

King David High School

Inspection report

LEA	Manchester
Inspected under the auspices of	Pikuach
Inspection dates	2-3 February 2011
Reporting inspector	Jeffrey Leader

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

Type of school	Comprehensive
School category	Voluntary Aided
Age range of students	11 - 18
Gender of students	Mixed
Number on roll	820
School (total)	
Appropriate authority	The Governing Body
Chair of Governors	Mr Joshua Rowe
Headteacher	Mr Brian Levy
Date of previous school inspection	31 October – 1 st November 2007
School address	Eaton Road, Road Crumpsall, Manchester, M8 5DY
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two inspectors. They visited 13 lessons and held meetings with governors, staff and groups of students. They observed the school's work and looked at documentation which included the school development plan, the school's self-evaluation for Jewish Studies, lesson plans, reports, the curriculum for Jewish Studies and *Ivrit* (Modern Hebrew) and relevant resource material.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- The provision of Jewish education in King David High School.
- The quality of students' learning in Jewish Studies.
- Leadership and Management in relation to Jewish Studies.

Information about the school

King David High School is a large, mixed, Jewish faith-based comprehensive school which operates under the auspices of the Office of the Chief Rabbi. It has a strong Jewish ethos. There are 820 students on roll including 229 students in the Sixth Form. The school has a setting and streaming system to meet student learning needs. It has specialist status in mathematics, computing and Modern Foreign Languages.

The school has very recently moved into a new state of the art building which is situated on the original campus. The building now physically incorporates a primary and secondary school on the same premises. Each, however, is administered by a separate governing body.

The High School is divided into the main campus and its Yavneh stream which meets the Jewish educational needs of more religiously observant students. More time is devoted to Jewish Studies in Yavneh by means of an extended day. There are 54 boys and 88 girls studying in Yavneh. Although the main campus offers students a good range of Jewish Studies and *Ivrit*, Yavneh extends the range by offering additional subjects including *Mishna* and *Gemarah* (Talmud).

Overall, students arrive at King David with well above national average scores in English, mathematics and science at KS2. Entrance Assessment tests are set for Year 7 students in English, mathematics, science and Religious Education to assist with setting and streaming.

Students come from a whole range of socio-economic backgrounds. 31 students take up their free school meals entitlement.

Inspection judgements

Grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Overall effectiveness

1

Capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

The overall quality of Jewish education at King David High School is excellent. Students enjoy their Jewish Studies and work hard. Formal examination results at GCSE and A level in Jewish subjects are well above the national average when compared with other schools' GCSE and A Level results in Religious Education.

There are effective partnerships with other agencies which promote Jewish learning and well-being and enhance the students' personal development.

Teaching is outstanding overall with many examples of excellent practice in Jewish Studies, *Ivrit* and Jewish History. The curriculum for Jewish Studies is wide and provides for all levels of Jewish learning ranging from general Jewish knowledge to the study of *Gemarah* (Talmud). However, the curriculum document for Jewish Studies is fundamentally a syllabus, highlighting in each topic area what needs to be taught rather than how to teach it and to what depth. Informal Jewish education activities such as *Shabbatonim*, Israel and Poland study trips do much to enhance the school's Jewish Studies programme.

The school provides an outstanding level of care, guidance and support.

Students' behaviour in the Jewish Studies and *Ivrit* classrooms is excellent. Students enjoy school, place a high value on its Jewish ethos and speak very positively about Jewish Studies and *Ivrit*.

The effectiveness of leadership and management in Jewish education is excellent. The senior leadership team and governing body are conspicuously successful in inspiring the school community to share a strong sense of Jewish purpose which involves work towards meeting or sustaining ambitious targets for all students. Consequently, belief in the school's success runs through all levels of the Jewish Studies and *Ivrit* staff. As a result, the quality of teaching in Jewish educational subjects is at least good and mainly outstanding. Leaders and managers, especially the Chair of Governors, take highly effective steps to drive up the quality of teaching still further. Consequently, outcomes in achievement and well-being for most students are good, and some are exceptionally high. Nevertheless the school has still not benefitted from the appointment of a Jewish Studies Coordinator who would have overall responsibility for the development of Jewish education throughout the school. This was an issue highlighted during the

previous Pikuach inspection.

