

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The inspection was carried out under Section 23 of the School Inspections Act (1996). Its purpose is to report on:

- the educational standards achieved in Jewish Studies in the school;
- the quality of Jewish education provided;
- the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils at the school;
- arrangements for collective worship.

Other aspects of the school's work were inspected under Section 10 of the School Inspections Act (1996) and reported on separately.

### 1.1 Basic Information about the School

King David High School is part of the King David campus which contains a crèche, nursery, primary and high school. It serves the Jewish community of Greater Manchester, but students come from further including Leeds and Liverpool.

King David High School is a modern orthodox Jewish school, which attracts families from a variety of religious backgrounds. Parents value the fact that the school recognises and respects all levels of observance.

The school is popular and pupils are drawn from the full range of socio-economic backgrounds.

The school has undergone significant transformation in the past ten years and continues to grow from strength to strength in some areas, such as very good examination results and a wide range of extra-curricular activities. The school's admissions policy allocates places to children who are recognised as 'Jewish' by the Chief Rabbi of the United Kingdom.

The school is divided into four streams according to academic ability:

- Yavneh (Girls yrs 7-13 : Boys yrs 7-8)
- Solomon (Boys / Girls yrs 7-13)
- Saul (Boys / Girls yrs 7-13)
- David (Boys / Girls yrs 7-13)

Admission to the *Yavneh*, *Solomon* and *Saul* streams is by entrance examination and *Shmirat Shabbat* is a prerequisite for admission into *Yavneh*.

Within the main school, the *Solomon* and *Saul* streams are more academic than the *David* stream.

Pupils entering the school encompass the full range of ability, but the majority have attended Jewish primary schools, so that attainment on entry in Jewish Studies is above average.

There are 801 pupils, with high competition to gain places, particularly in the *Yavneh*, *Solomon* and *Saul* streams.

This transformation has been achieved and very good examination results maintained through the dynamic leadership of the Chair of Governors who works in the school every day and deals with all aspects of school life, even to the extent that if a member of staff is absent, he will provide the necessary cover himself.

The school's general aims are to:

*“provide quality teaching and a promotion of excellence.”*

Its specific quoted aims in relation to Jewish studies are to:

*“provide a strong Jewish education so as to imbue children with the knowledge and pride in their heritage and identity, and to promote the values, standards and discipline which are essential for children who are destined to become leaders of the Jewish community and beyond.”*

These aims were carefully considered during inspection.

Jewish education is central to the life of the school as a whole and this is reflected by the fact that many activities are organised through the Jewish Studies Department. For example, there are six trips to Israel this year alone.

<i>Name of School:</i>	King David High School
<i>Type of School:</i>	Comprehensive
<i>Status:</i>	Voluntary Aided
<i>Age range of pupils:</i>	11-18
<i>Principal:</i>	N/A
<i>Head Teacher:</i>	Mr Brian Levy
<i>Head of Jewish Studies:</i>	N/A
<i>Head of Yavneh Boys:</i>	Rabbi Y Dominitz
<i>Head of Yavneh Girls:</i>	Rabbi Y. Peles
<i>Senior Jewish Studies Teacher:</i>	Mr S. Mintz
<i>Jewish Studies Co-ordinator:</i>	Rabbi Waxman
<i>Address of School:</i>	Eaton Road, Crumpsall, Manchester M8 5DY
<i>Telephone:</i>	0161 740 7248
<i>Fax:</i>	0161 740 0790
<i>Chair of Governors:</i>	Mr. J. Rowe
<i>Local Education Authority:</i>	Manchester
<i>Dfee School Number:</i>	3524810
<i>Reporting Inspector:</i>	Sandra Teacher
<i>Team Inspector 1:</i>	Angela Gluck Wood
<i>Team Inspector 2:</i>	Rabbi Geoffrey Shisler
<i>Team Inspector 3:</i>	Reverend Michael Binstock
<i>Date of Inspection:</i>	11 – 15 April 2005
<i>Date of previous Inspection:</i>	November 1998
<i>Date of inspection (Jewish calendar):</i>	1 <sup>st</sup> Nissan 5765

## 1.2 School Data and Indicators

Number of full-time pupils 2004-2005:

Year	Boys	Girls	Totals
7	55	67	122
8	63	67	130
9	70	57	127
10	47	62	109
11	52	65	117
12	52	68	120
13	34	38	72
<b>Totals</b>	<b>374</b>	<b>426</b>	<b>801</b>

% of Jewish pupils	100%
No. of pupils eligible for free school meals:	25
No. of pupils with statements of special educational needs:	9
No. of Full time Jewish Studies teachers:	8
No. of Part time Jewish Studies teachers:	10 (2 assistants)
Pupil : teacher ratio for Jewish Studies:	77 : 1
No. of ethnic minority pupils:	16

### Total *Limmudei Kodesh* time per week per Key Stage

Periods per week	Yavneh		Main School
	Boys	Girls	
Key Stage 3	19	12	5
Key Stage 4		10	5
Key Stage 5		10	7-8

