

Yesoiday Hatorah School

Sedgley Park Road, Prestwich, Manchester M25 0JW

Kodesh Studies Inspection

Inspection dates	29-30 July 2019
Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Outstanding
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Outstanding
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Outstanding

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FOR PARENTS AND PUPILS

This is an outstanding school

- The long-standing Headteacher continues to drive the school forward with extraordinary vision and professionalism. He is supported by a dedicated and enthusiastic Senior Leadership team.
- The second-tier leadership is energetic and forward-looking and they play a full role in the management of this very large primary school.
- The effective staff professional development programme enables teachers to provide outstanding Kodesh lessons.
- The outstanding, bespoke curriculum facilitates the delivery of focussed lessons which make excellent use of class time and is the catalyst for extensive after-school and holiday learning programmes.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and this is reflected in the outstanding pupil-teacher relationships that permeate the school.
- The SEN provision, including the Chavatzelet programme, is outstanding.
- The SMSC (spiritual, moral, social and cultural) provision is extremely well-developed throughout the school.
- Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of all aspects of the school's provision.

What the school can do to improve further

- In the absence of timetabled Halochoh (Jewish Law) lessons, the school should consider carrying out an audit to ensure that all necessary Halochos are taught (within other subjects) in an age-appropriate manner.
- The school could consider making Tefillah (prayer) more meaningful by staging whole-school prayers on special days such as Rosh Chodesh (first of the month – a mini festival).
- To develop pupils' retention of the wide-ranging and outstanding Yedioh Klolis (general knowledge) programme, the school may want to introduce a systematic revision programme linked to regular summative assessments.

Inspection team

Rabbi Nessanel Lieberman
Rabbi Yehuda Levenson

INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Effectiveness of leadership and management is outstanding

- The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the school is outstanding. The veteran and highly-respected head teacher has been at the helm of the school for several decades, and continues to oversee all aspects of the school's operations with integrity and vision.
- The Kodesh (Jewish studies) and Chol (general studies) departments work seamlessly together. The head teacher and the SLT are responsible for both the Kodesh and Chol departments of the school. This enables the pupils to benefit from a Kodesh atmosphere throughout the school day.
- The head teacher has been successful in building multi-tiered leadership teams to manage this very large, and expanding, primary school. Apart from the seven-member Senior Leadership Team, there are also six members of a Middle Management Team. Further teams include the Subject Heads and the pastoral staff.
- All management positions are occupied by teachers from within the school, who have demonstrated particular leadership qualities. This develops continuity and stability for the school, as well as creating loyalty amongst the staff, as they feel that they are constantly being supported and encouraged to develop their effectiveness as educationalists.
- There is an extensive training programme for teachers, some of which is provided in-house. There are also strong links to the internationally-acclaimed Torah Umesorah (TU) Teacher Training Centre, which is situated close to the school, where there are a variety of training options, ranging from one-off to year-long courses. These links are facilitated by a member of the school staff being one of the lead coordinators of TU, by the Headteacher's pivotal involvement in setting up the centre and by virtue of a member of the school's governing body also being a mainstay of the TU centre.
- There is a very comprehensive tailor-made curriculum for all Kodesh subjects that are taught at the school, and there is an entire curriculum for teaching Hebrew spelling – a topic that is overlooked in many other schools.
- From perusal of the written curriculum plus discussions with the curriculum co-ordinators it is evident that an outstanding amount of effort and skill has been expended in producing this curriculum.
- It was noted that there is no separate curriculum for Halochoh, and although the management are confident that all necessary Halochoh is covered by other curricula (such as Yedioh Klolis or Tefillah), it is nevertheless recommended that the school carries out an audit to ensure that all the required Halochos are taught in a suitable fashion.

