Yesoiday Hatorah Girls Academy

Sedgley Park Road, Prestwich, Manchester M25 0JW

Kodesh Studies Inspection

under section 48 of the Education Act 2005

Inspection dates	22-23 December 2025
Leadership and management	Exceptional
Quality of education	Exceptional
Personal development	Exceptional
Outcomes for pupils	Exceptional

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FOR PARENTS AND PUPILS

- The Senior Leadership Team of the school place strong emphasis on providing an outstanding Kodesh education.
- All senior and middle management members of the Kodesh team work tirelessly and with a strong sense of duty to set a high standard for the Kodesh provision.
- The highly-motivated and well-trained Kodesh staff have an excellent rapport with the pupils and provide outstanding lessons and informal guidance for the girls.
- Morale is very high and there is strong co-ordination and co-operation across the spectrum of the teaching staff.
- The wide-ranging curriculum is constantly being upgraded and there is a strong focus on demonstrating its relevance to the girls' daily lives.
- SEND pupils benefit from a wide range of excellent resources and programmes and are an integral part of the school.
- Pupils display outstanding behaviour. They are refined, polite and friendly.
- There is a wide range of extra-curricular activities which improve the girls' Middos and personal development.

INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Effectiveness of leadership and management is exceptional

- The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the school is outstanding. The visionary Menahel (Principal) and the enthusiastic, energetic Assistant Heads of Kodesh combine to create an environment that is highly conducive for girls to make great strides in their Kodesh studies and in all aspects of their Yiddishkeit (Judaism).
- The senior leadership team, ably guided by the Academy Lead, has set standards of professional excellence in both teaching and care for pupils that permeate all levels of management and teaching, enabling the pupils to feel fulfilled, safe and happy to be at school.
- Management and teachers meet regularly with colleagues across year groups, with their Chol (general studies) counterparts and with the SEND team, to provide targeted education for the pupils. Many of these meetings take place out of school hours.
- The Kodesh curriculum covers the full gamut of Kodesh subjects, and is constantly being updated and improved. The inspectors noted significant upgrades since the previous Kodesh inspection, particularly in the subjects of Tefillah (prayer) and Halochoh (Jewish Law).
- A further feature of the curriculum is how it is not only framed to be an accumulation of knowledge – rather it is the Jewish way of life. Great effort and expertise have been expended to demonstrate that learning about Jewish topics is not just theoretical but is acutely relevant to the pupils' daily lives.
- There is a large team of professionals providing support for pupils with SEND, with a variety of tailor-made programmes, including Chavatzelet and Shir v'Zemer, so that all pupils at the school are able to participate in class activities and they have many opportunities, including non-academic ones, where they can express themselves and shine.
- Shir V'zemer is an all-inclusive music, song and dance programme for all pupils in Year 5 and Year 6, which provides enrichment for any pupil taking part, whether musical or otherwise. Pupils develop proficiency in rhythm and beat, dance and music, song and movement. The programme culminates in a vibrant end-of-year school performance that celebrates their learning and achievement.
- The school's compassion and its determination not to leave any pupil behind are apparent in the acquisition of resources that are way beyond those found at comparable Jewish schools.
- Morale is high at this school, and staff, parents and pupils are all happy and proud to be associated with the school.

- The extra-curricular programme has been even further developed since the previous inspection. It now includes even more meaningful activities to mark both Rosh Chodesh and other special days on the Jewish calendar. For example, the inspection coincided with the festival of Chanukah and all the fun activities during that festival were linked to the promotion of sterling Middos (character traits).
- Extra-curricular activities are also a vehicle for parental involvement with the school. This creates a family atmosphere despite the large pupil body.

Governance

- The governing body has faced a challenging period over the past five years. They have coped with Covid, overseen the de-amalgamation that has created two distinct schools, negotiated the purchase of a large building to accommodate the school's expansion, and they have supported the significant expansion of the school's middle management.
- These activities, and more, have been carried out in a professional and sensitive manner by the dedicated and capable members of the governing body, working in tandem with the Principal and senior staff.
- The governors have full faith in the school's leadership and work hard to support the senior Leadership Team in a joint and determined bid to continue improving the school.
- The board of governors is generous with its allocation of resources for the pupils, including those with SEND.