### Examination Results in Religious Studies (RS) 2004:

#### GCSE results:

120 entries

56 at grade A\* – 44 at grade A – 13 at grade B – 5 at grade C – 2 at grade D

#### AS results:

5 entries

3 at grade A – 2 at grade C

#### A2 results:

40 entries

13 at grade A – 22 at grade B – 4 at grade C – 1 at grade D

### Destination of Pupils Leaving Summer 2004

Girls	Seminaries	37% (27 out of 73)
Boys	Yeshivot	11% ( 8 out of 73)
	Gap year	52% (38 out of 73)

### 1.3 Record of Evidence

Four inspectors were involved in the inspection for a total of 12.5 days. This coincided with the Ofsted inspection.

#### **Number of lessons seen and the time spent in observation (hours):**

More lessons were observed at Key Stage 3, as the Yavneh boys stream only contains Years 7 and 8.

	KS3	KS4	Post-16	Cross-phase	Total
Number of lessons observed	16	5	5	1	27
Time in observation (hours)	10.0	5.66	3.16	0.66	19.48

Apart from attendance in lessons, the inspectors attended the following for additional evidence:

- Assemblies
- *Davening - Shacharit and Minchah* with the pupils
- *Shiurim* and the *Beit Midrash*
- Lunches
- Playgrounds during break times
- Informal activities

#### **Further Methods of Collating Evidence were as follows:**

- Samples of pupils' work from each year group and from each ability range in all aspects of the Jewish Studies curriculum were perused and assessed.
- Detailed discussions were held with all members of the Jewish Studies team, the Head teacher, the Deputy, the special needs co-ordinator, staff from the Junior school, members of the Governing Body and parents.
- A questionnaire was distributed to parents, and 57 replies (out of 800) were received and analysed.
- A representative group of pupils was interviewed and pupils spoken to class, during lunch and breaks and around the school. Pupils were tested in Hebrew reading, writing and general knowledge.

Issues which were brought up that related to Jewish Studies during the Ofsted parents' evening were also considered.

Close links were maintained with the Section 10 inspection team.

## 2. SUMMARY

### 2.1 Main Findings

- 2.1.1 The King David High School offers a secure and caring Jewish environment for its pupils. The school is very popular and works hard to fulfil its aims of promoting Jewish education by sending increasing numbers of students to *Yeshivot*, seminaries and Gap Year programmes.

All the inspectors were impressed with the atmosphere of the school.

- 2.1.2 The standards and progress achieved in Jewish Studies are variable, reflecting the broad range of intake. In Religious Studies, a subject taken at GCSE, AS and A level, examination results show that standards are very good. Standards in Jewish Studies in *Yavneh* Girls and *Yavneh* Boys are very good as are standards in the upper sets in the main school. The school aims to provide pupils with a love and pride of Judaism through a wide range of additional activities and admirably achieves this objective. Students display commitment and involvement within the Jewish community. However, in the middle and lower sets, within the representative sample of pupils tested, the standards of Hebrew reading, writing and Jewish General Knowledge, are unsatisfactory. The curriculum should contain strategies for the inclusion of ongoing practice in these skills throughout a pupil's school career.
- 2.1.3 The school complies with the statutory requirement to provide a daily act of collective worship for the pupils. A variety of formats for *Tefillah* are offered for pupils to suit the varying levels of observance and ability. The high standards observed in the *Yavneh* streams reflect the ethos of the school, but within the main school, the majority of pupils are not engaged during the brief *Tefillah* sessions. This is of concern, as the weaknesses identified in the previous inspection have not been addressed.
- 2.1.4 Special Needs provision (SEN) in the school is good. The special needs co-ordinator works closely with the *Limmudei Kodesh* staff, but liaison can be difficult as there is no overall subject leader. Additionally, there is good evidence of students with SEN being taught individually or in small groups.
- 2.1.5 The quality of teaching is variable. Of the lessons observed one in five was good or better and one in five was unsatisfactory. Strengths include a secure knowledge of the subject and a clear commitment to Jewish Studies by staff acting as very good role models. However, where teaching is unsatisfactory this is because of poor planning, low expectations and learning objectives that are not matched to the differing needs of students.
- 2.1.6 There is no overview of the curriculum for the whole school, which is unsatisfactory. In the *Yavneh* streams, there is now a skeleton curriculum in place which provides a good basis on which to build. However, the quality of the curriculum in the main school is unsatisfactory and little progress has been made since the previous inspection. The main focus of the curriculum at Key Stage 4 is the GCSE syllabus and at Post 16, the A level Religious Studies. At Key Stage 3, the school has produced workbooks which could form the basis of a formal curriculum document. They now need to be developed to show how pupils will be expected to build up their skills and knowledge as they progress through the school.
- 2.1.7 Spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is very good. Examples were observed of older pupils caring for younger ones, and the atmosphere on all sites is generally happy and relaxed. The practice of *Middot* is evidenced in many ways, including respect shown by teachers to pupils and the courtesy shown to inspectors by the pupils. The school is involved in caring activities and pupils and staff work tirelessly to raise money for *Tzedakah*. The whole *Hashkafah* of the school helps students to take pride in their Jewish identity.

