

North West London Jewish Day School

Inspection report

LEA	Brent
Inspection dates	10 – 11 December 2007
Reporting inspector	Rev Michael Binstock
Team inspector	Rabbi Yaakov Heimann

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

Type of School	Primary	School address	180 Willesden Lane
School category	Voluntary Aided		London NW6 7PP
Age range of pupils	3 - 11		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	020 8459 3378
Number on roll	273	Fax number	020 8451 7298
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Arnie Kosiner
Date of previous inspection	12 -14 March 2002	Headteacher	Rabbi Daniel Kerbel

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Introduction

Description of the school

North West London Jewish Day School is a well established one-form entry voluntary aided Orthodox Jewish school for boys and girls aged 3-11. It was founded in 1945 and has occupied its present site in Brondesbury for forty-seven years. The school aims to serve the needs of Modern Orthodox Jewish families by providing a rounded secular and Orthodox Jewish education based on the National Curriculum and Orthodox Jewish sources, and to enable pupils to achieve the highest academic standards. 30% of the school curriculum is devoted to Jewish Studies.

The school is over-subscribed by some four applications for every place. There are currently 273 pupils on roll including 35 in the Nursery. Pupils come from a wide catchment area within a four mile radius of the school with an increasing number from the surrounding area. At the end of Key Stage 2, the majority of pupils transfer to Jewish schools, predominately Hasmonean High School, Immanuel College and JFS.

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 *Limmudei Kodesh* Department of the North West London Jewish Day School is good with some outstanding features. It is notable that the inspection took place during *Chanukah* and inspectors had the opportunity to observe special activities including an enhanced morning assembly and candle lighting in the afternoon. On entering the school at the commencement of the inspection, the wonderful display of original *Chanukiot* (candelabras) produced by pupils greeted and impressed the inspectors.

The needs of the overwhelming majority of the pupils are met, resulting in contented and healthy pupils working in a safe and secure environment. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs achieve well and make good progress throughout the school. The well-being of pupils is of primary consideration and the school successfully provides a Torah-true education in an atmosphere of love, warmth and respect.

Among the school's strengths are its leadership and management. The Headteacher and Head of *Kodesh* have a very clear vision of the school and understand what is needed to continue to build on its strengths and move the school forward. A significant feature that contributes to the school's success is the unity that exists between the *Limmudei Kodesh* and secular staff. They work together to create a whole-school community that reinforces the school's religious ethos. Another major strength is the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils. Pupils' behaviour is mostly good in lessons and as they move around the school. Teachers are well-supported by the Head of *Kodesh* and they in turn are dedicated and motivated. Progress has been noted since the previous *Pikuach* inspection, particularly in the standards achieved in Jewish History.

Completed parents' questionnaires indicate that most are satisfied with the school although a minority expressed concerns about standards of achievement in *Ivrit* (Modern Hebrew). In the view of the inspectors, these concerns are justified.

Scrutiny of samples of pupils' written work revealed that marking is inconsistent. Examples were observed of errors that remained uncorrected and teachers' comments that were positive but uninformative.

The school's Self Evaluation Form indicates that the school knows itself well and has the determination and capacity to continue to improve its provision for Jewish education.

Grade: 2

What the school should do to improve further

- review the provision for the teaching of *Ivrit*
- improve the quality of marking so that pupils are informed about what they are doing well and how they can improve
- further develop the procedures for assessment
- further develop teachers' skills in differentiation (addressing the needs of pupils' varying levels of ability)

Achievement and standards

Whilst pupils' prior attainment varies, most, including those with learning difficulties achieve well and make good progress in line with the school's expectations as they advance from year to year. This was confirmed by observation of lessons throughout the school and testing of a representative sample of pupils from Years 2, 4 and 6. The standard of Hebrew reading is good overall and in some cases, pupils read with outstanding accuracy and fluency. Script writing is introduced in Year 3 and pupils gain competence in this skill so that by the end of Key Stage 2, most are able to write with confidence.

Standards achieved in most other areas of the *Limmudei Kodesh* curriculum including Jewish History are good overall and this constitutes an improvement since the previous *Pikuach* inspection when standards in Jewish History were judged as poor.

The teaching of *Chumash* and *Mishnah* focuses on comprehension of the selected texts in addition to translation and most pupils tested, displayed an impressive level of comprehension.