Quality of teaching learning and assessment is exceptional

- The quality of teaching in the majority of lessons is outstanding, as teachers calmly, confidently and positively deliver high-quality lessons.
- There is a visible passion and determination to reach all pupils during lessons and to enable them to succeed. Many examples were noted of teaching that was framed to be relevant to pupils' daily lives.
- Even the more experienced members of staff engage in regular professional development to further their teaching skills. These training sessions are delivered both by colleagues and by professionals from other organisations.
- Teachers have access to outstanding resources, including custom-made teacher planners that ensure they follow the prescribed curriculum, and colour workbooks that greatly enhance the learning experience for the girls.
- Lessons are taught at a brisk pace, utilising a variety of teaching methods, and pupils are focussed - eager to learn and participate.
- In an Early Years class, the lesson was so exciting and stimulating that pupils were busy enjoying themselves and did not realise that they were learning!
- Teachers use reward systems, compliments and personal warmth to promote enthusiasm for learning.
- The SENDco provides targeted support to enable teachers to integrate many of those on the SEND register into regular lessons.
- For SEND pupils who require individualised lessons there is a range of support, including the highly successful Chavatzelet and therapy programmes, where experienced and motivated staff provide targeted support to individuals and small groups.
- Detailed, weekly newsletters are shared with parents, encouraging them to be involved in a learning partnership with the school.
- Colourful wall displays and learning walls add an extra layer of learning for the girls, and they include samples of both classwork and project work by the pupils.
- All areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum are covered in the Nursery class by the Kodesh teachers. The children benefit from a vibrant and well-resourced environment, a choice of multiple activities to acquire knowledge and from a team of very experienced and capable teachers. Consequently, they make very solid progress.
- There is a multi-layered assessment programme to ensure that all girls are absorbing the teaching and making requisite progress. Teachers assess via class discussions, through regular written tests and by carefully marking the workbooks. There is also oversight by subject leaders, who collate comprehensive data of pupil progress.

- Senior leaders move decisively to plug any gaps that are revealed during the assessment process. For example, when the assessment informed the school that retention for Yedioh Klolis (Jewish General Knowledge) was below par, extra monthly and termly assessments were introduced. This has had a very positive and noticeable impact on the standards for this topic.

Personal development and behaviour are exceptional

Personal development (including SMSC – spiritual, moral, social and cultural)

- The school's efforts to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are exceptional.
- Yesoiday Hatorah Girls Academy is a spiritual school. Communal prayer takes place every day, usually at the beginning of the school day, and Tefillah (prayer) is taught as a subject, so that girls gain insight into the depth and meaning of their prayers.
- The girls also join for the communal Bentching prayer that is chanted in unison after eating their lunch.
- Walking along the school corridors one encounters many wall displays depicting Jewish topics, and one hears Jewish texts being taught and learned, occasionally accompanied by a relevant song.
- The school has a sharp focus on moral conduct and the teaching of Middos Tovos (positive character traits). Many of the lessons that were inspected (across the curriculum) included discussions and/or ideas for practical application of Middos Tovos.
- Within the Kodesh curriculum all aspects of Fundamental British Values are taught, discussed and debated.
- The school has a very large library where pupils can borrow a variety of books, which increases the breadth of their exposure to Jewish culture. SEND pupils are also catered for in this fully-computerised library.
- Pupils are happy to come to school as they feel safe and cared for. There are very few unauthorised absences, and a significant number of parents commented on how happy and willing their children are to attend their Kodesh lessons.
- Pupils flourish at this school in an environment that exudes care and compassion. This particularly, but not exclusively, affects the younger pupils. For example, the inspector noted two separate occasions when senior members of staff bent right down to tie the shoelaces of young pupils.
- On another occasion a younger pupil was looking lost, but within seconds an older girl passed by who addressed her by her name and helped her find what she was seeking.
- Year Six pupils run lunchtime clubs for younger girls. This benefits both the older girls who thrive on the responsibility and the younger pupils who enjoy the extra activities.