2.1.8 The commitment of the Chair of Governors, Headteacher, Co-ordinators of Jewish Studies to the school is of the highest order. However, there are serious management issues, and overall management of the Jewish Studies Department is unsatisfactory because there is no overall subject leader. There are four separate departmental leaders for each unit. (Yavneh Girls/ Yavneh boys/Main school – Years 7-9/ Religious Studies (GCSE and A–Levels.) There is no formal Development Plan and limited curriculum planning. There are few procedures for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning and, at present, the timetabling does not allow for efficient use of Jewish Studies teachers. The teaching loads are too heavy to allow for planning, assessment and evaluation of lessons. There is too little provision for developing the teaching and management skills of the Jewish Studies department and this has prevented the school from tackling the action points identified during the previous *Pikuach* inspection report. These now need to be addressed as a matter of urgency.

## 2.2 Key Issues for Action

**The following key issues for action were identified in the last inspection report (1998), and now require immediate attention.**

- Appoint a professional head of Jewish Studies to lead the team of staff and to supplement the dynamism of the Chair of Governors;
- Develop a formal written curriculum based on the school's aims and objectives and a full Scheme of Work;
- Improve the quality of teaching through the provision of Continuing Professional Development and the process of Performance Management;
- Devise strategies to make collective worship more meaningful for all pupils.

## 3. STANDARDS IN JEWISH EDUCATION

### 3.1 Achievement and progress in Jewish Studies

- 3.1.1 The school's documentation states that it is founded on the pursuit of excellence and that its mission is to encourage every pupil to reach the highest levels of academic achievement.
- 3.1.2 Very good results are achieved in GCSE and GCE Religious Studies examinations. Of the 120 pupils who entered the GSCE examination in 2004, 85% gained Grades A – A\*. The GCE A2 examination was taken by 40 pupils of which 32.5% achieved Grade A and 55% achieved Grade B.
- 3.1.3 The standards of achievement and progress of pupils in the *Yavneh* and *Solomon* streams are very good and in line with the school's expectations. For example, in a *Parashat Hashavua* lesson for boys of Years 7 and 8, good progress was made in learning about the difficult topic of *tzara'at* (leprosy) including selected commentaries of *Rashi*. In a voluntary *Talmud shiur*,

impressively high standards were noted. The programme of Jewish Studies is designed to enable pupils to enter *yeshivot* and seminaries. This aim is admirably achieved in the *Yavneh* girls' stream and in the top sets in the main school.

3.1.4 In the main school at Key Stage 3, it is difficult to measure achievement and progress when judged against the school's expectations. It is the view of the Head of Curriculum Development that the focus of Jewish Studies should be on imbuing pupils with a love and pride of Judaism. This is to be achieved with the aid of workbooks centred on selected narratives and personalities from the Torah. As such, there is little evidence of the teaching of basic Jewish skills and knowledge. It is however, difficult to reconcile this view with the stated aims of the school to provide a strong Jewish education and to enable pupils, to achieve their full potential. For example, the results of testing a representative sample of pupils revealed that most are unable to read or write Hebrew proficiently and some are very weak in these important skills. Of the pupils tested, few knew the names of the Books of the Torah. A similar lack of knowledge was evident in other areas including the *berachah* for drinks, the name of the current Jewish month and Jewish terms such as *Lechem Mishneh* and *Hachnasat Orchim*. This is disappointing and unsatisfactory. It is equally unsatisfactory that there is no formal and compulsory Jewish Studies provision for pupils in Post-16 who do not enter the A level Religious Studies examination.

## **3.2 Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and response to Jewish Studies**

3.2.1 Pupils' behaviour in lessons is good at all stages, although in the main school some pupils arrive late for lessons and at Key Stage 3 some take a casual approach to their work. Pupils are respectful of their teachers, obedient in following instructions and compliant in carrying out tasks. They handle books and treat property with care.

3.2.2 Pupils respond well to Jewish Studies. In Religious Studies examination classes, they are keen to succeed and they apply themselves diligently to their work.

3.2.3 The quality of pupils' response in lessons mirrors the quality of teaching but in some cases pupils respond well even when teaching is unsatisfactory or no more than satisfactory. Even where pupils appear bored, they behave courteously and concentrate on the tasks, although without energy or a real sense of application. Where teachers have provided material and present ideas that capture the students' interests and imagination, or where they give pupils opportunities to explore and investigate, they respond positively and with maturity.

3.2.4 On the whole, pupils do not play an active enough part in lessons. This is partly because the teaching in many lessons does not enable them to participate beyond listening to the teacher and answering short questions. When teachers' questions are addressed to the class as a whole, only a small minority of pupils volunteer to answer. In the classes observed, pupils seldom asked questions. In discussion with pupils, they explained that they are not invited or encouraged to do so. However, in a Year 10 lesson on the sanctity of life and in a Year 13 lesson on theocracy, pupils showed that they were able to pose questions, to explore the issues involved and to probe ideas deeply.