- Leaders have an accurate view of the quality of the school's Kodesh provision, and a clear vision for continued progression. This is evidenced by the wide-ranging and up-to-date self-evaluation document and associated improvement plan.
- The extensive provision for SEN pupils by the large team of professional and experienced therapists and SEN specialists is one of the outstanding features of the school.
- Within the SEN provision there is the Chavatzelet programme, which runs specialised 2-3 hour sessions for groups of pupils, which enables those pupils to participate in regular classes for the rest of the day. This highly-specialised provision is a beacon of good practice within the SEN sector, and has provided support and guidance to other schools in the wider community.
- The SENCo also provides support for teachers across the school, to assist them in integrating pupils with individual needs into regular classes.
- Within the past month 99 parents recorded their opinions about the school on Parentview. All the parents would recommend this school to other parents, and there is overwhelming approval for all aspects of the way that the school is run.
- Parents demonstrate their commitment to the school by their involvement in assisting pupils alight from their cars daily as they arrive at school, and many parents volunteer regularly at extra-curricular activities.

Governance

- The governing body work closely with the head teacher and the leadership team, and share the same vision for the school.
- The current plans for de-amalgamation have added greatly to the workload of the governing body, and they have responded by bringing in fresh faces to assist in this very ambitious project.
- The governors deserve particular commendation for their commitment to assisting each and every pupil, including all who are on the SEN register, and for their provision of a capacious hall that truly enhances many a school event.

Quality of teaching learning and assessment is outstanding

- The quality of teaching in the majority of lessons is outstanding, and pupils from the full range of abilities make noticeable progress.
- Teachers are adept at utilising the superior classroom resources, including the interactive whiteboards, to create exciting and stimulating lessons.
- There are weekly meetings between management and KS2 staff to discuss the teaching of Sedra (weekly portion of the Bible), Yedioh Klolis, Nach (scriptures) and spellings.
- The planning is comprehensive and collegiate, as teachers of each year group plan together, whilst the management oversee the resources that are produced and mentor the less experienced teams.
- After decisions have been reached on how to present the week's material in class, the actual preparation of those materials is then shared by all teachers, to ensure uniformity and avoid duplicity.
- Much of the teaching of the main subjects (Chumash [Bible], Mishna and Gemorroh [Talmud]) focuses on developing pupils' skills to enable them to become self-sufficient in their learning.
- The outstanding lessons move at a brisk pace and feature focussed questions, which indicate a sound knowledge of each pupil's individual capabilities.
- The pupils are active during lessons and keen to participate. They thrive on the encouragement they receive from their teachers. Even if a pupil gives an incorrect answer to a question in class, the teacher will find a way to validate the answer and praise the pupil.
- Three SEN lessons were observed, plus a session at the Chavatzelet Centre, during which the pupils happily worked through the tasks that were set for them by experienced and caring teachers. The pupils were all well-versed in the various class routines, which is just one important skill that they are taught. In one lesson the pupils were rewarded by being able to choose from a platter of delicacies that had been brought to school by the teacher following a family Simcha (celebration).
- The school operates a sophisticated assessment schedule to track pupil progress in all subjects, ranging from the weekly Chumash tests to the annual Kesivah (writing) assessment. It is suggested that a systematic revision programme is implemented in Yedioh Klolis to assist pupils in the longer-term retention of the many details that are taught in this subject.
- Exercise books and project work are carefully marked, so that pupils know what points of their work require further improvement.
- Parents receive a comprehensive, wide-ranging and detailed written report once a year, with details of pupils' effort and attainment in all areas of their academic and social life at school.

