

Yesoiday Hatorah School

Sedgley Park Road, Prestwich, Greater Manchester, M25 0JW

Kodesh Studies Inspection

Inspection dates	28-29 May 2014
Overall effectiveness	Outstanding 1

Quality of teaching	Outstanding	1
Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (SMSC)	Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils	Outstanding	1
Leadership and management	Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- The quality of teaching is generally outstanding, enabling pupils to make outstanding progress.
- Pupils' attitudes towards learning are very positive. Their behaviour is outstanding and they are extremely proud of their school.
- The quality of SMSC development provided at the school is outstanding. The pupils are respectful, friendly and display a spiritual refinement.
- The comprehensive enrichment programme enables pupils with a wide variety of learning difficulties to make excellent progress.
- The leadership and management are ambitious and forward-looking and have demonstrated outstanding vision in improving the school during a period of rapid growth.

Information about this inspection

- 20 *kodesh* lessons were observed (some of which were joint observations with the SLT) and three classes were visited during a learning walk round the nursery.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, the leading members of the representatives of the governing body, members of the teaching and enrichment staff, SEN team, the librarians and groups of pupils.
- Pupils across the age and ability range were tested on their knowledge of *chumash, yedioh klolis, krioh, Talmud and mishna*.
- The school's assessment and tracking systems were scrutinised, as was work in pupils' *kodesh* books.
- The inspectors considered the views of 50 parents and carers who responded to a recent parental survey conducted by the school.
- The inspectors perused documentation and policies and watched a video featuring the school's annual end-of-year exhibitions.

Inspectors

Rabbi Nathaniel Lieberman
Rabbi Yehuda Levenson

Full report

Information about this school

- Yesoiday Hatorah School is in essence two orthodox Jewish primary schools on the same campus, one for boys and one for girls, catering for 3-11 year olds. There are 812 pupils on roll, including 120 children in the nursery - an increase of 25% since the last inspection, three years ago. There is a waiting list of children who wish to join the school.
- It operates as an Academy school, and is the largest orthodox Jewish state-aided primary school in England, with more than 200 teaching staff.
- It aims to meet the needs of orthodox Jewish families in the Manchester area by providing a dual curriculum - both an orthodox Jewish education, which imbues pupils with a love of *torah* and *mitzvos*, and a high-quality enriched curriculum.
- Boys and girls are taught in separate gender groups throughout the school. Jewish studies represent approximately 55% of lessons. Despite that, a full enriched curriculum is delivered, due to the school's emphasis on cross-curricular work and due to pupils being at school on Sunday mornings and for up to 8½ hours daily.
- There are 27 pupils with a statement of special educational needs, which is well above the national average. There are a further 110 pupils on the SEN register. This is in line with the national average but is significantly above average for an orthodox Jewish school.
- There are also 56 pupils on the EAL (English Additional Language) register, and during the past two years 45 children have joined the school mid-year.
- The school employs a SENco, an assistant SENco and a learning mentor, three speech therapists, two expressive therapists and a social skills mentor.
- The school's last Section 48 inspection was on 25 November 2010.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

To maintain and further improve on its current provision, the school should:

- Expand the relatively new tracking and assessment systems for *yedioh klolis* and *krioh* to include all *kodesh* subjects.
- Ensure that all marking of written work includes advice on next steps for improvement.

Inspection judgements

The quality of teaching is outstanding

- The quality of teaching is outstanding overall, particularly in the boys' section, and is never less than consistently good. Pupils of all abilities are making sustained high progress.
- Senior management training and mentoring was evident in the outstanding lessons in both boys' and girls' classes, as the following was repeatedly observed:
 - Lessons proceeded at a brisk pace, with teachers nurturing high expectations from their pupils.
 - *Rebbes* and teachers have earned the respect of the pupils by virtue of their caring and encouraging attitude. The pupil-teacher relationship is very positive throughout the school.
 - *Rebbes* and teachers spend long hours outside the classroom preparing tailor-made worksheets and innovative lessons.
 - Excellent use is made of the interactive whiteboards, as an aid for both learning and revision.
 - Enthusiastic *rebbes* and teachers engender participation by all pupils through the use of incentive schemes, unstinting and honest praise, skilful and probing questioning, plus a positive and lively atmosphere within the classroom.
 - Well-planned lessons empower the pupils with the requisite skills and knowledge that enable them to decipher and understand texts by themselves.
- The cross-curricular teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage department is robust and purposeful, with a healthy balance of teacher-led and child-initiated learning.
- The quality of the displays in classrooms and around the school underpins the strong *kodesh* learning environment.
- Pupils on the SEN register receive targeted support. This is either from a TA or LSA within the classroom, as part of a group that is withdrawn for booster sessions or via a one-to-one session from a member of the SEN team. As a result of these interventions, and the robust monitoring by the SENco, the SEN pupils make remarkable progress.
- Staff know their pupils very well. Formal assessments include weekly written tests in the main subjects, plus regular oral tests from the headteacher. Staff also track all their pupils on a termly basis, and the Senior Leadership Team assures that all necessary interventions are in place. The comprehensive and differentiated planning is based on the results of the assessment and tracking.