- 3.2.5 In the few lessons where pupils were given opportunities to cooperate with one another, they worked productively. They supported one another, building on ideas through discussion and extending one another's learning. It was in these instances that the learning was of the highest quality.
- 3.2.6 In the social and circulation areas of the school, behaviour is good. They move about the site with a concern for safety and with consideration for others. There is an almost complete lack of litter and graffiti on the school site.
- 3.2.7 In discussions with inspectors, pupils spoke of their concern about bullying, especially verbal, and a few instances of anti-social behaviour were observed. However, some acts of particular kindness between pupils were also observed and, in general, pupils show *derech erez* in their relationships with their peers and with adults.
- 3.2.8 Pupils respond particularly well to the opportunities for the extended Jewish curriculum and their participation in extracurricular activities—including *Shabbatonim*, Israel tours and other residential events—is especially high. A large number of pupils volunteer for additional Jewish learning, in the various *Bet Midrash* programmes, including the weekly after-school *Bet Midrash*. The *Bet Midrash* that was observed, burst with life, as pupils with individual or group tutors engaged in textual study with vigour and commitment.
- 3.2.9 Pupils also take the opportunities offered to involve themselves in communal events, voluntary activities and *tzedakah* projects.
- 3.2.10 The pupils have a sense of pride in their Jewish heritage and confidence in their identity as young Jews.

### **3.3 Collective Worship – Tefillah**

- 3.3.1 The school satisfies the statutory requirements for an act of communal worship each day. There is no written policy on collective worship.
- 3.3.2 *Tefillah* in *Yavneh*, both in the boys' and the girls' departments is of a high level. The boys, who are joined by a small group from the main school, conduct a regular *Shacharit* service. The girls *daven* silently and independently and are respectful of one another. Prayers are taken seriously in both departments and provide a worthwhile and spiritual experience for all pupils.
- 3.3.3 In the main school, assemblies were observed on each of the four days of the inspection. There is no evidence of any change since the previous *Pikuach* which stated '...assemblies in the main school are lacking in that the majority of pupils do not appear to be gaining from the experience. During prayers, only a minority are involved and of these, many appear to be going through the ritual motions rather than attempting to pray with any meaning or contemplation.' These findings are still applicable.
- 3.3.4 During *Tefillah* pupils sit quietly. Boys and girls sit separately and boys over the age of *Bar Mitzvah* are expected to put on *Tephillin*. Many of them do so incorrectly, and minimal help is offered by members of staff to assist them to perform this important *Mitzvah*. Many pupils, both boys and girls, do not have a

*Siddur* with them. A senior member of the Jewish Studies Staff recites the *Berachot* for *Tephillin* and the *Shema*, and allows a short period of time for those who want to, to recite the silent *Amidah*, although it was very difficult to identify any pupil who did so. After he recites *Alenu*, *Tephillin* are removed and normal school matters are dealt with.

- 3.3.5 On Thursday, when *Keriat Hatorah* (reading from the *Torah*) took place, the sixth form sat at the rear of the hall, the majority of them without *Siddur* or *Tephillin*, and not attempting to participate in any way whatsoever. A *Sefer Torah* appeared, one of the pupils read the appropriate portion very competently, and three pupils were called-up.
- 3.3.6 In all assemblies observed, by far the majority of pupils were totally disengaged. There was no attempt, except on those days when *Keriat haTorah* took place, to involve the pupils in any aspect of the *Tefillah*. The prayers are recited at them and most pupils make no attempt to participate in any way. It is impossible to assess the negative impact this has on already disinterested pupils. It is apparent that little planning or preparation is given to the *Tefillah*, and as a result the entire event provides an utterly negative experience for the pupils.
- 3.3.7 The school might consider smaller units for general *Tefillah* and in Year 7, pupils should be taught the skills of *tefillot* including teaching boys how to lay *tephillin* correctly.

## **4. QUALITY OF JEWISH EDUCATION**

### **4.1 Quality and range of the Curriculum**

- 4.1.1 There is a skeleton curriculum in Yavneh girls which provides the basis on which to construct a sound programme. It is currently written in Hebrew and, when it is completed, will need to be presented in English to make it accessible to parents as well as to all teachers. The topics cover a wide variety of areas of Jewish learning, *Torah*, *Nach*, (prophets) *Halachah*, *Hashkafah* (Philosophy), and General Knowledge.
- 4.1.2 Much work still needs to be done on this curriculum, defining more precisely how much is to be taught on a given topic. For example, in Years 7 and 8 under the heading of *Halachah*, the title *Shabbat* appears without further clarification as to which different areas of the laws of *Shabbat* are to be taught in each year. Similarly in Year 12 under the heading *Nach* alone, the subjects to be covered in one year are Ecclesiastes, Lamentations, the Twelve Minor Prophets, Job and (unspecified) chapters of prayer!
- 4.1.3 To provide continuity, it is urgent to attend to the completion of this curriculum so that it will be in place for the next *shlichim*.
- 4.1.4 In *Yavneh* boys, the curriculum is more developed. Subjects covered are *Chumash*, *Parashat Hashavua*, *Mishnah*, *Gemarah*, *Halachah*, *Nach*, History, and *Hashkafah*. It shows evidence of being carefully thought out with learning objectives being specified for each chapter of *Nach*. The *Dinim* (Laws) curriculum specifies what is to be taught each week, as does that in *Mishnah*.