Standards achieved in *Ivrit* are unsatisfactory although there has been some improvement since the previous *Pikuach* inspection. A maximum of two lessons per week is devoted to this subject and the focus is on building pupils' vocabulary to enable them to develop their speaking skills. However, most pupils have difficulty in formulating or understanding simple phrases.

Grade: 2

Personal development and well-being

The school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. This was particularly evident as the inspection took place during *Chanukah* and inspectors observed the special morning assembly and the kindling of the lights in the afternoon. The school choir performed beautifully before the whole school at the end of assembly and left during the afternoon in order to perform at Brent Town Hall in the presence of the Mayor of Brent and councillors. In addition, a wonderful variety of original *chanukiot* produced by pupils was on display near the entrance of the school.

There is full compliance with the statutory requirements of a daily act of collective worship. *Tefillah* (davening) and *Birkat Hamazon* (Grace after Meals) take place daily. Pupils conduct themselves well during *Tefillah* and *Birkat Hamazon* thus reinforcing the ethos and Jewish values of the school. The needs of the Sephardi pupils are met, for example with the provision of two *Sifrei Torah* (Torah Scrolls). The ornaments of one are according to Ashkenazi tradition and those of the other are according to Sephardi tradition.

Evidence gained during lesson observation and from discussions with pupils confirms that they have very positive attitudes towards their school. They are happy to be at the school and they enjoy their Jewish Education. To quote one pupil in Year 4, 'you are never alone' and 'teachers help you'. The views of pupils are taken seriously and issues are raised by means of the effective school council. Pupils understand and appreciate the importance of leading healthy lifestyles and the school provides opportunities and encouragement for them to do so. For example, a variety of healthy foods are available at lunchtime. Behaviour is mostly good and pupils act towards visitors, teachers and peers with *derech erez* (courtesy). During the course of the inspection, they opened doors and greeted members of the inspection team.

Pupils contribute to the Jewish and wider communities in a variety of ways. For example, they collect money for *tzedakah* (charity) that benefits Jewish and non-Jewish causes and they visit and entertain the residents at a local home for the aged and at Sage Nursing Home in Golders Green.

Grade: 1

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching throughout the school is good overall and outstanding in the Nursery and upper Key Stage 2. Teachers are motivated and dedicated and present themselves as excellent role models. Of the lessons observed, most were good or better. In the best lessons seen, there was good interaction between teachers and pupils and opportunities were given for pupils to contribute. The pace of the lessons was brisk and pupils' attention was sustained. Teachers asked challenging questions and pupils responded enthusiastically displaying good recall of previously learned knowledge. The teaching was further enhanced by the effective use of interactive white boards. Where teaching was judged as unsatisfactory, lessons lacked stimulation and variety. There was no evidence of differentiation to take account of pupils' varying abilities, therefore pupils' attention was not sustained. This resulted in some unsatisfactory behaviour.

Teachers assess pupils' progress in a variety of ways including questioning and written tests. In most cases, accurate records are maintained and these are particularly impressive for Hebrew reading which has resulted in improved

standards. Further development of assessment procedures is being implemented by the Head of *Kodesh* with input from an external educational advisor.

The previous inspection report noted that the standard of marking pupils' work was variable. This weakness has not yet been addressed. Of the sample of written work scrutinised, some contained just a tick and others had errors that remained uncorrected. Where work was marked, the accompanying comments were limited and in most cases, did not provide pupils with information necessary to enable them to improve.

Grade: 2

Curriculum and other activities

The quality and range of the curriculum is outstanding. It is suitably broad and balanced and reflects the ethos and values of the school by providing a solid foundation of Jewish knowledge and skills, while implanting Jewish attitudes, beliefs and practice. The curriculum document is divided into five sections; each with its rationale, aims and objectives, attainment targets and schemes of work.

The school is committed to a policy of integration with the secular curriculum. There is a fully integrated curriculum in the Nursery and aspects of PSHCE (Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education) are taught within the *Limmudei Kodesh* curriculum. In addition, guest Rabbis are invited to the school to talk to pupils on topics such as Jewish marriage and personal relationships. Termly meetings are held between *Limmudei Kodesh* and secular teachers to further develop opportunities for integration.

