

North West London Jewish Day School

180 Willesden Lane, London NW6 7PP

Kodesh Studies Inspection

Inspection dates	23-24 April 2013		
Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection	Good	2
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Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (SMSC)		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school with several outstanding features.

- Pupils achieve well from their starting points to reach standards which are well above average by the time they leave in *kriah* (Hebrew reading) and all textual subjects, including *chumash* (bible studies). They are well prepared for their secondary education.
 - The quality of teaching is good and sometimes outstanding, enabling pupils of all abilities to make good progress.
 - Pupils' behaviour is outstanding both within *Kodesh* lessons and around the school. Pupils' attitudes towards learning are exemplary and they are very proud of their school.
 - The quality of SMSC development provided at the school is outstanding. Pupils are inspired to love doing *mitzvot* (*Torah*)
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- commandments). They are inculcated with *Torah* values so that they are very clear how to interact with peers in an altruistic and harmonious way.
- Pupils are very well cared for by all the adults in the school and as a result feel extremely safe.
- The head of *Kodesh*, headteacher, staff and governors have very high aspirations for the school and a shared vision. The head of *Kodesh* provides dynamic leadership of the *Kodesh* department, with self-evaluation and school improvement planning being of a very high quality.

Since the previous inspection all three areas raised as improvement points have been well addressed. Reports at the end of year now provide detailed information to parents and carers of attainment, progress and development points. The teaching of Ivrit is now good and pupils make good progress in this subject. There has been a strong focus on teaching and learning since the last inspection, by the leadership, teachers and governors. Consequently, the quality of teaching has been upgraded so that nearly all lessons are at least good with several being outstanding. Now, teaching does take into account pupils' level of attainment, so that all pupils' needs are well addressed.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Assessment strategies used to track progress of pupils within *Kodesh* studies are not yet embedded. Although baseline assessments have been carried out in *kriah*, *chumash* and *Ivrit*, assessment now needs to be used to track progress every term. These outcomes should be linked to meetings where pupil progress is discussed.
- The quality of marking in pupils' books is not consistently good enough, as pupils are not always given guidance on their next steps in learning.
- Although teaching has greatly improved since the last inspection and is of a high quality, it is not yet consistently outstanding.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 17 *Kodesh* lessons and a number of small group sessions. A perusal of work in pupils' *Kodesh* studies books was undertaken in most classes.
- Inspectors also talked to pupils, listened to them read, tested them in various subjects and observed them in lessons and around the school.
- Inspectors met with senior leaders, staff and representatives of the governing body.
- The views of 20 parents met at the school gates were considered as well as the outcomes of a recent parental survey conducted by the school.
- Inspectors visited assemblies and *tefilah* (prayer) sessions.

Inspection team

Rabbi Dr Yonoson Yodaiken
Rabbi Nesanel Lieberman

Lead Inspector
Team Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- North West London Jewish Day School is an Orthodox Jewish school situated in the London Borough of Brent with all pupils from the Jewish community. There is a full-time Nursery on site.
- There are 280 pupils on roll. Most pupils are of White British heritage, although approximately one third are from a range of other White backgrounds, mainly French.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported on school action is well below average. The proportion supported on school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is broadly average.
- It aims to meet the needs of modern Orthodox Jewish families by providing a wholesome secular and Orthodox Jewish education which imbues pupils with a love of Judaism.
- At the end of Key Stage 2 most pupils transfer to Jewish schools, predominantly Hasmonean High School, Immanuel College and JFS.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching from good to outstanding so that all pupils make rapid progress by:
 - ensuring that teachers' marking and feedback to pupils within their books consistently provides guidance on the next steps in their learning and that teachers give pupils opportunities to respond
 - embedding the new systems for tracking the progress of pupils to ensure that reliable information within *kriah*, *chumash* and Ivrit enables individuals and groups of pupils not making rapid progress to be identified quickly. Assessment needs to take place every term which will in turn feed into pupil progress meetings between senior leaders and members of staff
 - appointing a middle leader within *Kodesh* studies as an assessment coordinator, who will facilitate the aforementioned aspects being progressed and monitored. There would be an advantage for this person to have knowledge of the National Curriculum, so that assessment criteria can be aligned between *Kodesh* and National Curriculum subjects.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good.

