

Moriah Jewish Day School

Inspection report

LEA	Harrow
Inspection dates	16 th – 17 th March 2009
Inspected under the auspices of	Pikuach Lead Inspector: Rabbi Geoffrey L Shisler Team Inspector: Mr John Gordon

This inspection was carried out under section 48 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of School	Primary	School address	Cannon Lane, Pinner, Middx. HA5 1JF
School category	Voluntary Aided		
Age range of pupils	3 – 11		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	020 8868 2001
Number on roll	216	Fax number	020 8429 8419
Appropriate authority	The Governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs Doreen Samuels
Date of previous inspection	11 th – 12 th January 2006	Headteacher	Mr Alan Shaw

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Introduction

Description of the school

Moriah Jewish Day School is a one-form entry, voluntary aided, orthodox Jewish, co-educational primary school. The majority of its pupils live in the Pinner post-code area or within the London Borough of Harrow, with the remainder coming from as far away as Mill Hill, Watford and Borehamwood. It is a United Synagogue school and therefore accepts the *halachic* authority of the Chief Rabbi.

Since the school opened in 1998 its Jewish Studies has, until the current academic year, been under the guidance of the headteacher. From September 2008 this role has been undertaken by a newly appointed head of Jewish Studies, who is also responsible for Information Technology (IT).

The teacher responsible for the delivery of Jewish Studies at Key Stage 1 was unable to be present during the inspection.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Unsatisfactory

Overall effectiveness of its provision for Jewish education

Inspectors judge the overall effectiveness of the school's provision to be 'good with some outstanding features.'

Its main strengths lie in its leadership and management, and a clear commitment of every member of staff to the pupils' well-being and education. Jewish Studies is pitched at exactly the right level for the pupils and their family backgrounds, and engages their interest. The assemblies and Grace after Meals are inspiring and of a high quality, and pupils' ability and enthusiasm to participate is very impressive. The new head of department has begun to make a significant impact on the school.

An area for improvement lies in the delivery of the Ivrit programme where pupils' attainment is being restricted by insufficient use of sustained, whole-class and group repetition at normal speaking speeds.

Grade: 2

What the school should do to improve further

Since the school considers Ivrit to be, not just its chosen modern foreign language at Key Stage 2, but also an integral part of its Jewish Studies curriculum, it should take steps to raise the teaching of Ivrit to the high level of the other elements of this programme.

As in the previous Pikuach report, inspectors recommend that the school should take the opportunity to observe techniques used in other schools in the teaching of a modern foreign language, and adopt them, where appropriate, to the teaching of Ivrit in Moriah.

Achievement and standards

In relation to pupils' capabilities and prior knowledge the levels of attainment and standards reached by most children in the *Torah and Texts*, *Jewish Way of Life* and *Jewish History/Geography and Israel* components of the school's Jewish Studies curriculum are outstanding. They compare more than favourably with what is achieved in the best of similar Jewish primary schools elsewhere in this country. Many of the pupils achieve even better than the overall grading below suggests. This was confirmed by evidence from lesson observations, the scrutiny of pupils' written work and the oral testing of a representative sample of pupils from Years 2, 4 and 6 during the inspection. Inspectors were impressed by the level of general Jewish Knowledge displayed by pupils.

Progress in Ivrit is satisfactory, however many pupils do not reach the levels of attainment and self-assurance observed in the rest of their Jewish Studies.

The ability of pupils to read aloud suitable texts in Hebrew is generally good. The presence of an assistant for additional Hebrew support within the Jewish Studies department ensures that, either in class or in a support group, help is available at all points for those pupils finding difficulties in acquiring Hebrew reading skills.

Procedures are also in place to inform parents/guardians of any difficulties their children are meeting. They make clear what needs to be done at home to supplement what the school is doing and ensure that there is a positive check on how effective the outcome has been. Individual attainment and progress are regularly assessed using the school's own schedule of attainment levels and targets which has been further refined since the beginning of the current school year.

Grade: 2

Personal development and well-being

The school's provision for the personal development and well-being of the pupils is outstanding. A warm Jewish atmosphere pervades the school and there is a high level of integration between the secular and Jewish curricula, such as in the areas of food technology, mathematics, and Design & Technology. Links have been forged with local non-Jewish schools to which visits have been made, and Moriah has reciprocated by receiving visits from them. A Biblical garden is in the process of being planted.

Assemblies comply fully with the requirements of the relevant Education Acts and pupils participate in them with much enthusiasm. The level of musical accompaniment at assemblies is of an unusually high quality, which encourages the pupils to sing heartily and with passion. Groups of pupils are frequently involved in giving presentations to the rest of school and on most Monday mornings the Sefer Torah is removed from the Ark and one of the pupils reads the weekly portion. After lunch, pupils return to their classes to sing Grace after Meals. Inspectors were greatly impressed by the enthusiasm displayed by each class as they sang.

Evidence gained from lesson observations and discussions with pupils confirms that they enjoy their Jewish Studies and Ivrit lessons.

Behaviour observed by inspectors both in class and around the school was exemplary and pupils were polite and helpful.

Grade: 1

Quality of provision

Teaching and Learning

During the inspection observation of Jewish Studies and Ivrit teaching took place in the Nursery, Reception and all Key Stage 2 classes.

The quality of teaching in all Jewish Studies lessons observed was good at the very least and in two of the lessons was judged to be outstanding. Good use was made of appropriate teaching aids, including the interactive whiteboard, to enhance pupils' understanding of what was being taught.

