

Moriah Jewish Day School

Pinner, Middx, HA5 1JF

Inspection report

LEA 310 - London Borough of Harrow

Inspection dates 11th – 12th January 2006
Reporting inspector Mr J Gordon
Team inspector Rabbi M Lebrecht

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

Type of School	Primary school	School address	Cannon Lane
School category	Voluntary aided		PINNER
Age range of pupils	3 – 11		Middlesex
			HA5 1JF
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	020 8868 2001
Number on roll	214	Fax number	020 8429 8419
Appropriate authority	Governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Brian Leaver
Date of previous inspection	4 th - 6 th July 2001	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 drawing its intake from the Jewish communities of the LB of Harrow and neighbouring boroughs, and from South Hertfordshire. The United Synagogue is the sponsoring denominational foundation body and the school accepts the halachic authority of the Chief Rabbi.

Opening in September 1998, the school has now grown to full size with a 26 full-time place nursery, a reception class and the complete range of infant and junior-age classes. At the time of the last inspection the school had only nursery, reception and infant classes. Since then the school has grown to include junior classes from Year 3 to Year 6 and has developed its Key Stage 2 curriculum provision.

Overall effectiveness of its provision for Jewish education

Since the last inspection the school has examined the original targets in its Jewish Studies curriculum and has identified where these needed to be revised. It sees its provision as being effective both in absolute terms and in relation to the proportion of weekly teaching time available. The inspectors' view is that, in relation to its stated targets, the school has no major weaknesses in its provision.

Among its strengths are:

- its small team of qualified, well-motivated specialist Jewish Studies teachers
- effective cross-curricular integration of Jewish and secular curricula wherever possible
- effective use of the potential of ICT
- attainment targets developed for all four components of the taught Jewish Studies curriculum, with level descriptors for the expected attainment levels at the end of the Foundation Stage (R), end of Key Stage One (Y2), mid-point of Key Stage Two (Y4) and the end of Key Stage Two (Y6).
- an improved system of monitoring, assessing and recording children's performance in acquiring Hebrew reading skills, with

attention paid to analysing and recording individual errors as a basis for corrective action

- the use it makes of the results of target-setting and assessment of reading performance to track the progress of individual pupils and whole classes as they move up the school.

The school's capacity to improve is clearly reflected in:

- the way it has followed up suggestions made in the last inspection report for refining and developing its procedures for error analysis, assessment and recording of children's Hebrew reading performance
- fully developing its scheme of attainment targets and levels to cover the full age-range in the school
- the intention to extend the use of the school's existing performance-tracking computer program to recording data on children's attainment levels in Jewish Studies

Grade: 2

What the school should do to improve further

While there are no major issues, we recommend that, as part of the continuing professional development of the school's teachers and to improve the oral performance of older Key Stage 2 pupils in communicating in everyday spoken Hebrew, the school should take advantage of any available opportunities to observe and acquire successful methodological techniques for stimulating an active oral response commonly used by good teachers of:

- Hebrew language in other Jewish schools
- French in nearby primary, first or middle schools
- English as an alternative language to speakers of other mother tongues in nearby special units or centres

Achievement and standards

The standards achieved by most pupils in the lessons observed were for the most part good and rarely less than satisfactory. This was confirmed by a scrutiny of samples of children's written work.

The level of Jewish knowledge of pupils on admission to the school is variable. The progress of most pupils in their Jewish Studies is rarely less than satisfactory and is in most cases good, meeting the school's expectations.

Significant underachievement is confined to a very small number of children with identified learning or emotional difficulties and disabilities. For these

learning support is provided. Among the small number of pupils of Israeli background and orally fluent in Hebrew, performance in writing/spelling skills in Hebrew is in some cases below expectation in relation to age and stage.

Grade: 2

Personal development and well-being

As at the time of the last inspection the school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development continues to be of a consistently high order. Not the least important factor in this is the part played by the school's normal and special assemblies and *Tefillah*. These daily acts of worship comply fully with the requirements of the relevant Education Acts. They also always provide ample opportunity for both girls and boys to play a personal role. Stimulating use of music and Jewish cultural content makes this an attractive experience for the children and their participation is active and enthusiastic. Attendance in general is good and it is evident from parents' and pupils' comments that most children enjoy their Jewish education.