- In Nursery, all the seven areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage are covered by the Kodesh staff, and there are no dedicated Chol teachers. The staff meet regularly to discuss their weekly planning. All the teachers have benefitted over the past few years with extra training, both in-house and via Manchester College. The children's progress in Personal and Social skills is a strength of the Nursery.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's efforts to promote pupils' personal development and welfare are outstanding.
- The staff display a strong culture of caring towards pupils, with a determination to ensure that every pupil succeeds at school, both academically and emotionally.
- Apart from the regular SEN provision, and the Chavatzelet programme for those pupils who are unable to be within a regular classroom structure for the full school day, the schools employs two expressive art therapists, three speech therapists, a social skills co-ordinator and a learning mentor, with the aim of maximising each pupils' personal development.
- Pupils are under careful supervision at all times, and both children and parents (on Parentview) aver that pupils feel safe at school. Older pupils have watched the video 'Bullied', and have attended workshops both before and after the viewing to discuss the issue of bullying at length. Pupils report that there is no bullying problem at school.
- School leaders have taken the Shema Koli course on safeguarding in Charedi schools, in order to pass on this knowledge to the pupils in an age-appropriate way that is acceptable according to the ethos of the school.
- Year Six pupils are given opportunities to assume responsibility in various ways. The pupils can apply to undertake jobs around the school, including running lunchtime clubs for pupils of Years 3 & 4, assisting the younger classes during 'wet break', modelling correct behaviour during lunch to younger pupils, reporting for/editing the school magazine, etc. This develops the pupils' self-confidence and nurtures their creativity.
- The lunchtime singing and drama clubs promote the personal development of two groups of pupils. The Year Six pupils who run these groups benefit from the responsibility, and the participants in these clubs then gain by acquiring extra skills and by performing their newly-learned skills at school assemblies.
- Every term, representatives of each year are elected to participate in the school forum, which puts forward ideas to the school leadership on

behalf of the pupils. Recent achievements of the forum are new playground equipment plus wall clocks for classrooms.

- The school works in partnership with parents on the personal development of pupils via the parenting workshops that are run by the schools. These are popular with parents and enable home and school to project similar messages.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils around the school is generally outstanding. Great respect is shown to adults, as pupils move aside to let them pass, greet them politely and rush to hold doors open for them. They also rise in respect when adult visitors enter and leave their classroom.
- During the many lessons observed by the inspectors, the behaviour of pupils was virtually always of the highest standard. This enables teachers to concentrate fully on their teaching and to deliver lessons without interruptions.
- There is excellent decorum during lunchtime, where older pupils sit together with younger ones and model good behaviour.
- The school recognises that when a child misbehaves there is generally an underlying symptom, often a cry for help. Therefore, staff have been trained to identify these needs, and -through deployment of a strong behaviour team and a robust referral system- the school ensures these issues are addressed. The success of this strategy is evident in the excellent behaviour throughout the school. Pupils told the inspectors that behaviour has improved since the appointment of the behaviour leads.

Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development is outstanding

- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. As an integral part of the Kodesh curriculum pupils are taught not only about spiritual matters, but they are also given a strong basis concerning moral issues. The school's Sedra Curriculum, in particular, includes a section on 'lessons from the Sedra', which presents various ideas for teachers to use as moral teachings every week.
- Consequently, despite the size of the school, there is a calm, friendly and purposeful atmosphere, with pupils displaying refinement in their character.
- The pupils display mature social skills, as they communicate with confidence with both adults and peers.
- Most classes start the day with their morning prayers, and one Year 6 pupil told the inspectors that the Tefillah lessons are her favourite subject, as she can apply those lessons in practice to her daily prayers.
- Pupils suggested that their Tefillah experience would be further enhanced if all classes were able to conduct their prayers first thing in the mornings, before other lessons. They also suggested that on Rosh Chodesh classes should join together for a communal rendering of the Hallel (prayer that is recited/sung on Rosh Chodesh and festivals).
- The school as a whole focuses on a different Middoh (character trait) every year. Currently the Middoh is Hashgochoh Protis (how G-d takes care of every individual), and there are regular assemblies that encourage pupils to share experiences of Hashgochoh Protis in their lives. This encourages the pupils to be reflective and to be aware of the spiritual dimension to their lives.
- Pupils are heavily involved in community projects: they visit the elderly at Beenstock Home for the Aged to sing and perform plays; they stage an annual bazaar and sell raffle tickets to raise funds for poor people or those with special needs; they were involved in the school's car boot sale by running the stalls and looking after children; and their school choir has performed at both school and communal functions.
- The bright and colourful 'working walls' displays on various SMSC topics add to the SMSC development of the pupils, as do the themed activities that take place in the splendid school hall to coincide with Jewish festivals and mini-festivals.
- Year Six pupils are paired up with new pupils, vulnerable pupils or pupils with extra needs, and act as their big buddies. This has proven to be beneficial to both the older and younger pupils.
- The computerised school library, with its 26,000 books on a wide range of topics, broadens the scope of the pupils' cultural knowledge and experience. The library is open every morning, and is very popular within the school. The experienced librarians assist the class teachers in ensuring that pupils choose books that are appropriate for their literacy level. Books are also available for pupils on the SEN register.