- Pupils' achievement in *Kodesh* studies is good overall and sometimes outstanding, and has improved since the last inspection. This was particularly evident when testing a representative group of pupils from Years 2, 4, 5 and 6 and during lesson observations.
- Hebrew reading standards are excellent and pupils in Year 6 read with great accuracy and confidence, making exceptional progress as they move from year to year. In textual studies, including *chumash* and *mishnah* (Talmudical studies), high standards are achieved by nearly all pupils, with children making good progress as they move up the school. The school has worked hard to raise standards in Ivrit since the last inspection and now standards are overall good, particularly within Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 where a new scheme for teaching Ivrit has been introduced successfully. Standards within Jewish general knowledge are at expected levels although not always consistently so. Pupils display particularly good knowledge about Jewish festivals.
- Discussions with a representative sample of pupils within Key Stage 2 reveal that they are very positive about the school. 'We feel like one big family' and 'We are very well looked after by staff' were views expressed by two pupils, to the approval of others in the group. Evidence gained from discussions with older pupils demonstrates that they are reflective, confident and articulate. Pupils enjoy learning *Kodesh*. In discussion one pupil said 'I love reading Hebrew as lessons are so enjoyable'.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs receive effective support which enables nearly all to make good progress. Expectations for these pupils are high and this is reflected by the progress they make as they move up the school.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection. It is now good overall with a significant number of lessons judged as outstanding.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage the learning experience of children is outstanding. There is a wholesome integrative approach to the curriculum with *Kodesh* studies objectives synthesised with Early Years Foundation Stage goals. For example, children typically use role play, acting as the *Kohen Gadol* (high priest) and experiencing life in a "cave" in preparation for *Lag B'Omer* (33rd day of counting between *Pesach* and *Shavuot*).
- All teachers are immensely secure in their subject knowledge and are wonderful role models for pupils. They exude a love of *Torah* and display great enthusiasm which inspires their pupils.
- In the six outstanding lessons, all the elements of excellent teaching were present including clear lesson objectives, a review of previous learning, excellent use of resources, including the interactive whiteboard, and outstanding classroom management. In these lessons, activities were expertly matched to pupils' needs and teachers checked consistently for understanding. An example of outstanding teaching is within a Year 6 *mishnah* lesson where the teacher uses questioning strategies very impressively to scaffold pupils' knowledge and skills at all levels.
- In the few less successful lessons, activities are not matched well to pupils' needs and the pace of lessons is too slow. Although pupils now love learning Ivrit and are overall making good progress, occasionally in these lessons progress is slow.
- Assessment strategies are being put into place within reading, *chumash* and Ivrit with baseline assessments being conducted in these subjects. However, this needs to now be embedded so that teachers can use tracking data as formative assessment to help them plan lessons.
- Marking in pupils' books is inconsistent. In some classes marking is good with helpful comments being made by teachers to their pupils about next steps in their learning. However, in other classes teachers only affirm good work without any guidance for future learning.
- Display in classrooms and around the school provide a warm, rich learning environment which supports *Kodesh* studies. In addition, the recently instituted *ulpan* (intensive course) for Year 6, to develop their Ivrit spoken skills, is exceptionally successful.

Pupils' behaviour and personal development is outstanding

- Pupils' behaviour in *Kodesh* lessons and around the school is exemplary. This is an area of great improvement since the last inspection, due to dynamic leadership by the head of *Kodesh* studies,

supported by the senior leadership team. They have put in place consistent systems to successfully manage behavioural issues.

- Pupils show great respect to adults and are extremely polite and courteous. During the inspection several pupils expressed their pleasure at being able to welcome the inspectors into their school.
- Pupils display positive attitudes to learning and express their enjoyment of school life. There are excellent relationships between staff and pupils and between pupils themselves. Pupils work well collaboratively and are very willing to help classmates who might need help within *Kodesh* subjects. An example of this is the paired work in *kriah* within some classes, wherein pupils who read fluently support others who find this skill more difficult.
- Pupils' attendance is broadly average but improving because of the school's robust procedures to reward high attendance, which really encourages pupils to come to school.
- Pupils are knowledgeable about how to stay safe and have a good understanding of how to lead healthy lifestyles. They are taught that by doing so and looking after their health they are doing an important *mitzvah* delineated in the *Torah*.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are outstanding

- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Pupils are taught the difference between right and wrong and to respect the law through the *Kodesh* curriculum.
- Teachers take every opportunity within *Kodesh* lessons to engender important lessons of how to live an altruistic *Torah* life. An example of this is within an Early Years lesson wherein children are encouraged to write to *Hashem*. The children thoroughly enjoy writing to Him in a letter, to be placed in the model *Kotel* within the classroom.
- Arrangements for *shacharit* (morning prayers), assemblies and for pupils to recite *birkat hamazon* (grace after meals) meet the requirements for collective worship. *tefilah* sessions are truly inspirational and provide opportunities for pupils to reflect and to pray for the welfare of others. An example of this is within assembly sessions, where pupils pray for the speedy recovery of people who are seriously ill. They also sing songs beautifully which convey messages of Jewish survival and hope for the future.
- Display in classrooms and around the school highlight the importance of doing *chessed* (kindness) to others and the importance of speaking nicely about others. The school's *chessed* coordinator leads on devising and implementing *chessed* projects. The Year 6 *chessed* committee spend much time considering ways to raise funds to donate to charity and successfully implement these plans. Examples of these projects are pupils selling necklaces (self- made) in aid of Norwood and the choir performances in aid of SAGE and sheltered housing accommodation.
- The *Kodesh* curriculum is outstanding and meets the needs of all of the pupils of the school. The curriculum document clearly sets out its

rationale, aims and objectives, supported well by schemes of work. Since the last inspection the Ivrit curriculum has been upgraded and now provides a good provision within this subject. The curriculum is enhanced by various extra curricular activities, such as the annual *Pesach seder* attended by parents and *Yom Ha'atzmaut* celebrations. The curriculum is enriched by regular visits from local community rabbis who address the pupils in assemblies.

- Pupils learn to appreciate and respect Jewish culture and traditions. Despite quite a diverse variety of backgrounds within the school body, pupils display great respect for others' traditions which may be different than theirs.

Leadership and management

- The quality of leadership and management of *Kodesh* studies is good. The head of *Kodesh* studies and headteacher have a clear vision of what they want pupils to achieve and a strong commitment to ensuring improvement. The quality of self evaluation within *Kodesh* studies is outstanding and matches very well the outcomes of the inspection. This self evaluation has formed the basis of the school improvement plan which leaders have driven through since the last inspection. As a result, the three areas for improvement mentioned in that report have all been addressed. These include improving the quality of reports sent to parents, the quality of the provision for the teaching of Ivrit and ensuring that teaching is planned so that the needs of pupils at all levels of attainment are being met.
- Leaders have implemented good systems to chart the performance of staff and targets are given to them for further improvement. Observations of staff are undertaken on a regular basis and staff are given advice on next steps to enhance their teaching practice. Leaders provide appropriate training for staff to enable them to develop their skills. This has had a good impact on raising pupils' achievement, particularly as staff are reflective and willing to accept feedback that helps to improve their performance. There is a very positive ethos within the school that fosters pupils' good academic achievement, outstanding attitudes to learning and their exemplary behaviour.
- The head of *Kodesh* is ambitious and his high expectations of staff and pupils are presented in a very positive way.
- The governors have an impressive understanding of the strengths and areas for improvement in the school and hold the head of *Kodesh* to account, but also offer good support to him.
- The school has begun to implement a whole school tracking system within reading, *chumash* and Ivrit. As yet, however, this only constitutes a baseline assessment of pupils' level of attainment. Strategies need to now be developed which will assess pupils' progress on a termly basis. This assessment should then be linked to progress meetings between teachers and members of staff wherein pupils' individual progress will be discussed in their subjects. Consequently,

intervention strategies will be put in place to help pupils who are making slow progress.

- The head of *Kodesh* and headteacher have taken positive steps to form strong relationships with parents and carers. Parents and carers are invited to parents' meetings, are regularly informed of the work of the school through detailed newsletters and are invited into school to experience the rich quality of events permeating the school year. These include school shows, curriculum events and activities linked to the *chagim* (Jewish festivals).

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number 101553

Local authority Brent

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	280
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Paul Gottlieb
Chair trustees	Graham Morris
Head Kodesh	Rabbi R Broder
Headteacher	Rabbi Daniel Kerbel
Date of previous school inspection	20-21 October 2010
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