Although not yet fully developed, this is a very good beginning that provides a very sound basis on which to construct a programme that will enable the school to achieve its objectives for Yavneh boys.

- 4.1.5 In the main school, there is no cohesive, overall, written curriculum. What exists is fragmentary and mainly geared towards GCSE and A Level Religious Studies. There are programmes of work for *Chumash* and *Torah sh'ba'al peh*. It has therefore been very difficult for inspectors to assess the quality and range of the curriculum. In Years 12 and 13 there is no *Limmudei Kodesh* timetabled at all, though all pupils have the option to participate, and a significant number do – in the various *Bet Midrash* learning programmes. Approximately two thirds of the pupils sit Religious Studies at A level and the other third do no formal or compulsory studies of Judaism.
- 4.1.6 In *Yavneh* and in the upper sets in the main school, good standards are achieved in textual skills. However, in the other sets, very little reading or writing of Hebrew is done in Jewish Studies lessons. Many of the pupils come from Jewish Primary schools where these subjects are perceived as an integral part of their Jewish education, as confirmed in conversation with the Junior school staff members. Regrettably, these skills are actually being lost by some pupils (who do not continue to Key Stage 4 in Modern Hebrew) as they progress through the school.
- 4.1.7 A number of workbooks have been prepared in-house all entitled 'A closer look at....' And include, Abraham, Rebecca, Redemption from Egypt and Receiving the Torah.' They contain topics for discussion and various activities for pupils to undertake. Many are done as homework. However, there is no reference to what pupils are expected to learn, and the work is not levelled to cater for differences in ability. There is very little cross-curricular work undertaken. There are good examples in both art, drama and science but very little evidence of teachers from the different departments planning together.
- 4.1.8 At Key Stage 4 there is a 'Departmental Handbook' which simply contains the syllabus for OCR Cambridge, Religious Studies. Since GCSE and A Level Religious Knowledge examinations are sat by non-Jewish pupils throughout the country, many of whom take Judaism as an option, it is of considerable concern that the school uses only the results obtained in these examinations as the benchmark by which the success of the Jewish education of its pupils is measured. There is additional tuition for more able pupils in *Nach and Halacha*, a number of these pupils are sitting the Classical Hebrew GCSE examination this year, which they have opted to do on a voluntary basis.
- 4.1.9 As a matter of priority, a curriculum and scheme of work should be developed which meets the school's aims and objectives for students within the main school.
- 4.1.10 There is an excellent range of extra curricular activities offered to the pupils. In the years 2004/5 more than 400 students went to visit Israel on 6 different tours, which included fact finding visits to *Yeshivot*, Seminaries, Universities and other Gap Year programmes. Trips are also held to visit Jewish sites in Poland. A week is devoted to Zionist Youth Seminars when the whole timetable is devoted to Israel and 15-20 *Madrichim* (leaders) are brought over from Israel. This culminates in a *Shabbaton* which is held in the *B'nei Akivah Bayit House*).

Each year a barbecue and fair are held to celebrate *Yom haAtzmaut* (Israel Independence Day). Shabbatonim take place, almost every weekend and the school is an active participant in the national and international Bible Quiz.

4.1.11 A special ceremony to celebrate *Bat Chayil* is held in June for Year 7 King David girls, which attracts about 37 participants.

4.1.12 A *Bet Midrash* programme is held throughout the week and every Wednesday afternoon after school for one hour where approximately 70 pupils come to learn on a one to one basis with members of staff, parents, ex-pupils and *Yeshivah* and Seminary graduates attending Manchester University. Attendance for *Yavneh* boys is compulsory and they are supplemented by approximately 12 boys from the main school. A variety of subjects is studied including *Gemarah*, *Mishnah* and *Halachah*. This was observed during the inspection and the industriousness and involvement of all participants was seen. A similar programme takes place separately for *Yavneh* girls which is called *Lishma*. In addition to the regular Shabbatonim held in Manchester, very successful *Shabbatonim* are also held in Gateshead for Year 10 pupils at their *Hamayon* Centre and many pupils go on more than one occasion.

4.1.13 All major, minor and Israel - related festivals of the Jewish Calendar are celebrated in the school and on *Tu Bishvat* for example, Year 7 pupils take part in a video conference link with schools and youth groups in Israel.

