

# BEIT SHVIDLER PRIMARY SCHOOL

## INSPECTION REPORT

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Local Authority      Barnet

Inspected under the auspices of Pikuach

Inspection dates      6-7 June 2017

Lead Inspector      Dr Leon Bernstein

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

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Type of school      Primary

School category      Voluntary aided

Age range of children      3-11

Gender of children      Mixed

Number on roll      239

Appropriate authority      The governing body

Chair of Governors      Daniel Wynne

Headteacher      Rabbi Jonny Spector

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## **Inspection team**

**Lead Inspector: Dr Leon Bernstein**

**Team Inspector: Michael Cohen**

## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by two inspectors over two days. The inspectors visited 6 classes from Nursery to Year 6 to observe lessons and parts of lessons, and attended *tefillas* (prayers) and two school assemblies. Some of the lessons were observed jointly with school leaders. Inspectors held meetings with the Principal, Chair of Governors, headteacher, Deputy Headteacher, Director of Jewish Life and Learning, the school's *Kodesh* Improvement Partner, other staff and many pupils. The inspectors observed also the school's work and looked at a range of documentation including pupils' written work, the *Limmudei Kodesh* curriculum, assessment documents and reporting and tracking documentation. The Senior Leadership team played an active part in this inspection, including attending meetings with inspectors, and observing lessons. School leaders agreed with the inspectors' judgements during joint lesson observations.

The school's last *Pikuach* inspection took place on 25-26 June 2012.

It should be noted that over the year the school has been in a state of turbulence. This has been in no small part a result of:

- Instability due to a high level of staff turnover.
- Three changes in school leadership over the last eighteen months.
- The unfortunate extended absence of the newly appointed Director of Jewish Life and Learning due to ill health.

However, to the relief of the whole school community, the Director of Jewish Life and Learning has recently returned to the school. He is joined by a newly appointed headteacher, and the new leadership is seen as a breath of fresh air for the school. This has been acknowledged by governors, parents and pupils.

### **The inspectors looked in detail at the following:**

- Outcomes for pupils in their Jewish education.
- Quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Jewish Education.
- Effectiveness of Leadership, Management, and Governance of Jewish Education.
- Effectiveness of the *Limmudei Kodesh* curriculum based on the school's aims and objectives.
- Quality of provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, including meeting the statutory requirement for a daily act of Collective Worship (*tefillah*).

## **Information about the school**

- Beit Shvidler Primary School is slightly smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The school caters for pupils from the Jewish Orthodox community.
- Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds, with very few who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium funding is low compared to other schools. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is high compared to other schools.
- Since the previous inspection, a new headteacher was appointed in September 2015. Subsequently, that headteacher left and a new interim headteacher took up post in September 2016.
- That interim headteacher left and governors have now appointed a new headteacher whose role started in May 2017, five weeks prior to this inspection.

## **Inspection judgements**

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Outcomes for pupils in their Jewish education</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Jewish Education</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Effectiveness of Leadership, Management, and Governance of Jewish Education</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Effectiveness of the Jewish Studies/Education curriculum based on the school's aims and objectives</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Quality of provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, including meeting the statutory requirement for a daily act of collective worship (tefillah)</b>	<b>2</b>

## Overall Effectiveness:

### The quality of Jewish education provided in Beit Shvidler requires improvement (GRADE 3) because:-

- There are weaknesses in one or more of the five key judgement areas.
- Some of the school's key *Kodesh* documentation, including its self-evaluation, development plan and curriculum mapping, has been neglected and this has had a negative impact on the overall level of Jewish learning in the school.
- In the absence of key staff, areas of target setting, monitoring and tracking the progress of pupils have not been effective.

### It is not yet good (GRADE 2) because:-

- The majority of pupils have not been able to benefit from teaching, learning and assessment that is at least good, and some which is outstanding, across the school.
- Owing to certain areas of the curriculum that have not been delivered, a number of pupils are not prepared for the next stage in their education.
- The newly appointed leadership team has not yet had the necessary time to make a significant impact on some of the areas that require improvement.