Outcomes for pupils are outstanding

- Pupils make outstanding progress from their starting points, and are very well-prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Pupils receive an outstanding base for their Kodesh studies due to being taught how to read in a thoroughly professional manner, and due to continued practice throughout the school.
- By the end of Year Six pupils have the Hebrew reading, vocabulary and grammar skills to tackle unseen texts in Chumash, and the boys have the translation and comprehension skills to study Mishna and Gemorrah with confidence.
- Despite the outstanding Yedioh Klolis curriculum, and the time and energy expended on teaching it, this is not reflected in the way pupils retain their knowledge of Yedioh Klolis. It is suggested that a systematic revision programme is implemented, and that this is linked to regular summative assessments, to assist the pupils with their long-term retention of the facts of the Yedioh Klolis curriculum.
- During classes, pupils exhibited a high standard of recall of Sedra details and grammar rules that they had learned in previous years.
- Pupils display maturity, self-respect and self-confidence. They were friendly and respectful when chatting to the inspectors.
- Older pupils thrive due to the many opportunities they have to assume responsibility in a variety of school activities, such as contributing to the school magazine, running lunchtime clubs and modelling correct behaviour to younger pupils at lunch.
- Pupils look and sound happy around school, and they derive enjoyment from their Kodesh studies. They are proud of their school. When asked by an inspector what they would do to improve their school, the pupils couldn't really think of anything that required improvement in their opinion.
- The neat work in exercise books and the meticulous craft work are an indication of the pride that pupils have in their work.
- Pupils aver that they are making very good progress at school. A Year Six pupil said that she is now able to look at Rashi to help her decipher an unseen Chumash text.
- The Chavatzelet programme has supplied pupils with serious SEN issues with the tools and skills they require in order to function for much of the day in a regular classroom setting.
- The expressive therapy sessions have an outstandingly positive effect on pupils with extra needs.

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 906 pupils on roll, including 128 children in the nursery - an increase of 11% since the last inspection, five 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 general studies curriculum.
- Boys and girls are taught in separate gender groups throughout the school. The school is in the process of de-amalgamating, to create two separate schools, one for boys and one for girls, under the same leadership, and will become a multi-academy trust on 1 August 2019.
- Jewish studies represent approximately 55% of lessons. Despite that, a full enriched general studies 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 16 pupils with a statement of special educational needs, which is well above the national average. There are a further 275 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 44 pupils on the EAL (English Additional Language) register.
- The school employs a SENCo, a learning mentor, three speech therapists, two expressive therapists and a social skills mentor.
- The school's last Section 48 inspection was on 28-29 May 2014.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors visited 26 lessons, covering all subjects and all year groups, and they observed morning prayers. Five further classes were visited during a learning walk at the Early Years department.
- Meetings were held with the Headteacher, senior leaders, the SENCo, the chair and the financial representative of the governing body, middle leaders, subject leaders. members of the teaching, SEN and enrichment teams, and with the librarians.
- The inspectors observed pupils at break, at lunch and around the school, met with groups of pupils, and tested further groups of pupils on their knowledge of Chumash & Rashi, Gemorroh, Mishna, Hebrew reading and Yedioh Klolis.

- The inspectors perused documentation, policies and newsletters, and viewed photos and a video presentation of the school's enrichment activities.
- The inspectors scrutinised work in the Kodesh exercise books and samples of Kodesh project work
- The inspectors analysed the views of 99 parents and carers who expressed their opinions on Parentview in response to a recent survey conducted by the school

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 on roll 906

Appropriate authority The governing body

Chair of Governors Mr I Steinberg

Menahel/Headteacher Rabbi Dr J Yodaiken

Date of previous inspection 28-29 May 2014

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