The curriculum is enhanced by some excellent extra-curricular activities including the school choir and the *Limmudei Kodesh* Day which focused on practical elements of *Chanukah* and included musical entertainment provided by a professional Orthodox Jewish entertainer. In addition, there are weekly clubs for topics including *Gemara*, *Minchah*, *Leyning* (chanting from the Torah scrolls), and *Chesed* (kindness) committee.

Grade: 1

Care, guidance and support

The provision for pupils' care, guidance and support is outstanding. The school has clear policies on Anti-bullying, Health & Safety, and Child Protection. The school provides a safe and secure environment for its pupils. Security in the school is very effective. There are two full-time security officers who carefully check all visitors before they are admitted onto the premises. Pupils feel very safe and secure and know to whom they should turn in the event they have a problem. They are appropriately supervised during break and at lunchtime.

Teachers show care and sensitivity towards pupils of lower attainment and those who have special needs. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is outstanding. There is a designated *Limmudei Kodesh* SENCO (special educational needs coordinator) who carries out his duties conscientiously and effectively. Under his guidance, pupils receive effective support.

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 quality of leadership and management is good and underpins the school's many strengths. The headteacher, Head of *Kodesh* and governors are actively involved and play a very prominent role in all areas of Jewish Studies. There is a designated governor with responsibility for Jewish studies. The school's Principal and Halachic authority is Dayan I Binstock. There is an excellent relationship between the headteacher and Head of *Kodesh* and they work together for the good of the school in an atmosphere of mutual respect and cooperation. It is their vision for pupils to achieve the highest possible standards in *Limmudei Kodesh*. They therefore ensure that every support is given to the Head of *Kodesh* to turn this vision into a reality. The Head of *Kodesh* on his part provides strong and effective leadership to all staff. He is highly valued and regarded, and his organisational skills and ability to work under pressure were specifically highlighted during discussions with the inspectors. One of the challenges that he faces is the recruitment of sufficient numbers of suitable teachers that meet the high standards set by the school. He effectively monitors both teaching and learning and is well aware of teachers' strengths as well as those areas where further development is required. Continuing professional development is provided for *Limmudei Kodesh* staff and they also participate in whole school professional development sessions.

Notwithstanding the progress that has taken place in the teaching of *Ivrit* since the previous inspection, the school is aware that there are still some significant weaknesses in this subject. Therefore, the Head of *Kodesh* proposes to introduce radical changes in the way that *Ivrit* is to be delivered and he is in the process of producing revised plans with input from an external educational advisor.

The governors, headteacher and Head of *Kodesh* strive constantly to improve the provision for *Limmudei Kodesh*. As a result, the school is well aware of its strengths and the areas that need further development. It is therefore well placed to take the school forward.

Grade: 2

The following annex should be completed and attached to this report:

1. The **Inspection Judgement Form** (Annex A)

The inspection report should be published as a single document.

We will not publish Annex A.

Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 unsatisfactory.</i>	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 pupils?	1	
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote pupils' well-being?	1	
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	1	
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	Yes/No
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	Yes/No

Achievement and standards

How well do pupils achieve?	2	
The <i>standards</i> ¹ reached by pupils	2	
How well pupils' make <i>progress</i> , taking account of any significant variations between groups of pupils	2	
How well pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	

Personal development and well-being

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

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

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all pupils?	2	
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 performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all pupils achieve as well as they can	1	
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	1	
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1	
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that pupils are protected	Yes	
Does this school require special measures?	No	
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No	

The extent to which schools enable pupils to be healthy	Delete as appropriate
Pupils are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily.	Yes
Pupils are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise.	Yes
Pupils are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse.	Yes
Pupils are educated about sexual health.	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that pupils stay safe.	Delete as appropriate
Procedures for safeguarding pupils meet current government requirements.	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place.	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism.	Yes
Pupils are taught about key risks and how to deal with them.	Yes
The extent to which pupils make a positive contribution	Delete as appropriate
Pupils are helped to develop stable, positive relationships.	Yes
Pupils, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them.	Yes
Pupils are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable pupils to achieve economic well-being	Delete as appropriate
There is provision to promote pupils' basic skills.	Yes
Pupils have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams.	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all pupils in Key Stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form.	NA
Education for all pupils aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy.	NA