## 4.2 Teaching

4.2.1 The quality of teaching is variable. Of the lessons observed, one in five were good or better but almost one in five were unsatisfactory. Since the last inspection, there has been a decline in the quality of teaching, especially at Key Stage 3 in the main school. Two very good lessons were seen in Key Stage 4 and the Sixth Form. There was no unsatisfactory teaching in the Sixth Form.

4.2.2 In all age groups, in both the main school and the *Yavneh* unit, teachers have good subject knowledge, which they communicate clearly. They set clear expectations of pupils' behaviour and manage it well. There is lateness in the start of some lessons but otherwise classes are orderly.

4.2.3 In the best examples of teaching, lessons are planned with learning objectives in mind and these are shared with pupils. However, few of the lessons seen were planned with a view to improving pupils' learning skills and many concentrate too heavily on simply conveying information. Teachers too rarely share with pupils the objectives for learning and a very small number of lessons showed no signs of having been carefully planned and prepared. Several lessons ended abruptly, without summary, evaluation or any indication of the next steps. Such factors limit the possible extent of effective teaching and learning.

4.2.4 In several lessons, the pace was too slow, teachers' expositions were too lengthy and there was insufficient variety in activities. In a small number of cases, pupils were required to complete in silence written exercises that were more appropriate for homework, thus freeing class time for discussion or other interactive tasks. Some teachers dictate notes to pupils rather than take the opportunity to teach the skills of note-taking and thus enable pupils to learn

through the experience of making their own notes. There is a schedule for the regular setting of homework but often it is no more than a completion of work undertaken in lessons and does little to further pupils' learning.

- 4.2.5 With notable exceptions, teaching is insufficiently challenging for pupils and teachers do not give pupils full enough opportunities to participate. They do not question pupils sufficiently and, when they do, they frequently use closed questions, eliciting short and limited answers rather than requiring pupils to reflect on or explain the information they acquire. Generally, pupils are not encouraged to ask questions or to express and justify a point of view, and teachers organise very little paired or group work. The teaching with these characteristics does not adequately present pupils with positive and compelling models of Jewish learning.
- 4.2.6 In the *Yavneh* units, and in the upper sets in the main school, most teaching is appropriately pitched and teachers engage with pupils' thought-processes in a stimulating way. In the textual sessions seen at *Yavneh* and in the upper sets in the main school at Key Stage 3, teaching was demanding of the pupils and they were challenged with probing and well-focused questions that required them all to achieve their best.
- 4.2.7 Likewise, an exemplary Year 10 lesson was observed in the main school. The clear and appropriate learning objectives were communicated to pupils at the outset and referred to as the lesson progressed. It had a brisk pace, with a wide range of activities, including paired work. Very relevant resources were chosen to sustain pupil interest and motivation throughout. The interactive white board was used competently and effectively. The teacher employed a variety of open-ended questions and involved pupils in a well-focused and clearly structured investigation, encouraging them to interrogate the material and to ask questions of themselves, of the teacher and of each other. This teaching was exceptional in its support of pupils across the attainment range.
- 4.2.8 Generally, the available learning resources are not well used. There is too heavy a reliance on photocopied pages from text-books, a few of which are intended for younger children. There is very little use of Jewish artefacts and audiovisual aids. Inter-active white boards have recently been installed and some teachers are making good use of them. However, other teachers use the interactive white board too infrequently or in too minimalist a way, not tapping the full potential of this invaluable educational resource. Similarly, in the lessons that were observed and in the samples of pupils' work that were seen, there was no evidence of pupils using information and communications technology (ICT), which has a huge potential for Jewish learning.
- 4.2.9 The marking of pupils' work is good in the Sixth Form, but unsatisfactory at Key Stage 4 and poor at Key Stage 3. There is no practice of setting learning targets for or with pupils. In the Sixth Form, teachers make helpful remarks on pupils' written work. At Key Stage 4, pupils are given marks according to the GCSE marking criteria and this is helpful to the pupils in anticipating their eventual grade. However, in the samples of pupils' work that were seen, teachers had not added comments that would explain to pupils the basis of these marks and therefore do not understand what they need to do in order to improve. A great deal of the Key Stage 3 pupils' work is not marked at all. Where it is, teachers make only token comments and do not convey to pupils

what they can do to be successful in the future. Pupils do not understand the basis of the grading system that teachers use and therefore have no insight into their strengths and weaknesses in Jewish learning or in broader educational skills.

4.2.10 Across the age range, in both the main school and the *Yavneh* unit, there are examples of good teaching that can be shared with colleagues. For every instance where there is a particular element in a colleague's teaching that is weak, there are corresponding strengths in one or more colleagues' teaching that can be modelled.

### **4.3 Assessment**

4.3.1 Assessment procedures are satisfactory and have improved since the previous inspection. A combination of formal and informal assessments is employed to summarise pupils' progress. This takes place in the form of questioning during lessons and written tests which are held twice per year. At Key Stage 3, marks are recorded by the relevant head of department and used to inform future planning. Where deemed appropriate, pupils are moved to higher or lower sets.