The relentless drive to improve attainment for students' results in, at least, very good outcomes for most 6th Form students in their Jewish Religious Education examinations. The 2010 Religious Education A Level results represent outstanding progress and achievement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

Improve the quality of provision by:

- appointing a Head of Jewish Studies to ensure that the teaching of all disciplines within the Jewish Studies Department is cohesive with common systems for assessment, recording and planning.
- taking account of the need for those in leadership roles to have the training and the time to monitor regularly the quality of teaching and learning in Jewish Studies. The current demands on teaching time make this difficult.
- taking more account of the needs of students of different abilities within Jewish Studies by making specific provision in teachers' planning to meet these varying needs.

• Outcomes for individuals and groups of students

1

Students' achievement in their Jewish Studies overall is very good.

By the end of Year 11 in 2010, GCSE results in Religious Education (RE) were significantly above average and standards were high. 59.65% of GCSE results in RE were A* and A Grades while 78.95% of GCSE results in Religious Education were A* - B Grades. This represents good progress and achievement.

In the 6th Form standards in 2010 in Religious Education were very high. 37.5% of A Level results in RE were A* and A Grades while 70.83% of A Level results in RE were A*-B Grades. This represents outstanding progress and achievement. Students with special educational needs generally achieve well. In Years 7 and 8 the school's records show that these students make satisfactory progress. They make accelerated progress in Years 10 and 11, in part due to the small size of the classes and achieve outstandingly well in these years. In 2010 almost all students with SEN achieved GCSE grades A* to C in Religious Education. In *Ivrit* standards in 2010 were above national averages for a modern foreign language at GCSE and A Level. This is an indication of the outstanding progress

made by students between the time they enter the school and taking the GCSE examination; it also reflects the good progress they continue to make in the Sixth Form.

In the lessons seen students' progress in Jewish Studies closely reflected the quality of the teaching and is very good overall. However, the achievement of students with special educational needs in Years 7 and 8 is restricted because teachers do not use assessment information sufficiently to guide them in catering for their needs. In GCSE years students are streamed by ability.

Students answer questions very well in both Jewish Studies and *Ivrit* lessons. There was evidence of students' ability to read fluently and accurately in Hebrew during general Jewish Studies lessons, *Ivrit* and *Talmud* lessons.

Discussions with learners from both the main campus and Yavneh stream reveal an articulate Jewish student body, willing to learn and very comfortable with their identity. They enjoy studying at King David and will miss their teachers and friends when the time comes to leave. The discussions show that most students have very positive feelings towards their Jewish Studies. A number pointed out that they particularly enjoyed Jewish history and *Ivrit*.

Some did complain about the pressure placed upon them by the school's drive to succeed in examinations. However, they understood that the drive to succeed would serve them well when academic choices were to be made at the post- 18 stage.

Students think deeply about their own and others' experiences and try to relate them to a clear set of personal values. They have a keen interest in ethical issues, act in a principled manner and understand the importance of reassessing values in the light of experience. The students resolve conflicts intelligently and seek consensus while accepting the right of others to hold different opinions and beliefs. They have a very good insight into similarities and differences between their own and others' cultures and how these are constantly changing.

Attendance at King David is excellent and students feel safe in school. They have a very clear understanding of the difference between right and wrong and are polite, courteous, thoughtful, caring and responsive to each other's feelings and needs. They grow in confidence and enjoy taking on responsibility.

The school holds a series of assemblies for different Year Groups including separate weekly *davening* sessions for boys and girls. The assemblies meet the national criteria for collective worship and are well attended.

These are the grades for students' outcomes

Students' attainment¹	1
The quality of students' learning and their progress	1

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

The quality of learning for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and their progress	2
How well do students achieve and enjoy their learning?	1
To what extent do students feel safe?	1
How well do students behave?	1
To what extent do students adopt healthy lifestyles?	2
To what extent do students contribute to the school and wider community?	1
Students' attendance ¹	1
How well do students develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	1
What is the extent of students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development?	1

How effective is the provision?