The high ethical content and emphasis on *middot* (moral qualities) are clearly reflected in pupils' attitudes and in their behaviour to each other in and about the school. This ethos features strongly in both the formal curriculum (particularly in the *Torah and Texts* and *Jewish Way of Life* components of the Jewish Studies curriculum) and the informal curriculum of the school (for example in the *Lunch and Learn* midday club for Year 5 and 6 pre-adolescent girls and the *Rosh Chodesh* club for Key Stage 2 boys).

The same ethos is reflected in the way children are given opportunities to make a positive contribution to the community through regular collections for charities and by organised visits to homes for senior citizens, both locally and even when away on school visits, to talk to the elderly residents and entertain them.

Schools guidelines to parents ensure that the packed lunches and snacks that children bring to school conform to Kashrut requirements and exclude unhealthy or 'junk' food or drinks. Guidelines on school uniform ensure that children's school clothing is appropriate from the point of view of health and safety as well as Jewish standards of modest dress. There are ample opportunities for healthy organised indoor (PE, Israeli dancing) and outdoor activity (netball, football, gardening and nature study) on the school site, in the nearby park and on extended school visits.

Grade: 1

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

All the present Jewish Studies teachers have qualified teacher status and all were observed during the inspection. The overall quality of almost every lesson seen was good; none was less than sound. All lessons seen showed evidence of competent planning and execution and were directly relevant to the school's Jewish Studies programmes. Lesson plans showed awareness of the need to provide extra work for more able pupils and differentiated tasks suitable for the less able, for whom there was classroom support from learning assistants.

The majority of the pupils worked well and with interest. In the rare cases where a child's attention strayed from the task in hand the matter was dealt with swiftly and quietly by the teacher or learning assistant.

Good use was made of teaching aids and modern technology. The ease and assurance with which teachers used interactive white boards to present lesson content was impressive.

Grade: 2

Curriculum and other activities

Intellectually, spiritually and creatively both the formal and informal Jewish Studies curricula of the school are well matched to the needs of the pupils. Every opportunity is taken to ensure cross-curricular integration of the work undertaken in both the secular and Jewish curricula so as to enrich children's learning and promote the ethos of the school. The greater part of the PHSCE syllabus, in particular moral and family values, interpersonal relationships and sex education, is taught from an orthodox Jewish perspective through Jewish Studies lessons.

Extensive use of ICT and the imaginative use of music are a major factor in stimulating and retaining children's interest. They respond positively, especially where lesson content deals with the practical skills and knowledge they need to play their roles as practising members of the Jewish community. They all actively participate in the school's celebration of the festivals and special occasions of the Jewish year. Their enjoyment and self-esteem are enhanced by the many opportunities this offers for personal spiritual and artistic expression and collective creativity.

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support

The school has explicit Anti-Bullying, Health and Safety and Child Protection policies and effective arrangements for safeguarding pupils at all points in the school day. In the strong family atmosphere of the school the older pupils in Years 5 and 6 are given responsibility for looking after younger children. The commitment of the entire staff, both teaching and non-teaching, results in their functioning as a single team to ensure the well-being of all the children.

The school is effective in the way it deals with parents' concerns about what their children learn and their learning or social performance, and in making available to parents information about future educational choices.

Grade: 1

Leadership and management

The performance of the Senior Management Team in promoting the ethos of the school and the well-being of all pupils is of a consistently high order.

In the absence of a suitably qualified and experienced Head of Jewish Studies the personal involvement and competent leadership of the Headteacher has been exemplary. It has been vital for the development of a vibrant Jewish Studies curriculum and for ensuring successful integration with work in the secular curriculum. The Headteacher constantly monitors the quality of lesson planning and teacher performance and goals are evaluated and revised wherever necessary. Teaching resources and equipment are good and, with the support of governors, benefactors and parents, are being further improved. There are active links with other Jewish schools, AJE and other Jewish educational agencies.

Grade: 1

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