- Older girls prop the corridor doors open as the girls file in and out to and from their breaks. This trains them to acquire the Middos Tovos of caring for others and helping them.
- The school forum is a further project that helps with the personal development of pupils. Every term, representatives of each year group are elected to participate in the school forum, which acts as a liaison group between pupils and the management of the school. Apart from teaching the pupils the fundamentals of democracy in action, the forum also creates an opportunity for pupils to develop leadership skills.
- There is a comprehensive extra-curricular programme for the pupils that includes activities in advance of special days, such as Rosh Chodesh and Yomim Tovim (festivals). These activities are not only exciting for the girls as they bring the Jewish calendar to life, but they are also themed to be relevant to their daily lives. For example, during the week-long Chanukah festival there was a different activity every day featured a different Middah that was both relevant to a deeper understanding of the Chanukah story and inspired the girls to reach ever higher levels in Middos Tovos. Feedback from parents was particularly appreciative of this point.
- The Bas Melech programme is an exceptional initiative to encourage the pupils to conduct themselves with Tznius (modesty) and refinement, as is befitting for religious young ladies. It is currently in its initial stages of development and it has the potential to be pivotal in the personal development of the girls. The school should make every effort to continue to develop this programme.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils both in the classrooms and around the school is outstanding. During lessons pupils are well-versed in the classroom routines, they feel cared for and they focus on their lessons.
- Pupils are polite and friendly to visitors. They stand respectfully when visitors enter and leave their classrooms, and they were articulate and forthcoming when meeting with the inspectors.
- In discussions with groups of pupils, there was an impressive awareness of the importance of school rules, and that rules and expectations create a safe environment for pupils. There was also a strong ethos of pupils caring for each other (Bein Odom l'Chavero).

Outcomes for pupils are exceptional

- Pupils are confident readers in all forms of Hebrew texts, including more complicated and unseen passages. This is due to relentless practice, monitoring and assessment, which ensures that high levels are achieved and maintained.
- During class discussions on a variety of topics, pupils displayed excellent retention of material they had studied previously, and they were also able to contribute well to the discussions.
- Year Six pupils were able to tackle random unseen Chumash texts with a fair degree of both confidence and ability, and Year Four pupils were able to work out selected straightforward unseen texts based on the skills they had acquired over the years.
- Knowledge and retention of Yedioh Klolis have improved since the last inspection due to the more rigorous revision and assessment programme that now takes place.
- Pupils look forward to attending school and they are thriving in an atmosphere that is challenging and engaging without being too stressful for them to cope with.
- 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.
- Pupils are proud of their efforts and achievement. This is evident in the care they take in their written work and whilst engaging in crafts and projects.
- Pupils with SEND feel strongly that they are an integral part of the school. They make excellent progress due to the variety of the provision that caters for them as individuals.

Information about this school

- Yesoiday Hatorah Girls Academy converted to become an academy school in August 2019. It is part of the Yesoiday Hatorah Multi Academy Trust, and was formerly part of the Yesoiday Hatorah School for both boys and girls. There are currently 436 pupils on roll.
- In its most recent Ofsted Section 5 inspection, during February 2024, the academy was judged to be outstanding.
- It is an Orthodox Jewish school, and in its previous Section 48 inspection for schools of a religious character, in July 2019, it was judged to be outstanding in all areas.
- 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.
- 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 7½ hours daily.
- There are 8 pupils with a statement of special educational needs. There are a further 88 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 11 pupils on the EAL (English Additional Language) register.
- The school employs a SENDco, Pastoral Lead, Personal Development (Behaviour) Lead, speech therapists, expressive therapists and a Social Skills Mentor.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors visited 22 lessons, covering all subjects and all year groups, and observed morning prayers.
- Meetings were held with four members of the governing body including its chair, the Headteacher, senior leaders, the SENDco, subject leaders, and with members of the teaching, SEND and enrichment teams.
- 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, Hebrew reading and Yedioh Klolis.
- The inspectors perused curriculum documentation, policies and newsletters, and viewed photos 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 parents and carers who expressed their opinions in response to a recent survey conducted by the school.

Inspection team

Rabbi Nessanel Lieberman

Mrs Jackie Menczer

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	Girls
Number on roll	436
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of Governors	Mr D Sinitsky
Menahel (Principal)	Rabbi Dr J Yodaiken
Academy Lead	Mrs S Gitlin
Date of previous inspection	29-30 July 2019
Telephone number	0161 773 6364
Email address	info@yhmat.org.uk