Teaching in Jewish Studies and *Ivrit* throughout the school is outstanding overall with many examples of good and very good practice. In these classes, teachers have high expectations of their students and their excellent subject knowledge is applied consistently to challenge and inspire their students who are motivated and remain on task throughout the lesson. Outstanding lessons in King David are fast-paced and enjoyable. Teachers ask perceptive questions and these help students to think constantly about what they are learning. Resources, especially the use of new technology, make a valuable contribution to the quality of learning.

Lesson planning for Jewish Studies is inconsistent. Inspectors were handed lesson plans in five different formats. Some plans made provision for students of different abilities while others did not. Where planning was good, objectives were clear, focused and challenging. There is no standard planning template and this suggests a certain lack of cohesion within the Jewish Studies department.

Jewish Studies students are placed in four ability sets and this goes some way towards meeting the needs of students at different levels of ability. Improvement and progress within one set can mean promotion to the next whereas a lack of incentive and progress could mean relegation to a lower set.

Performance data for Jewish Studies students are logged on to a spreadsheet. This data is held for three years and this enables the school to track student progress in Jewish Studies and helps make informed decisions about GCSE groups.

Decisions about placing new Year 7 students on entry to the school are based on their performance in secular subjects in their feeder schools but there is no evidence that comparable information is used to identify new students' needs in their Jewish education.

The Special Educational Needs Coordinator's (SENCO) expectation is that subject leaders monitor students' progress in their own subject and come to her if they have any concerns about any student. There are no recalled or recorded instances where this has occurred in relation to Jewish Studies.

Currently records are maintained of students' examination results by the Jewish Studies department and these are used to track their progress. Statemented students have similar support in Jewish Studies lessons by Teaching Assistants as they do in secular subjects, receiving very good support in the lessons observed.

Series of lessons are planned to develop learning successfully, but assessment information is not sufficiently used in individual lesson plans and therefore these lack sufficient detail about how teaching and resources are to be tailored to the individual needs and abilities of all learners.

Informal teacher assessment through teacher questioning and student answers takes place during lessons. There are End of Unit formal tests for Years 7- 11. The school's Religious Education Self-evaluation Form (SEF) claims to implement the school's policy of grading each piece of work with a letter A-E for content and a number 1-5 for effort in order to assess students' progress in Jewish Studies. It claims also that students' exercise books are monitored to make sure that the school marking policy is followed. However, there is little evidence to suggest this is happening as inspectors found a number of examples of unmarked work in Jewish Studies stretching back to the beginning of the academic year in September. The failure to mark students' work suggests to them that what they do is not acknowledged or valued by their teachers. They may well question the need to write up work in their exercise books if it is not looked at and left unmarked by their teachers.

Each Jewish Studies class in the main school has an interactive white board which teachers put to good use. Teachers in Yavneh do not have this facility.

In addition to formal Jewish Studies and *Ivrit* the school conducts assemblies and extra-curricular activities such as the voluntary *Shacharit* (morning) service and Jewish-themed lunch time and after-school clubs. From Years 7 – 9 the school offers courses on *Chumash*, *chagim*, *siddur* and religious Zionism. In Year 8 boys receive support in their *Bar Mitzvah* preparation with a special focus on *tephilin*. In Year 9 there is a flexible programme to prepare students for their trip to Israel. In Years 10 and 11, the main part of the Jewish Studies curriculum is based on the AQA Judaism and Jewish Ethics GCSE course. Apart from one weekly voluntary session, the only formal Jewish education for Years 12-13 is conducted through the OCR Judaism and Jewish Scriptures A- Level programme.

Although the current curriculum statement addresses the needs of the students, in its present form it lacks depth and breadth. It is more of a syllabus than a curriculum in that there are pointers to what needs to be covered and taught but little detailed guidance as to how to achieve this. For example, the curriculum for Y7 *Chagim* simply says: '*a review of the basic details and rituals associated with each festival.*' There is no further information as to which festivals are to be

taught and which rituals are associated with them.

