly. There are systems in place to make a report to UKVI if a visa student should fail to enrol, miss contacts or discontinue study.

Standards for the effectiveness and suitability of staff

The Standards for the effectiveness and suitability of staff are met. JTTC is a prestigious college which is able to retain experienced teachers and attract rabbis who are renowned experts in their field. This ensures that the quality of the teaching remains consistently high. The college also has clear and comprehensive policies for recruiting all staff and for checking and vetting their professionalism and suitability to have contact with young people. A senior member of staff has undertaken Safer Recruitment training and this influences recruitment policy and practice. Interview questions are designed to ensure that candidates understand the professional barriers between staff and students, and share the college's approach to safeguarding. The college's policies are followed carefully so that all students, including those who have not yet attained the age of eighteen, are safeguarded appropriately and protected from unsuitable adults who do not share JTTC's values.

Thorough checks are made of employees' identity, nationality, right to work in the United Kingdom, medical fitness, and qualifications, where relevant. Professional and character references are sought in a standard format; an enhanced DBS check is made on all members of staff; and additional checks are made on the Barred List and Prohibition Orders, where relevant, before an appointment is confirmed. An overseas police check is requested for employees who have lived or worked abroad. All these checks are recorded correctly on the Single Central Register, signed appropriately, and confirmed by the evidence held on individual staff files. The college has gained written assurances from partners such as Gateshead College and any companies occasionally supplying staff or services to college, that they have made the appropriate checks on their named employees. The identity of visitors and visiting staff is checked and supervision arrangements are in place where necessary. There has been no occasion to do so, but the college is aware of its duty to report to the authorities any dismissal of a member of staff on safeguarding grounds, and it understands how to do so, should such a case arise.

Standards for financial sustainability, management and governance

The Standards for financial sustainability, management and governance are met. The college's finances are in good order. Enrolment is strong and there is a consistently high demand for places. The trustees and Principal manage the budget wisely and in the best interests of the students. Since the last inspection, the college has funded a substantial programme of new building and refurbishment of both the teaching and the boarding accommodation and facilities. This development has been managed with care and attention to detail, and students have benefited considerably. Prudent financial management ensures that the college is sustainable going forward and that its future development plans are realistic.

The work of the college is underpinned by clear, detailed and effective policies and procedures which cover all aspects of course planning, teaching, assessment, student welfare, management and administration. The policies are reviewed on a regular basis for compliance with legal requirements and government guidance. They are resourced appropriately and implemented fully to work in the students' best interests.

The college is well-run. The principal and his senior staff work effectively together and take account of the views of staff and students in order to maintain the strengths of the college and rectify swiftly any weaknesses. The Academic Advisory Board meets twice a year to review academic courses and make any changes deemed necessary. Critical self-awareness together with the drive for constant improvement and active management, ensure that all Standards are met and continue to be so.

Standards for premises and accommodation

The Standards for premises and accommodation are met. The college buildings have been carefully adapted and recently modernised to enable all the courses to be taught effectively. The maintenance and decoration of the buildings is of very good quality, with good lighting and ventilation. The main college building has good teaching and learning facilities including lecture rooms, classrooms, computer rooms and a library.

Adjacent to the classroom areas fourteen terraced houses have been skillfully converted to boarding accommodation with a long continuous corridor linking all the houses and allowing girls to move freely and safely around the boarding area. A new section has been built since the last inspection and the other rooms have been refurbished. This has relieved the overcrowding noted in the previous report and now means that all the dormitories provide pleasant and comfortable accommodation with good storage for clothes, shoes and personal effects. The girls share dormitories of four to six beds. The room lists are changed twice a year, so that all girls have the opportunity to share with different room-mates, and to mix with girls from different countries, of different ages and different temperaments, the

aim being to learn humility and tolerance, appreciate other national traditions, and to learn from one another and live together in peace and harmony.

Washroom facilities have been refurbished or renewed and are modern, clean and afford a high level of privacy. There is a sufficient number of showers, lavatories and basins. They work well and are well-maintained. Efficient boilers and storage tanks ensure that there is ample hot water to cover high demand at peak times. A dedicated sick room, equipped with WC and basin, is located close to the entrance to the matron's house, so that girls who are ill can be monitored and treated effectively.

Students have access to well-maintained and pleasant outdoor spaces, including a small private park. The teaching, boarding and outdoor areas provide a safe and secure environment that safeguards the health and safety of students. Appropriate facilities are available in the event of a student having special needs or disabilities.

Food is prepared on site in well organised kitchens that are adapted to Jewish dietary customs, and kitchen staff are trained in food hygiene to the required standards. Large scale murals designed and painted by the students enhance the appearance of the student dining room.

Standards for information and complaints

The Standards for information and complaints are met. Students say that much useful information about the college is widely shared within the community and through feeder schools. Many of the mothers, sisters, female relatives and friends of the students have attended the college and share their knowledge of its reputation and provision. The college does not have a website, but up-to-date and accurate information in the form of a very informative prospectus and other documents are available on request. Communications with students are excellent, with clear and updated information provided regularly. Reports on progress in the form of assessments, grades and tutorials are thorough and much valued by students. Parents are able to contact the college with any queries they have including requests for information about their daughters' progress.

Students know how they can complain, informally and in writing, if they have any concerns or worries. A formal complaints procedure is in place with suitable actions set out, although the college is advised to add a timescale to the different stages of the process. There have been no instances of formal complaints to date.

SECTION C: SEMINARY AND INSPECTION DETAILS**Details of college**

Name of college:	Beth Midrash Lemoroth – Jewish Teachers’ Training College
Address of college:	50 Bewick Road, Gateshead NE8 4HB
Telephone number:	0191 477 2620
Email address:	office@jttc.org.uk
Proprietor:	Trustees: Rabbi Simcha Kohn, Rabbi Joseph Grunfeld
Name of Principal:	Rabbi Simcha Kohn
Licence number:	02JYGYE56
Type of college:	Religious education and training

Details of student body

Age range	16-21
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Number on roll:		Male	Female
	Full Time:	-	470
	Part Time:	-	0
	Below 18	-	227

Annual fees:	Between £4,500 and £10,000
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Details of inspection

Type of inspection:	Educational Oversight: Full	
Inspection Team:	Reporting Inspector:	Mr. Peter Jones
	Supporting Inspector:	Mrs. Jane Cooper
Dates of inspection:	20-21 June 2023	