

King David Junior School

Inspection Report

LEA Manchester
 Inspection dates 17 & 18 January 2007
 Inspected under the auspices of Pikuach

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

Type of School	Junior	School address	Wilton Polygon
School category	Voluntary Aided		Bury Old Road
Age range of pupils	7 – 11		Manchester M8 5DJ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0161 741 5090
Number on roll	290	Chair of Governors	Mrs S Simon
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Headteacher	Mr P Parker
Date of previous inspection	May 2002	Head of Jewish Studies	Mrs B Landes

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Introduction

Description of the School

King David Junior School is an Orthodox Junior school based on modern Zionistic principles. The school is part of the King David campus, which includes a crèche, kindergarten, infant school and high school. Each of the respective schools within the campus is managed separately. The school states that the majority of its pupils come from non-observant homes. The school last received a Pikuach inspection in May 2002, which was successful. There are thirty-four pupils on the special needs register, with five having a statement of special needs. A new Headmaster is in place since the previous inspection, but the Head of Jewish Studies is the same.

Key of Inspection Grades

- 1.** Outstanding
- 2.** Good
- 3.** Satisfactory
- 4.** Unsatisfactory

Overall effectiveness its provision for Jewish Education

The judgment of the inspectors is that the school is extremely effective and successful in delivering a high quality Kodesh curriculum for all of its pupils.

Excellent progress has been made since the previous inspection, and all of the recommendations in that report have been carried out. The school is a very happy, secure and well balanced community. The pupils receive high quality lessons and care, which well prepares them for life in the next stage of their education at Year 7.

The Head of Jewish Studies provides outstanding leadership. She works extremely well to ensure that the very highest quality teaching is delivered, and receives total dedication and support from all her teaching staff.

Pupils behave extremely well. They greatly enjoy going to Kodesh lessons, and this is evidenced by the high standard of their behaviour observed during Tephila and around the school.

The Headteacher and Head of Jewish Studies are particularly successful in ensuring that both secular and non-secular departments work extremely well together. There is an excellent relationship between pupils and teachers, and the whole school community is happy, calm and strives for excellence in every respect.

Grade: 1

What the school should do to improve further

- The school needs to continue to develop its work on in-class differentiation.
- The school needs to ensure that pupils understand how well they are doing, what they need to do to improve and work to individualized targets.
- The school should develop further opportunities for cooperation in cross-curricular work in order to enhance further pupils learning experiences.

Achievement and Standards

Although pupils enter the school with varied levels of prior attainment, most pupils progress well and achieve good knowledge, skills and understanding in both Jewish studies and Hebrew. By assessing all pupils on entry to the school on their Hebrew reading skills, the school is able to establish a baseline for continuous assessment, which continues all the way through the school on a regular basis. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are identified and early interventions, including one-to-one Hebrew reading and writing, help to raise standards for all pupils so that by the time pupils leave the school, the vast majority can read and write accurately

and fluently. Additionally, high achieving pupils are set for *Chumash and Dinim*, offering opportunities to broaden and deepen their Jewish learning experience.

The school is to be highly commended for the innovative way in which it structures the teaching of Dinim. Twelve areas of Jewish law and practice have been developed, and each year, all year groups learn the same topic concurrently, reinforcing and building on prior knowledge so that by the time they reach Year 6 they achieve very high standards. Inspectors witnessed very high levels of pupil knowledge and understanding of the laws of berachot. The school acknowledges that the previous Chumash curriculum was not sufficiently meeting the needs of its learners. It is therefore piloting the Chumash Curriculum of JSCP (Jewish Studies Curriculum Project). This should enable pupils to make good progress and achieve excellent knowledge and understanding. Standards in general Jewish knowledge are extended due to the breadth of the curriculum and very high quality teaching resources developed in the school. The achievements in Tephillah are excellent, and the children engage in their prayers with much devotion.

Grade 1

Quality of Provision

Teaching and Learning

Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is very good, with some outstanding features. Jewish Studies teachers have very good subject knowledge and employ a range of teaching methodologies to excellent effect. Teachers are deeply committed to the school and their pupils. The outcome of their dedication and hard work is a proactive, effective team. They have high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour, and pupils respond with enthusiasm and enjoyment.

Teaching resources are very good, and the department is to be commended for its initiative in designing a range of high quality teaching and learning resources as well as frameworks for recording pupil progress; the latter being currently developed further. Most lessons are enhanced by interactive white boards, which were used to great effect in all lessons observed. The talents of one of the members of the department in producing bespoke interactive PowerPoint's are an outstanding feature.

Some learning objectives conveyed to the pupils are actually descriptions of content or methodology and are not expressed as intended outcomes for pupils in terms of knowledge, skills and understanding. The medium term planning includes differentiated tasks, but this is an area that needs further development so that pupils of higher ability can be set even more challenging tasks, and pupils with learning difficulties supported even more effectively on a regular basis.