4.3.2 The quality of marking pupils' written work is unsatisfactory and has not improved since the previous inspection. Of the sample of work inspected, there was little evidence of helpful comments which would inform pupils of what they need to do to improve their work.

4.3.3 The Head of Curriculum Development is aware of the need to formalise assessment procedures by producing a written policy document.

### **4.4 Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

4.4.1 Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good and is a strength of the school. All teachers, including non-Jewish staff show considerable respect for the school's Jewish ethos and all present themselves as good role models.

4.4.2 There is a wide range of extra-curricular activities including *Shabbatonim*, trips to Israel and Poland, voluntary *shiurim* and a full daily morning *Minyan*. There are regular *tzedakah* projects and the sums raised benefit both Jewish and non-Jewish charitable causes. Sixth form pupils are involved in a project entitled 'Time for You'. This initiative encourages the pupils to develop links with residents of the local Jewish welfare homes and sheltered accommodation for the aged.

4.4.3 Opportunities for the moral development of pupils are created. For example, in a *Parashat Hashavua* lesson in *Yavneh*, the teacher focused on a *middah* (good character trait) contained in the text. The school organises outings to concerts and art galleries which impact on pupils' cultural development.

4.4.4 The school could further enhance the pupils' spiritual development by increasing the limited displays around the school. Appropriate wall displays of Jewish themes including pupil's artwork and creative writing would further reinforce the school's religious ethos.

## **4.5 Equality of opportunity**

4.5.1 The school has successfully created an inclusive environment. Its equal opportunities policy has a positive impact on the quality of learning and achievement in Jewish Studies. All pupils have equal access to the curriculum. Boys and girls are given different but equal roles in *Tefillah* in accordance with *Halachah* and the Jewish ethos of the school. Both boys and girls participate in *Mishnah* lessons.

4.5.2 The school caters for pupils of all abilities. Pupils who require extra support or more challenging work are identified and their needs are effectively met in various ways. This takes place within classroom teaching and through individualised programming. However, as there is no overall head of department, there is no consistency to ensure that this always happens with every teacher.

4.5.3 While the majority of pupils are of *Ashkenazi* tradition, there is a significant minority of children from a *Sephardi* background. The school does not always make a point of highlighting *Sephardi* traditions. Teachers and pupils use both the *Ashkenazi* and *Sephardi* Hebrew pronunciations which often leads to confusion and incorrect pronunciation of words. A clear policy on this issue would help to clarify mistakes.

## **4.6 Support, guidance and welfare**

4.6.1 The school site is safe and secure, and staff make good provision for pupils' welfare. Most tutor groups are relatively small and there is a well-established system for responding to pupils in distress or difficulty. In their discussions with inspectors, pupils said that there is always an adult to turn to for support and that, when they report instances of bullying, staff intervene swiftly and decisively. Pupils feel valued and cared for.

4.6.2 The school encourages Jewish observance, through the provision of *kosher* meals, its dress code, the opportunities for *Tefillah* and specific experiential programmes, such as *Shabbatonim* and educational tours.

4.6.3 There is access to a good range of appropriate counsellors and welfare agencies, to whom pupils can be referred. These include 'The Fed' (Manchester Jewish Federation), which offers support that is culturally and religiously sympathetic to members of the Jewish community. It is valuable that 'The Fed' can provide social workers for the school.

4.6.4 Appropriate information is available to older pupils on Jewish possibilities in the next stage of education and on the Jewish implications of their career choices. Jewish Studies staff encourage Sixth Form pupils to consider Jewish programmes when they leave school, such as in a 'gap year' or in higher education. They give advice on *yeshivot* and other projects that have a Jewish focus, and support pupils in making applications and arrangements.

## **4.7 Provision for Pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN)**

4.7.1 The school accepts pupils across the wide ability range and has 9 pupils with a statement of special educational need. Provision for pupils with special educational needs (SEN) is good and has improved since the previous inspection. It meets the aims of the school to achieve high standards in examinations, to encourage all pupils to fulfil their potential, and to access the

full range of the Jewish Studies Curriculum. The school has well-structured procedures for pupils with SEN and provides different levels of support depending on the degree of need.

- 4.7.2 Pupils with special educational needs usually learn well because they want to succeed, and also because teaching styles and learning materials are generally carefully matched to their needs. Pupils gain confidence through the good relationships in the classroom and from the help they receive from teachers and support staff. However, there are occasions when tasks are not sufficiently challenging and work is not sufficiently well adapted to pupils' requirements. Assessment is carried out systematically and effectively through the twice-yearly reviews of pupils' individual education plans.
- 4.7.3 There is no designated Jewish Studies Special Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO), but the school SENCO integrates well with all departments. However, as there is no Head of Jewish Studies, it is difficult for her to liaise effectively with all the different staff to ensure that the best help is always provided for each of the students.
- 4.7.4 There is one whole-school SEN policy. This makes brief reference to Jewish Studies but it would be beneficial when revising this document, to add further detail in relation to SEN provision in Jewish Studies.
- 4.7.5 Resources for Jewish Studies Special Educational Needs are limited. In particular, there are missed opportunities to use the computers and ICT equipment which is readily available to help improve the quality of the teaching and the learning.

