

Independent Jewish Day School

Inspection report

LEA	Barnet
Inspection dates	5 th and 6 th February 2008
Reporting inspector	Rabbi David Radomsky
Team inspector	Rev Michael Binstock

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

Type of School	Primary	School address	46 Green Lane
School category	Voluntary Aided		Hendon
Age range of pupils	3 -11		London
			NW4 2AH
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	020 8203 2299
Number on roll	224	Fax number	020 8202 1142
Appropriate authority	[The governing body]	Chair of governors	Ms Debbie Meyer
Date of previous inspection	24-26 March 2003	Headteacher	Miss Amanda Lando

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Introduction

Description of the school

The Independent Jewish Day School in North West London is committed to a modern Orthodox and Zionist education, and promotes a culture where Jewish life and learning are in harmony with each other. Children are from religiously observant backgrounds and *Kodesh* [Jewish Studies] lessons are taught in *Ivrit*. The *Kodesh B'Ivrit* programme is taught by *Ivrit* speaking teachers, mainly *Shlichim* [emissaries] from Israel, and is supported by *bnot she'erut leumi* [Girls undertaking their Israeli National Service]. Recently, there has been considerable staff turnover in the department. The number of children with learning difficulties and disabilities is below average and most pupils are from relatively advantaged backgrounds.

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Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of its provision for Jewish education

The Independent Jewish Day School provides an outstanding Jewish education and there has been significant improvement since the last inspection. It fully lives up to its mission of 'preparing pupils to live as modern orthodox Zionist Jews, participating proudly and fully in every aspect of modern life.'

All pupils are valued as individuals, make excellent progress, and work and play together in harmony. The staff forms a close and committed team, and ensure that the school provides a haven of integrated learning and a feeling of living in an Israeli style environment. This all-round excellence stems from a shared vision, the Headteacher's exemplary leadership, the Head of *Kodesh's* energy and dynamism, ably supported by his highly effective deputy. In addition, there is rigorous and accurate self-evaluation and a determination to ensure that the department continues to improve. The *Kodesh* leaders are supported well by a highly skilled dedicated *Kodesh* SENCO (special educational needs coordinator), who, together with the *Kodesh* support staff, ensures that all pupils make equally good progress. This team have steered the *Kodesh* Department exceptionally well to its current position of excellence. Their drive is a clear demonstration of the school's excellent capacity for further improvement.

The *Kodesh* governors play a positive role. They monitor the work of the school closely, are aware of the school's development needs, are supportive and they ensure good value for money. Parents' views are largely positive. As one parent said, 'I am grateful for the outstanding level of teaching and inspirational leadership of our Head of *Kodesh* and Headteacher. The SEN department is well run and our child has been well supported'.

The care, guidance and support has a positive impact on pupils' personal development and their high levels of achievement. Pupils are polite, respectful and supportive of each other living up to their learning of the importance of 'Torah im Derech Eretz.' The school has been pioneering the establishment of links with a local primary school through which pupils have learnt to respect and be tolerant of others. Pupils reported that these links have led them to realise they should not see others in a stereotypical manner. They expressed the hope that they have enabled the children from the other school to appreciate that Jews are good people. They thus see these links as providing opportunities to promote a *kiddush Hashem*. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Pupils grow in confidence as they move through the school, develop clear views on moral issues from a *Torah* perspective and, due to the excellent provision, develop strong *Tefilah* skills. This was seen particularly during the *Rosh Chodesh* assembly when pupils prayed with enthusiasm and joy. Pupils are aware of healthy lifestyles, and participation in extra curricular sporting activities is high. They say they feel safe and the school's security arrangements are robust. Opportunities provided for pupils to take responsibility are grasped with relish and they are prepared well for their move to the next stage in their Jewish education.

Children enter the nursery with good foundations in their Jewish knowledge and practice. In both the Nursery and Reception years, children quickly learn to comprehend *Ivrit* and progress well in their Jewish knowledge and understanding. Because the school's *Kodesh* provision is excellent, and is underpinned by seamless links to the general curriculum, pupils' achievement is outstanding in all year groups. By the time that they leave school, standards in *Kodesh* are very high as pupils have good skills in understanding and analysing a broad range of Jewish traditional texts. Owing to the high levels of support from teaching assistants and *bnot she'erut l'Le'umi* who work with individuals and groups of children, all pupils make excellent progress in their *Kodesh*.

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall with some outstanding features. Throughout the school, teachers manage pupils well and classrooms are characterised by a calm and purposeful atmosphere in which pupils thrive. In many lessons, work is pitched to meet the differing learning needs of pupils. In some lessons however, the lack of opportunities for pupils to be actively engaged limits their rate of progress. The school has well developed systems for tracking pupils' progress, but teachers do not consistently offer sufficient guidance on how pupils may improve their work.