### The school has the following strengths:

- Governors have appointed a new headteacher who has already made a positive impact on the school. The new headteacher and Director of Jewish Life and Learning are currently working relentlessly to secure school improvement for the immediate future.
- The school has recently formalised the role of a *Kodesh* governor responsible for the *Kodesh* provision.
- Pupils display good *middos* (character traits) and make good progress in their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development both in the classroom and around the school.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Continue with the solid planning strategies that the new leadership team have initiated, ably steered by the new headteacher, and ensure systems are firmly embedded for September 2017.
- Conduct a fresh self-evaluation review for *Limmudei Kodesh*, then link this to the school development plan to support a consistent provision for *Limmudei Kodesh* across the school.
- Put the school's assessment tracking system to full use with robust monitoring and tracking of attainment and progress over time in all Jewish subjects and for all pupils, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Further enhance the quality of teaching, learning and assessment to be at least consistently good with outstanding features across the whole school by ensuring that:
  - i) time is used appropriately and effectively in all Jewish learning experiences, both formal and informal
  - ii) teachers provide pupils with meaningful feedback, in line with the school's assessment policy, to help pupils to improve their learning
  - iii) the curriculum policy is reviewed and updated so that it meets the current needs of all pupils.

## **Outcomes for pupils in their Jewish education requires improvement (GRADE 3) because:-**

- For much of this academic year there has not been an effective range of routine monitoring and evaluation procedures in place that have accurately identified strengths and weaknesses in pupils' outcomes. Although there is evidence of recording outcomes, the monitoring and tracking of data has lacked the rigour necessary to raise standards that would lead to an overall improvement in pupil performance.
- Although there are assessment procedures in place, they have been inconsistent across year groups and do not always accurately inform future teaching and learning.
- Systems have not been effective enough to analyse data. For example, leaders have relied on subject staff to input data about pupils' outcomes, but for much of the year nobody has overseen the entire picture, making it difficult for pupils to know their current levels of attainment and what they need to do to improve. Pupils vocalised this when inspectors spoke with them.
- Many pupils speak confidently about subjects they have studied and are able to demonstrate a command of topics they have covered.
- Expectations of pupils' attainment have not been effectively communicated to senior leaders, governors and staff about improvement in teaching and learning in *Limmudei Kodesh*. The newly appointed headteacher and Director of Jewish Life and Learning are determined to make sure that meticulous monitoring and analysis of outcomes will help teachers communicate clearly to pupils what it is they have to do to improve their learning. This in turn will help pupils to understand where they are academically, and the next steps they need to take to make further progress.

## **The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Jewish education requires improvement (GRADE 3) because:-**

- There is currently insufficient evidence for effective and consistent teaching strategies to meet the Jewish educational needs of all pupils.
- Some attention is given to the assessment of pupils' Jewish learning but this is not always conducted rigorously enough, resulting in tasks being planned and set that do not fully challenge pupils.
- Where teaching objectives and learning outcomes are clearly communicated, these are generally met. However, in some lessons inspectors noted that pupils were unaware of any learning objectives and this left them wondering what they were doing and why they were doing it. For much of this year there is little evidence of targets being addressed and this requires improvement in order for pupils to know where they are in their learning and what they need to do to improve.
- While a number of pupils expressed their satisfaction in lessons, telling inspectors that they felt stretched in their learning and that their work was marked regularly and on time, others told inspectors a different story. For example, one pupil explained that in many lessons "... we just listen and get worksheets" and that "classes have naughty children" and this prevented others from learning. This view was echoed by other pupils.
- Lessons seen were well structured; enabling pupils to follow the learning thread which helped them to build on known facts/concepts.
- Behaviour seen in lessons was good and pupils responded to a range of questions from teachers.