#### **4.8 Partnership with Parents and the Jewish Community**

- 4.8.1 Of the 57 parents and carers who responded to the Pikuach Questionnaire at least 70% responded positively to every question, and the responses suggest that the school is highly regarded by parents.
- 4.8.2 Prospective parents meet with the Chair of Governors and both pupils and parents turn to him concerning matters regarding the school.
- 4.8.3 There is no regular communication with homes and letters are sent out as required. There is one Parents' Association for the whole campus (Infants, Primary, and King David) and it arranges functions to raise funds for the needs of the various schools. Parents also help to organise the *Bat Chayil* celebrations in the summer.
- 4.8.4 Pupils engage in a variety of activities connected with the wider community. They help with the 'phone-in' for JNF and have close links with the 'Manchester Federation,' under whose auspices Year 12 pupils visit the elderly. The school is supported by The North Manchester Jewish Youth Project who provides information and advice. Pupils go to Heathlands at *Chanukah* to entertain the residents, and the school choir participates in the communal *Yom haShoah* event. Each year the school hosts a visit from a group of Israeli War Disabled. Pupils from a local school for children with learning difficulties come in to participate in some of the festive celebrations held in King David.

- 4.8.5 Visits are made to the school by local Rabbanim and communal leaders and representatives of local Jewish youth groups, particularly *B'nei Akivah*. Local Synagogues are used in which to hold *Shabbatonim*.
- 4.8.6 There are no general *Tsedakkah* collections, but on-going collections are made for specific causes such as the Tsunami appeal and Leukaemia Research.

## **5. MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL AND THEIR IMPACT ON JEWISH EDUCATION**

### **5.1 Management**

- 5.1.1 The Chair of Governors has taken on the main leadership role and provides very strong management direction for the school. His drive and enthusiasm gives him the controlling hand over all issues related to Jewish Studies. His commitment is shared by the whole Jewish Studies team and they share a common good vision for the school. This vision, much of which has already been transformed into reality, should be used as a basis for a School Development Plan for Jewish Studies, which comprehensively delineates these plans, linked to success criteria and budgetary effects. It is important to change the dynamic leadership into one which is both dynamic and educationally professional. The combination of the Chair of Governors and a good professional head of department could provide inspirational leadership.
- 5.1.2 There are four different leaders who run the four distinct units (*Yavneh* Girls/*Yavneh* boys/Main school Years 7 – 9/RS – GCSE and A - Level), but no overall head to monitor and evaluate the work of the department, or to give professional direction to issues such as: curriculum, planning, assessment and professional development.
- 5.1.3 It is vital that the allocation and timetabling of staff is closely reassessed. The teaching loads are too heavy to allow for planning, assessment and evaluation of lessons. There is limited time to take part in regular professional training of staff at the school. In order to enhance the Jewish Studies provision in the school, which would have a markedly improve the quality of teaching; staff should take part more frequently in professional training on Jewish themes. The Head teacher and governors must support the idea of giving Jewish Studies staff the opportunity to further develop their teaching practice, both by going on courses and by visiting other schools. These weaknesses were identified in the previous Pikuach inspection report and now need to be addressed as a matter of urgency.
- 5.1.4 There is a performance management appraisal structure in place. However, in practice, this has not led to actual teacher appraisal. It is important that a monitoring and appraisal system is put into place as soon as possible.
- 5.1.5 The sixth form curriculum does not include a formal and compulsory learning programme for those students who are not involved in RS examinations; this is unsatisfactory. However, students can voluntarily participate in the variety of *Bet Midrash* programmes.

## 5.2 Staffing, Resources for Learning, and Accommodation

- 5.2.1 The school has enough teachers to teach the existing number of pupils and these teachers have appropriate academic qualifications. Most are qualified teachers or have embarked upon a recognised training programme, which the school endorses.
- 5.2.2 One of the ways in which the school embodies its Modern Orthodox Zionist outlook is by recruiting staff from Israel on a short-term basis. Currently these include two teachers with posts of responsibility in Jewish Studies and two *Benot Ami*, who give additional support to individuals or small groups of pupils and make a valuable contribution to informal Jewish education.
- 5.2.3 There are some deficiencies in the available learning resources for Jewish subjects. While there is sufficient written material, most comprises photocopies of pages of textbooks or workbooks produced in-house. Pupils very seldom have access to commercially produced books, artefacts or other attractive and relevant resources. The school lacks appropriate software to enable pupils to undertake research or investigations on Jewish subjects. The Jewish Studies classrooms in the main school are fitted with interactive white boards but many teachers are unaware of their potential or confident in their use. The Jewish books in the library are few in number, and in most cases outdated or in poor condition.
- 5.2.4 Accommodation for Jewish Studies is good, with a *Beit Hamidrash*, specialist rooms provided and the use of ICT in some classrooms. The environment is well kept and cared for.