The curriculum covers a wide range of learning activities and experiences. It is well planned to meet pupils' needs, and gives them a solid foundation on which to build lifelong Jewish learning. Teachers are creative in their cross curricular planning and this, linked to the many opportunities for informal education, as well as imaginative activities especially around the *Chagim*, helps to engage and stimulate pupils' interest.

Grade: 1

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Provision in the Foundation Stage is outstanding and children thrive in the supportive and exciting environment. In both the Nursery and Reception activities are stimulating and challenging. The curriculum is fully integrated and the six areas of learning are seamlessly merged with the *Kodesh* curriculum. For example, pupils in the Nursery were observed enthusiastically engaged in a variety of activities relating to money. This was linked into the important *mitzvah* of *tzedakah*. This *mitzvah* is beautifully reinforced at the commencement of the *Tefillah* session when pupils are given stickers for bringing *tzedakah* to school. Pupils' progress, particularly in the development of their *Ivrit* speaking and comprehension skills, is excellent. There are good assessment procedures in place to monitor pupils' progress.

Grade: 1

What the school should do to improve further

- Create more opportunities for pupils to be actively engaged in their learning and develop a range of strategies to enable pupils to understand the next steps they need to take to improve their learning.

Achievement and standards

By the end of Year 6, pupils reach very high standards and achieve well in all aspects of their Jewish learning. The school has a robust tracking and assessment system which facilitates all individuals and groups to make progress in meeting challenging targets. Pupils develop a wide range of skills, knowledge and understanding. By the end of Key Stage two, all pupils are able to engage with Hebrew primary sources. Reading of vocalised texts is accurate and often fluent. Additionally, many pupils are able to read non-pointed and *Rashi* script. From an early age, pupils have an excellent comprehension of spoken and written *Ivrit*, with many responding verbally to their teachers in *Ivrit*. Pupils make outstanding progress during the Foundation Stage, Key Stage one and in Year 6. Good progress is made in Years three, four and five. Excellent support from classroom assistants and *Bnot She'erut Leumi* ensures that all groups of pupils, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities and the most able, make very good progress.

Grade: 1

Personal development and well-being

Personal development and well-being is outstanding. The exceptional Jewish ambience and promotion of an integrated and holistic approach to all aspects of pupils' experiences, ensures pupils' excellent spiritual, moral and social development. Pupils engage with *Birkat Hamazon* and *Berachah Achronah* after break with enthusiasm, and, during *Tefilah*, they pray with devotion and enjoyment. The innovative links that pupils have with a local school have promoted a great respect for people of other religions and cultures. Pupils develop their leadership skills in a range of ways, such as serving on the *tzedakah* committee where pupils arrange a variety of collection activities and enjoy deciding to donate to charities that are local, international and for both Jewish and non-Jewish beneficiaries. Through repeatedly emphasising the school value of *Ve'ahavta Le'reiacha Kamocho* [Love your neighbour as yourself], behaviour in lessons and around the school is excellent. Pupils are polite and courteous. Pupils expressed their appreciation of the Jewish Studies provision to the inspectors. As one pupil put it, he does not want any changes, as the school 'is perfect as it is.' Pupils are prepared well for their future lives. For instance, pupils receive *Mitzvah* rewards which they cash in on a weekly basis, and, when they have collected a large enough sum, can spend their 'money' on a Jewish book, supplied by the school.

Grade: 1

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching throughout the school is good overall and outstanding in the Foundation Stage, Key Stage one and Year six. Teachers are very secure in their subject knowledge and present themselves as excellent role models. They are very dedicated and highly motivated and have an excellent rapport with their pupils. Good or better teaching is characterised by good interaction between teachers and pupils and where opportunities are given for pupils to contribute. The pace of the lessons is brisk and pupils' attention is sustained. Teachers ask challenging questions and pupils respond enthusiastically. The needs of all pupils are addressed, including those of higher and lower abilities. Most pupils display a high level of comprehension in the lessons which are all conducted in *Ivrit*. Many respond in English, but a good number successfully attempt to respond in *Ivrit*. Most teachers enhance their lessons by the effective use of the interactive white board and high quality visual aids.

Where teaching is less effective, there is an over emphasis on teacher-led learning with few opportunities for pupils to participate or work collaboratively. Worksheets used do not give pupils sufficient opportunity to extend their thinking and writing skills.