- Classroom management was generally very effective. Materials were prepared in advance and this promoted smooth transitions in content and activity. However, in some cases inspectors noted that too much time was spent on one activity, which resulted in pupils becoming restless.
- There is much positive reinforcement in lessons. Teachers are keen to give pupils the opportunity to be confident to ask questions and 'have a go', even if the answers are not always those expected by the teacher.
- Teachers are sensitive to pupils' needs and plan different levels of work to stretch groups of children, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Teachers are aware of the range of abilities in a class and are able to take quick action to modify delivery when necessary. For example, in an Early Years class, pupils were expected to role play. When they became a little shy the teacher seamlessly changed the activity and stepped in for them, preventing them from being embarrassed while at the same time avoiding any interruption to the lesson.
- Most impressive teaching was seen in a class where the pace was fast, material was challenging and where there was an atmosphere of great excitement which stimulated the pupils' curiosity. They rose to challenges and wanted to succeed. In another class, the lesson was well co-ordinated with a variety of content and activity. The teacher demonstrated solid subject knowledge, helping pupils to pick up concepts quickly and apply them to areas of *Shabbat*. The lesson was pitched well, allowing for a variety of abilities to work at different levels and in particular stretching those requiring greater challenge.
- Inspectors were impressed with those pupils who were answering written questions both in Hebrew and in English. However, basic errors in English punctuation and spelling were noted. Teachers should demand the same standards of literacy in *Limmudei Kodesh* as in *chol* (secular) subjects.
- Teaching Assistants are generally used well. However, this is not always the case and more direction needs to be given to involve them fully in all areas of pupils' learning.

### **The effectiveness of Leadership, Management and Governance of Jewish education requires improvement (GRADE 3) because:-**

- Leaders, including governors, need to articulate the school's priorities for the development of *Limmudei Kodesh* following the recent appointment of the new leadership team.
- Leaders, including governors, have begun to tackle inconsistencies in the provision of teaching, learning and assessment. However, the new leadership team now needs to put systems into place, including the induction of new staff, to ensure sufficient rigour which brings about sustained improvement in the school's Jewish education provision.
- The newly appointed headteacher, along with the Director of Jewish Life and Learning, have not yet had sufficient time to address the overall provision of *Limmudei Kodesh* in the school. They are both a committed team who are determined to drive rapid and sustained improvement throughout all areas of *Kodesh* provision. Inspectors noted that there is a shared confidence from a range of stakeholders, including governors, staff, parents and the pupils themselves, in the new leadership's capacity to take the school into a new era. For example, one parent said that since the appointment of the new leadership team they have experienced "...a new and exciting buzz which we haven't seen for a long time".
- The school's self-evaluation document for *Kodesh* needs to be updated to reflect the school's current strengths and areas for development. This should include an explanation of any impact that has been made as a result of initiatives introduced by the school.
- School leaders need to produce an up-to-date school development plan for *Kodesh*. This should clearly focus on and articulate the school's areas for future development, incorporating timelines, success criteria, resourcing and monitoring schedules.
- There has been disruption to the *Limmudei Kodesh* provision over the year and leaders have not yet been able to address the various issues that have prevented areas of progress.

However, inspectors feel that with the new leadership team in place, there is now capacity to improve.

### **The effectiveness of the Jewish Studies/Education curriculum based on the school's aims and objectives requires improvement (GRADE 3) because:-**

- The *Limmudei Kodesh* curriculum is not good in one or more areas of the school's Jewish education provision. While the school does possess a comprehensive curriculum for *Limmudei Kodesh*, it has not been updated. Aspects of it have been neglected, resulting in areas which have not been delivered to the pupils. For example, the curriculum policy refers to a whole school Personal, Social, Health and Care programme, but this has not been updated since 2012. Consequently, areas such as 'Current Affairs' are outdated and have little or no relevance to the pupils currently in the school.
- The school subscribes to an impressive list of charity organisations, including GIFT, Camp Simcha and Great Ormond Street Hospital. However, owing to outdated documentation, it is difficult to ascertain the complete, current picture.
- Where the curriculum says that it offers wider areas for *Kodesh* study this has not been delivered for a substantial part of the year. For example, boys told inspectors that owing to the shortage of staff, they have not received lessons in *Gemoro* or *Mishna*.
- There has been a similar picture for some girls, who told inspectors that although *Sefer HaChinuch* and *Megillos Esther/Rus* are on the curriculum, this also has barely been delivered.
- Other areas of the curriculum are being delivered and many pupils commented that they enjoy their learning, particularly in areas such as *Chumash* (Bible) and *Chagim* (Jewish festivals).
- Those aspects of the curriculum that are being delivered show breadth and depth, resulting from intense and effective planning.
- The school now needs to review the *Kodesh* curriculum and, with the projected appointments of new staff from September 2017, ensure that all aspects of it are delivered.