For the examinable parts of Jewish Studies such as GCSE and A Level, the school uses the AQA and OCR syllabuses.

In the Yavneh streams subjects such as *Chumash*, *Talmud*, *halacha* and text are offered in addition to the Jewish Religious Education GCSE and A Level modules. These additional subjects are taught to a high standard.

The school offers a variety of extra-curricular activities and informal learning initiatives which enrich Jewish learning. These include a King David *minyan* for boys, a girls' weekly *tephillah* assembly, *Shabbatonim* and school trips to Israel and Poland. The school also hosts separate weekly 'lunch and learn' sessions for boys and girls. The deep commitment of some of the school's rabbis is reflected in regular invitations to students to attend Friday night meals in their homes.

Each Wednesday a *Bet Midrash* programme takes place after school aimed at increasing students' knowledge of *berachot* (blessings), *tephillah* (prayer), *Kashrut* (laws of keeping kosher), *Shabbat* (Sabbath) and *chagim* (festivals). This programme is voluntary but the inducement to participate is that students can win points for achievement in these sessions which then can be exchanged for shopping vouchers. This is a well run programme but the number of participants has sadly declined. This could be because of the after-school timing but also because of competition from other after school clubs.

Festivals and special days such as *Purim* and *Yom Ha'atzmaut* and *Yom Ha'shoah* are regularly celebrated and commemorated.

Tzedaka (Charity) plays a large part in underpinning the school's Jewish values and last year £5,000 was raised for local and Israel-based charities.

In Year 12 all students participate in the work experience scheme. They participate also in the Young Enterprise scheme, setting up and running a business in competition with other local schools. The competition is judged by local businesses. 6th Form students have taken part in the Manchester Internships scheme in the Summer of 2009 and the Spring of 2010 and will also be doing so in the Summer of 2010. The internships provide intensive work experience placements in Manchester and do much to help students develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being.

Attention is given to all aspects of care, guidance and support. Students are treated as individuals and have high levels of confidence in the school's ability to advise them effectively.

Grade: 1

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	1
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The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets students' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The senior leadership team and other leaders and managers are conspicuously successful in inspiring the school community to share a strong sense of Jewish purpose which involves working towards meeting or sustaining ambitious targets for all students. This work is underpinned and supported by the outstanding drive and ambition of the Chair of Governors. The leadership treats Jewish education as one of the main pillars of the school and encourages and supports the department whilst at the same time demanding high standards of attainment in the area of Jewish Studies and *Ivrit*.

There is still no overall Coordinator of Jewish Studies, a fact noted during the previous Pikuach inspection and highlighted in the subsequent report as an issue to be resolved in order to help the school improve further its delivery of Jewish Studies.

This issue remains unresolved. There are members of staff who have a range of responsibilities for the delivery of Jewish Studies. These include the headteacher, the Head of Jewish Studies, the Senior Teacher with Responsibility for Key Stages 3 and 4 and the Chair of Governors. However, there appears to be no single authority that has a complete overview and responsibility for how Jewish education is developed and delivered throughout the school. The Jewish Studies Department is fortunate to have a number of outstanding practitioners but there is a danger that this reality could be perceived as negating the need for a Jewish Studies Coordinator. The lack of a single, professional authority responsible for the development of Jewish Studies is a significant omission in what is otherwise a talented and highly committed senior leadership team.

A very full teaching timetable means that those with a leadership role do not often have the opportunity to monitor teaching in the Jewish Studies classroom. Consequently, opportunities are missed to observe and monitor quality teaching and to be able to share this experience with colleagues.

The demands made on senior staff by their heavy teaching load also mean that they are rarely able to attend continuing professional development courses off-site. In 2009 for example, an important conference for Jewish Studies secondary school teachers took place in London. Jewish Studies teachers from King David were the only staff unable to attend and consequently, they missed an important opportunity to develop their skills and network with colleagues from other Jewish secondary schools. This need for continuing professional development is recognised in the school's Jewish Studies Self-evaluation Form.