The teachers monitor the pupils' work and offer much praise and encouragement in their marking. Learners would benefit from the department embracing the principles and practices of Assessment For Learning, so that pupils can understand how well they are doing, what they need to do to improve and can work to individualized targets.

Parents are strongly encouraged to be involved in their children's learning, for example by listening to their Ivrit reading three times a week.

Grade 1

Curriculum and Other Activities

The quality and range of the curriculum is excellent. It is suitably broad and balanced, providing a solid foundation of Jewish and Hebrew knowledge, understandings and textual skills, while implanting positive Jewish attitudes, beliefs and practice.

The curriculum has gone through a period of development and refinement in response to the ongoing learning needs of the pupils. Pupils expressed particular enthusiasm for the new project-based and independent learning approach to the study of Dinim, and area of the curriculum many schools find the most challenging to deliver. The school is a partnership school of the Jewish Studies Curriculum Project (JSCP) and teaches its Parashat Hashavua (weekly Torah portion) programme and has recently begun to pilot its Chumash programme.

The school is developing cross-curricular links such as a Purim project, where pupils had to write on a piece of the Megilah using one of four writing styles learnt in their literacy lessons, and, Jewish Studies teachers in Years 5 and 6 have implemented an Ahavat Yisrael programme and invited speakers to address aspects of bullying and negative behaviour from a Jewish point of view. More cross-curricular work would enhance further pupils learning experiences.

Extra curricular opportunities for Jewish Studies are outstanding in both quantity and range, and strongly enhance the ethos and special ruach evident in the school. KEF and Jewish Drama were just two of the many opportunities observed during the inspection. Most noteworthy is the excellent MJL (My Jewish Life) competition for Year 6 pupils. This programme broadens their knowledge and understanding through self-study, gives pupils opportunities of learning from a range of high quality guest speakers and entry into a competition judged by local Rabbanim. Pupils' success in enhancing their Jewish knowledge is celebrated publicly with the winner achieving the much-coveted MJL award at the annual prize day.

Grade: 1

Care, Guidance and Support

The school provides an outstanding level of care, guidance and support for its pupils. Child protection procedures are formally in place, and the school has well addressed the new legislation for obtaining advanced criminal record checks for its entire staff. Pupils at the school feel safe and secure. They relate to staff extremely well and know who to go to for guidance, help and support.

Pupils' behaviour is a credit to themselves and the school. They conduct themselves in an exemplary manner during Tephila and Daven with feeling and love for Hashem.

Pupils in Year 6 are given excellent support and guidance for their transition to secondary education, and liaison between the junior school and the high school is excellent.

Grade: 1

Personal Development and Well-being

The school makes excellent provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development. The staff are very proactive in teaching about other traditions. The organisation and teaching of Tephila is outstanding. Most children from Year 3 can read the Shema with confidence, and the inspectors were particularly impressed with the dedication and skill that the children displayed during the daily assemblies and the singing of Birchat Hamazon (Grace after Meals).

Attendance at the school is very good. Pupils told the inspectors that they greatly enjoy Jewish studies. They consult staff and listen to their views. Pupils particularly enjoy being members of the school council, where they are able to debate issues of importance to them. Pupils display great courtesy to one another, staff and visitors. They are encouraged to raise money for both Jewish and non-Jewish charities (tzedaka). During lessons pupils were observed working collaboratively together and in groups, and even the younger pupils demonstrated that they were able to discuss issues and question the teachers sensibly and in a mature manner. The school encourages pupils to lead a healthy lifestyle. The lunchtime menu provides a variety of good and healthy foods, and the Jewish study curriculum provides many opportunities to pupils to learn about religion and Tephila.

Grade: 1

Leadership and Management

The Head of Jewish Studies provides outstanding and inspirational leadership. She demands the very highest standards from her staff and pupils, and is very successful in achieving this.

The management is very successful in ensuring that pupils not only receive the very best education in all Jewish Studies subjects, but also enjoy lessons and achieve well.

The entire Kodesh staff are devoted and caring, and have the most excellent relationships with pupils. As a result their knowledge and ability to take part in a synagogue service is enhanced, and their behaviour is excellent.

The Headteacher ably supports the Jewish Studies department, and because of the excellent cooperation between the secular and non-secular departments, the atmosphere at the school is happy and caring, and pupils thrive as a result.

The school has excellent induction procedures for new teachers, and monitoring of teaching of all Jewish Studies staff takes place on a regular basis by the head of department.

The school benefits from a strong and supportive governing body. They act as a critical friend, and their careful monitoring of curriculum and support enables the school to move forward with confidence.

Grade: 1