### **The quality of provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, including meeting the statutory requirement for a daily act of Collective Worship (*tefillah*) is good (GRADE 2) because:-**

- The school meets legal requirements for collective worship through daily *tefillah* (prayer).
- Pupils show respect towards each other and to adults. They are polite and care about the feelings of others.
- Adults model good *middos* by the way in which they interact with each other and with pupils. They insist that pupils reflect this in their relationships with others.
- Pupils listen well to instructions from adults and act on them immediately.
- In lessons, pupils show respect towards each other and allow others to give answers without interruption. They then reflect on those answers and suggest their own, while being considerate of the feelings of others.
- Pupils understand and appreciate British values and are able to link these to their *Kodesh* learning. For example, in one lesson, pupils were learning an area of *Rashi* commentary and connections were made to the current general election.
- Pupils enjoy extra-curricular activities and are very enthusiastic about them. For example, there was a very positive atmosphere in a lunchtime choir where pupils were singing songs

- in Hebrew.
- There are very informative displays in the classroom and around the school. It is clear that this is a Jewish school, with posters in Hebrew and English reminding pupils about expectations, respect and an emphasis on *Chessed* (kindness). *Shabbos* (the Sabbath) displays are also prominent, as are displays showing a strong connection with Israel. This really gives a strong sense of *Achdus* (unity) and pupils were confident in telling inspectors their positive views on Israel and about being Jewish.
  - Key Stage 2 pupils take part in a Medallion Award programme that was initiated by the Head of *Kodesh*. Pupils from Year 4 upwards shared their achievements and were motivated by this initiative.
  - In assemblies, pupils walk in an orderly fashion and patiently wait for the assembly to start. Inspectors noted a delay of at least seven minutes while pupils continued to enter the hall and some pupils understandably became a little restless. Some Jewish music or a video clip of a Jewish nature might help them to focus during these periods.
  - During the inspection, the school welcomed the Chief Rabbi. Pupils were very respectful and honoured his presence. Two boys, who are related to the Chief Rabbi, confidently gave speeches of welcome, without referring to any notes.
  - Pupils show a sense of enjoyment about their Jewish faith and heritage, and about those of others in the world around them. For example, they spoke enthusiastically about Shabbat UK and its role in bringing all Jewish people together. At the same time, the school has a multicultural week, which explains other faiths and the importance of tolerance towards those of other backgrounds.

## Views of parents and carers

Pikuach invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils at Beit Shvidler Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school. Many responded and the comments below encapsulate their views. As written at the beginning of this report, the school is at a turning point. Many parents have commented on this and inspectors feel it is important to recognise the variance between the past leadership and management of the school in general and the current solid, new leadership team in particular. Inspectors feel confident that the new team, in role for just five weeks, will bring the school forward in all areas of *Limmudei Kodesh*, but that they need time to put their strategies into effect. The views of the parents reflect this.

*'We are very excited with the upcoming teachers joining our school and already feel a huge change in both atmosphere and learning since Rabbi Spector joined our school. We are looking forward to next year.'*

*'Very disappointed with Jewish education at the moment.'*

*'The school has undergone a lot of change and Kodesh has really suffered under non-Jewish leadership as the Head of Kodesh has been ill. I have very high hopes with the return of Mr Segal and the new headteacher Rabbi Spector that the Kodesh for my son next year will dramatically improve. But his Kodesh this year has been terrible and disappointing.'*

*'Beit Shvidler has had a difficult time from a Kodesh perspective over the last 12-18 months due to a number of reasons, including the regrettable illness of the Head of Kodesh. I am confident that from next year the school will move forward well and make quick progress in rectifying the recent problems as we now have stable leadership and from next year a full complement of hopefully excellent staff.'*



# GLOSSARY

## WHAT INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS MEAN:

<b>GRADE</b>	<b>JUDGEMENT</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupil's needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Requires Improvement	A school requiring improvement is not providing adequately for its pupils.
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 pupils.