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 instil important lessons of how to live a *torah* life. An example of this occurred during a *gemoroh* lesson in Year 6, where the *rebbe* initiated a discussion concerning the importance of respecting both parents and teachers. The topic was broadened to encompass the gratitude pupils should have towards their mentors, and how this should affect their relationship with their parents and teachers.
- Pupils develop their self-esteem and self-confidence by assuming responsibilities within the school. Pupils act as monitors within the classroom and they participate in the School Forum (Council).
- In Year 6, the pupils are allocated a plethora of responsibilities: teams of girls and boys undertake the production of their weekly newsletters under the guidance of a member of the SLT; they act as lunchtime monitors, class librarians and lost property monitors; they aid the teachers of younger classes during 'wet breaks'; and they adopt the role of 'big buddy' to care for their peers during the regular daily breaks.
- All Year 5 and Year 6 girls are involved in the *shir v'zemer* music club directed by an expressive therapist. They then perform at the annual school concert which is attended by family members. In addition, the junior boys' *shir v'zemer* club, run by two *rebbe*s, perform during the year and at the end of year boys' siyum.
- Prominent displays in classrooms and around the school highlight the importance of raising charity for the less fortunate. The school has won an inter-school competition for the past two years by being the one that raises the most money for the Kids Meal Appeal that supports disadvantaged schoolchildren. Also, following a cake sale, Year 4 pupils raised £630 for a charity that provides a summer holiday camp for disadvantaged children. In addition, Year 5 girls organised a bazaar at which they raised over £300 for *Zichron Menachem*, a charity that supports families of children who have cancer.
- Pupils contribute to the wider community in a variety of ways. They stage a show that is open to the community and perform as a school choir at the local Beenstock home for the elderly.
- The enriched curriculum is further enhanced by a wide variety of extra-curricular activities. These include regular chess and reading clubs, and an annual *chanukah* show. One-off activities in the past year have included a talent show (which featured a band formed by three boys), a funfair, a parrot show, a Science workshop, and circus-skills training.
- All pupils participate throughout the year in a themed cross-curricular programme that culminates with an end-of-year exhibition that is open to the public. This event is a showcase of the pupils' artistic creativity,

and, through astute planning, successfully combines all the four strands of spiritual, moral, social and cultural activities.

- The school has both a girls' and a boys' library which are open daily and staffed by two librarians. All classes have a weekly slot where teachers bring their pupils to choose books. Every pupil takes home a book every week. The books cover a wide range of genres and are a boon for the pupils' cultural and literary growth.

Behaviour and safety of pupils is outstanding

- The inspectors observed outstanding behaviour by pupils in *kodesh* lessons. Consequently, lessons moved at a good pace, enabling even the brightest pupils to make significant progress.
- There is a calm and purposeful atmosphere around the school, as pupils move sensibly from one activity to another.
- In discussions with the inspectors, the pupils credit the behaviour management systems with improving their attitudes towards learning and behaviour.
- Pastoral care for pupils is a priority of the school, and it has invested in an array of therapists -including two expressive art therapists and three speech therapists- a social skills coordinator and a learning mentor. This has a most positive impact on the behaviour and wellbeing of pupils.
- A happy atmosphere permeates the school, and is reflected by the friendliness of the pupils to visitors to the school. In particular, the EYFS and KS1 children were very keen to share their learning experiences with the inspectors.
- Visitors are greeted politely and pupils hold the doors open for them.
- Pupils display extremely positive attitudes to learning and are well-motivated to succeed. They are supportive of each other and learn well with partners and in small groups.
- Pupils' attendance (last year 97.4%) is well above the national average.
- Older pupils show responsibility for the younger ones during lunchtimes and breaktimes, and there is a good level of adult supervision at all times.
- 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*.
- 98% of parents/carers feel that their children are safe at school, according to a survey conducted in November 2013.
- Staff, pupils and parents/carers agree that there is virtually no bullying at school, and that any instances are dealt with swiftly.

Leadership and management

- The quality of leadership and management of the school is outstanding. The experienced and highly-qualified headteacher, with the assistance of the capable and devoted deputy head and the two new assistant heads, provides a focussed and incisive sense of direction for the school.
- There is no separate leadership for *kodesh* studies, as one of the features of the school is that the SLT is jointly responsible for both sides of the curriculum and for both the boys' and girls' sections.
- This collaborative management system ensures that all staff work harmoniously to deliver a high-quality cross-curricular experience for all pupils.
- Since the last inspection the SLT has been reinforced by the appointment of two assistant heads. The SENco has also become a member of the SLT. In addition there is now a 6-member middle management team, so that despite the rapid growth of the school, the current leadership and management team is appropriate in both size and expertise.
- The full leadership and management team has a quality balance of both highly experienced and youthful educators, who create the outstanding learning atmosphere that permeates the school.
- The management team has a very clear vision of what it desires for the pupils, and is strongly committed to affect constant improvement in all areas. A comprehensive programme of teacher monitoring which provides constant professional development, plus the prioritising of enrichment opportunities for weaker pupils, is responsible for the constantly high standards of teaching.
- The headteacher meets with the chair of governors on a weekly basis, and the meetings are minuted.
- The headteacher and governors have worked tirelessly to secure funding for the expansion of the school, to cope with the substantial increase in pupil numbers over the past years.
- The governing body has shown its commitment to SEN pupils by its decision to continue the current high rate of enrichment despite major cutbacks in the SEN budgets.
- The decision by the governors to allocate two large rooms as libraries also has an important impact on the pupils' opportunities for growth.
- The headteacher and the leadership team work together with the governing body in an atmosphere of mutual respect. This flows from leadership to staff to pupils, creating a focussed and harmonious school.

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.
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.</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.</p>

School details

Unique reference number 105346

Local authority Bury

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy
Age range of pupils	3-11
Gender of pupils	Boys/Girls
Number of pupils on the school roll	812
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr M Halpern
Headteacher	Rabbi Dr J Yodaiken
Date of previous school inspection	25 November 2010
Telephone number	0161 773 6364
Email address	info@yhs.org.uk