Good assessment procedures are in place to test pupils' learning, but further development is required in order to improve the quality of feedback to pupils in order to help them improve. In marked work, teachers' comments are limited and, in most cases, they do not provide pupils with the advice necessary to enable them to improve the quality of their work.

Grade: 2

Curriculum and other activities

The quality and range of the curriculum is outstanding. It is broad and balanced and reflects the orthodox Zionist ethos and values of the school by providing a solid foundation of Jewish knowledge and skills. The curriculum successfully meets the needs and interests of the pupils and its wide range of subjects includes Hebrew reading, *Chumash*, *Rashi*, *Nach*, *Halachah* and Jewish General Knowledge. The study of *Mishnah* commences in Year 3 and *Gemara* in Year 5.

Inspectors agree with the school's view that the *Kodesh* and secular curricula merge together seamlessly. There is a fully integrated curriculum in the Foundation Stage and the school has identified many opportunities for integrated studies throughout the curriculum in each year group. For example, many aspects of PSHCE (Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education) are taught within the *Kodesh* curriculum. Other examples include the teaching of the Greeks and Alexander the Great during lessons relating to *Chanukah*, the study of Israel within the geography curriculum, and following a secular lesson on road safety, pupils consolidated the knowledge they had gained by writing

about the topic in *Ivrit*. Further development of the curriculum is planned in the areas of *Halachah*, *Ivrit*, *Mishnah* and *Gemara*.

The curriculum is enhanced by some excellent extra-curricular activities which are well supported by the pupils. These include the school choir that performs for the pupils and entertains the residents at local Jewish homes for the aged, the weekly Key Stage 2 *Midrash* Club and various *Shabbat* activities such as a *chaburah* for boys held in a local synagogue and a *seudah shelishit* for girls.

Grade: 1

Care, guidance and support

The provision for pupils' care, guidance and support is outstanding. Clear policies on Anti-Bullying, Health and Safety and Child Protection are in place. There is a strong family atmosphere that permeates the school and teachers show care and sensitivity towards pupils. Pupils are valued and their successes are celebrated so that they feel proud of their achievements thus promoting their self-esteem.

Security in the school is very effective. Pupils are appropriately supervised during break and at lunchtime. Pastoral care in the school is outstanding. Pupils feel safe and secure in school and know that they may approach their teachers if they have a problem, by writing to them if they wish. They know that their problem will receive a prompt response.

Provision for lower and higher attaining pupils is outstanding. In each class there is a teaching assistant and a *Bat She'erut Le'umi*. The school's *Kodesh* SENCO carries out her duties in an outstanding manner. Under her guidance, pupils receive very effective support and make very good progress. Records are maintained and updated meticulously.

The school has strong links with the Jewish Secondary schools, and Year 6 pupils are given valuable advice and support so that they are well-prepared for the transition.

Grade: 1

Leadership and management

The school's Headteacher, Head of *Kodesh* and his deputy provide outstanding leadership that is underpinned by vision, passion and care for all. They ensure high standards, a sense of well-being and strong personal development for all pupils through the coherent and integrated *Kodesh curriculum*.

There are robust systems in place for self-review and evaluation of the *Kodesh* provision, and as a result, the Head of *Kodesh* and his deputy know the department's strengths and areas for development well. They are clearly focussed on raising standards even further. They have established effective

strategies to monitor the work of all pupils and set appropriate targets. Leaders provide good quality support to new staff joining the school, thus endeavouring to ensure a smooth transition during periods of relatively high staff turnover.

Resources are well used to support the school's unique *Kodesh b' Ivrit* curriculum. Effective leadership creates a genuine Israeli and *Ivrit* speaking environment in the school. This is strongly promoted through the annual recruitment of *Bnot She'erut Le'umi*. The school promotes equality of opportunity and has taken positive steps in promoting community cohesion through its links with a local primary school. These are outstanding features of the school.

The governors are very committed and supportive. They monitor the work of the department regularly and act as critical friends. Parents are appreciative of the Jewish education their children receive at the school, which has a well deserved good reputation in the community.

Grade: 1

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate.	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 learners?	1	
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes/No/NA	Yes/No/NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	1	
The effectiveness of boarding provision	n/a	
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1	

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1	
The standards ¹ reached by learners	1	
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1	
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1	

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1	
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	
How well learners enjoy their education	1	
The attendance of learners	1	
The behaviour of learners	1	
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	
How well learners 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 learners' needs?	2	
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1	
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1	

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

All white boxes must be completed. The grey boxes are used wherever the inspection team has sufficient evidence to come to a secure judgement.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1	
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1	
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1	
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1	
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes/No	Yes/No
Does this school require special measures?	Yes/No	
Does this school require a notice to improve?	Yes/No	