Almost all the Kodesh lessons seen were connected with learning about some aspect of the story of Pesach (the Passover festival). These lessons were well structured and learning activities were varied at intervals well suited to the age and stage of the year group being taught so that pupils' interest levels did not flag and a good working atmosphere was maintained.

In general there was a good balance between well-paced, whole-class instruction, collaborative group work and opportunities for pupils to focus on individual learning tasks. In all classes seen the work of the teachers was supported by one or more classroom assistants.

In the best of these lessons, the teacher took care to ensure that (a) there were relevant extension exercises for those pupils who completed the main task before the rest of the class and (b) there was sufficient time towards the end of the lesson to recapitulate the main points covered and to check on pupils' progress by asking them to identify what new facts and concepts they had learnt in the lesson.

While the quality of the Ivrit lessons seen was generally satisfactory children's self-assurance and achievement in comprehension and responding in Hebrew are clearly capable of further improvement.

Informal discussion with pupils during the inspection confirms that most clearly enjoy both their Jewish Studies and Ivrit lessons.

Grade: 2

Curriculum and other activities

Over the ten years since it opened, the school has developed a very well articulated policy statement laying out the aims, objectives and principles underlying both its formal and informal Jewish Studies curriculum. This document has not remained static: it was last updated in Autumn 2008 to take account of the requirements of national legislation.

Since the beginning of the current school year, the newly appointed Head of Jewish Studies and his team, in close consultation with the headteacher, have been actively reviewing the strategies, practices and schemes of work of the department in order to identify areas for improvement and further development.

Overall the quality of the school's formal and informal provision is outstanding, as is that of the many other activities which enrich the Jewish ethos of the school. Notable among these is the school choir, which regularly takes part in both Jewish and local civic events, the outstanding quality of the school's prayer assemblies (*Tefillah*), residential study visits, Biblical garden and the large amount of money in relation to the school's size that the children raise for Jewish and general charities.

In developing its formal curriculum the school has been an active participant in the work of the Jewish Curriculum Partnership (JCP) sponsored by the Agency for Jewish Education. During the current inspection there was ample evidence of the competent and very successful use of course materials developed by JCP for the teaching of *Torah and Texts*.

The school has elected to include the study of Ivrit as the language strand of the Jewish Studies curriculum. Since the last inspection it has introduced the use of the *Chalav u-Dvash* course materials for Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 pupils. It has also chosen Ivrit as its modern foreign language for Key Stage 2 pupils, which will become a statutory entitlement as from September 2010.

Grade: 1

Care, guidance and support

The provision of care, guidance and support of the pupils is very good, and pupils know whom to go to if they have a problem. Teachers show care and sensitivity towards all the pupils and there is an assistant who gives Additional Hebrew Support (AHS) where required.

Parents are generally very supportive of the school and out of 53 questionnaires returned, there were only 16 that contained some negative comment, almost none of which were of a serious nature.

Security arrangements are very effective and there are two full-time security officers who vet all visitors before allowing them access to the premises. Pupils are well supervised during break and lunch time.

Grade: 1

Leadership and management

Leadership and Management in Moriah are of a very high quality. There is a totally dedicated headteacher and Senior Management Team, and the newly appointed Head of Jewish Studies has already begun to make a significant impact on the school. Since his appointment he has instituted, among other initiatives, a *Tefillah* programme to teach an understanding of the prayers, and begun work to review the curriculum.

The involvement and input of the headteacher into the Jewish Studies curriculum is unusually high, and continues, even though there is now a specialist in place. Since the headteacher was, until the current academic year, the effective head of Jewish Studies, it is he who deserves credit for guiding the school to the high levels of achievement that it has attained.

The current Chair of Governors, who comes from an educational background, with considerable personal experience in *Limmudei Kodesh* teaching, is strongly dedicated to furthering the work of the school, and in this, is fully supported by the governing body.

Grade: 1

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 unsatisfactory.	School Overall	16–19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of pupils?	2	
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote pupils' well-being?	1	
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	1	
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	

Achievement and standards

How well do pupils achieve?	2	
The <i>standards</i> ¹ reached by pupils	2	
How well pupils' make <i>progress</i> , taking account of any significant variations between groups of pupils	2	
How well pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the pupils?	1	
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development including collective worship	1	
The behaviour of pupils	1	
The attendance of pupils	1	
How well pupils enjoy their education	1	
The extent to which pupils adopt safe practices	1	
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1	
The extent to which pupils make a positive contribution to the community.	1	
How well pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1	

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of pupils' needs?	2	
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of pupils?	1	
How well are pupils cared for, guided and supported including provision for collective worship?	1	

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all pupils?	1	
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1	
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all pupils achieve as well as they can	1	
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	1	
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1	
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that pupils are protected	Yes	
Does this school require special measures?	No	
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No	

The extent to which schools enable pupils to be healthy	Delete as appropriate
Pupils are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily.	Yes
Pupils are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise.	Yes
Pupils are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse.	Yes
Pupils are educated about sexual health.	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that pupils stay safe.	Delete as appropriate
Procedures for safeguarding pupils meet current government requirements.	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place.	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism.	Yes
Pupils are taught about key risks and how to deal with them.	Yes
The extent to which pupils make a positive contribution	Delete as appropriate
Pupils are helped to develop stable, positive relationships.	Yes
Pupils, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them.	Yes
Pupils are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable pupils to achieve economic well-being	Delete as appropriate
There is provision to promote pupils' basic skills.	NA
Pupils have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams.	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all pupils in Key Stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form.	NA
Education for all pupils aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy.	NA