The governors make a highly significant contribution to the work and direction of the school. They are confident in providing high levels of professional challenge to hold the school to account. The Chair of Governors engages very effectively with parents, students, and the staff as a whole and is extremely well informed about users' views of the school.

Class size in Jewish Studies and *Ivrit* are smaller than the national average. This results from a deliberate policy by the school's leadership to channel funding towards teaching rather than administration.

Reporting to parents on their children's progress in Jewish Studies varies in quality from the vague e.g. '*x is a well behaved positive student who has made very good progress*' to the informative '*x has developed her skills in comprehending a selection of events in the Torah in conjunction with explanations shared by famous Jewish commentators. She has also demonstrated a comprehensive understanding of the main laws and customs performed on key Jewish festivals.*'

The school has adequate safeguarding systems which meet requirements and keep all students healthy and safe. The school enjoys effective partnerships with other organisations such as schools and Jewish charitable institutions. King David, for example, enjoys close ties with other local high schools such as St Monicas. These partnerships add to the quality of students' Jewish learning, give an understanding of Manchester's cultural diversity and do much to enhance their personal development.

There are many opportunities for students to make a positive contribution to the wider community through voluntary service in the community, communal drama and music performances, involvement in Holocaust Memorial Day and taking part in many charity events which include raising money for national cancer charities and for the Children's Hospital in Israel.

Students also make a positive contribution within the school. Year 10 students for example, act as 'buddies' for Year 7 learners while older students help look after children in the lower school. Learners of all ages lead assemblies.

The school has a volunteer system where all Year 12/13 pupils are encouraged to volunteer for Manchester's Federation Of Jewish Services.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	1
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	Not inspected

The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion through the Jewish Studies curriculum	1
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1
Sixth form	
Outcomes for students in the sixth form	1
The quality of provision in the sixth form	1
Leadership and management of the sixth form	1
Overall effectiveness of the sixth form	1

The relentless drive to improve students' attainment in their Jewish religious education results, at the very least, in outstanding outcomes for most of the 6th Form students. Standards attained in the 2010 Religious Education A-Level examinations were very high with nearly 38% of students achieving A* - A Grades while more than 70% achieved A*-B Grades. This represents outstanding progress and achievement.

Success and attendance rates are high. 6th Form students thrive and are highly supportive of each other. They contribute extensively to the school and wider community. Less formally, they attend sessions given by outreach rabbis and these are both enjoyed and valued. Students clearly take responsibility for their own health, safety and well-being.

The 6th Form encourages speakers from different faiths to address its assembly. 6th Form students lead discussions and debates on various topics. Many students take part in extensive volunteering work through the Federation of Jewish Services and the Nicky Alliance amongst others.

The Sixth Form management team meets weekly and is comprised of the Chair of Governors, Head Teacher, Deputy Head Teacher, Head of Sixth Form, Heads of Year 12 and 13 and the main subject leaders. The Chair of Governors sets high and demanding standards and meets regularly with the 6th Form leadership team and teachers to ensure that standards are met. In addition to the Management Team's weekly meetings there are also monthly tutor meetings to discuss concerns and strategy.

Views of parents and carers

Unfortunately, because of circumstances beyond their control, the inspectors were unable to obtain the views of parents and carers.

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its students' needs. In 2007-8, 15% of schools were judged to be outstanding.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its students well. In 2007-8, 49% of schools were judged good.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its students. In 2007-8, 32% of schools were judged satisfactory.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its students. Pikuach inspectors will make further visits until it improves. In 2007-8, 5% of schools were judged inadequate.

Common terminology used by inspectors

- Attainment:** the standard of the students' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
- Progress:** the rate at which students are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the students' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
- Achievement:** the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, training or development. This may refer to the acquisition of skills, knowledge, understanding or desired attributes. Attributes include qualities or personal competencies which are important to the development of the pupil; for example personal, social, cultural, emotional or health.
- Capacity to improve:** the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
- Leadership and management:** the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.

