

Broughton Jewish Cassel Fox Primary School

Inspection report

LEA 355 Salford

Inspection dates 3rd-4th July 2006 Reporting inspector Mr J. Gordon Team inspector Rev M Binstock

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

Type of School School category Age range of pupils	Primary Voluntary Aided 3 - 11	School address	Legh Road Salford Manchester M7 4RT
Gender of pupils	Mixed The governing body 17 – 20 January 2000	Telephone number	0161 792 7773
Number on roll		Fax number	0161 792 7768
Appropriate authority		Chair of governors	Mr S Pine
Date of previous inspection		Headteacher	Rabbi D. Kerbel

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Introduction

Description of the school

Broughton Jewish Cassel Fox Primary School is a well established two-form entry voluntary aided Orthodox Jewish school for girls and boys aged 3-11. It is located in Broughton Park, a residential area in Salford with a high concentration of observant orthodox Jewish families from which it draws the majority of its pupils. Others also come from South Manchester and from as far afield as Leeds and Liverpool.

The school has a maintained nursery, two reception groups and the full range of infant and junior-age classes. With 344 pupils on roll overall, the current ratio of boys to girls is approximately 60% to 40%.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1 Outstanding
Grade 2 Good
Grade 3 Satisfactory
Grade 4 Unsatisfactory

Overall effectiveness of provision for Jewish education

The inspectors concur with the school's judgement that it is successful and effective in delivering a *Kodesh* curriculum of quality in accordance with its declared curricular, religious and social aims. Although there are points for development of which the school is already aware, they do not compromise the overall validity of this judgement.

- The school's main strengths are:
 - the generally good and sometimes outstanding quality of the teaching seen
 - the above-average experience and professional competence of both Heads of *Kodesh* and many of the teaching staff
 - the leadership and vision of the Headteacher who has identified the innovations that are necessary and the need to introduce them without causing friction
 - o the positive and constructive support of the Governors
 - the quality of the school environment and its concern for children's welfare.
- The school's main weaknesses are:
 - o The challenge to children in written tasks is sometimes less than the challenge they encounter in the active oral interaction between teacher and learners in normal lesson time.
 - Uniform assessment systems for Limmudei Kodesh still need further development. They should be as compatible as possible with those used for the subjects of the secular curriculum
 - o The school's statement of curricular aims for the information of parents needs to be reviewed and where necessary amplified.
- The school's capacity to improve is clearly reflected in:
 - the current re-evaluation of the school's Kodesh curriculum by the Headteacher and the two Heads of Kodesh
 - the drive to ensure uniformity of standards across the school with regard to assessment, marking of children's work and communicating with parents about pupils' performance in their Kodesh studies
 - the increasing use of the interactive white board [IWB] to enhance both learning and teaching

Grade: 1

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that marking is consistently used to guide pupils on how to improve their work
- Persist in developing and implementing the use of an uniform assessment system for evaluating all *Kodesh* learning, ensuring that the information thus gained is taken into account when planning future work
- Exploit every opportunity for linking the knowledge and concepts acquired by children in their *Kodesh* studies with those met in the secular subjects they study
- Increase existing opportunities for children to become independent learners by ensuring that they continue to develop the skill of finding and extracting relevant information from sources other than a worksheet.

Achievement and standards

Most pupils in the school want to achieve well and most do make good progress as they advance through the school. Children with learning difficulties are helped to achieve their potential.

Standards of Hebrew reading are good overall and in many cases children read with outstanding fluency and accuracy. Script writing is introduced in Year 2; most pupils gain competence in this skill so that, by Key Stage 2, they are able to write in cursive script with confidence.

In most oral lessons on *Chumash, Mishnah* and *Gemoro* seen the pupils were set challenging targets and were for the most part able to meet them. For example, in a Year 2 lesson, they correctly answered questions about the *Poroh Adumoh* (Red Heifer) and in a year 5 lesson, girls demonstrated their ability to tackle a complicated *Rashi*. Other examples of such challenging work were observed during the study of *Mishnah* in Year 3 classes and also in a Year 3 girls' *Chumash* class.

Some of the written tasks set, however, do not always present the same level of challenge to the pupils and it is in the written work set that the degree of challenge needs to be improved.

Grade: 1

Personal development and well-being

The school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is outstanding and in harmony with the ethos and values of the community it serves. Provision for furthering children's cultural horizons is improving and developing along positive lines. Opportunities are given to the school's small number of *Sefardii* pupils to tell others about their *minhogim* (customs), for example concerning the food that *Sefardim* may eat on *Pesach*. The school is also forging links in the wider community

so that pupils learn about other faith traditions and cultures and appreciate the value of tolerance.

Evidence from lesson observation, informal discussions with pupils and feedback from parents confirms that most children have very positive attitudes towards their school and teachers and enjoy their Jewish studies.

The views of pupils are taken seriously. Issues can be raised by them through the effective school council and this provides children with a practical example of citizenship in action. As an example, the condition of the playground was improved as a direct result of proposals made by the school council.

Pupils understand the importance of adopting a healthy lifestyle and the school provides many opportunities for them to do so. A variety of healthy foods are available at lunchtime and pupils are encouraged to make appropriate choices.

Pupils' behaviour in classrooms and around the school is generally very good. They display an impressive degree of *derech eretz* (politeness and courtesy) towards visitors, teachers and peers. Pupils contribute to the Jewish and wider communities in a variety of ways. There are links with local Jewish homes for the aged whose residents the school choir often entertains. Children are encouraged to practise the *mitzvah* of *Tzedokoh* (charity) by collecting money not only for Jewish charities but also for good causes and disaster relief in the wider world.

Grade: 1

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Almost without exception the quality of teaching seen was at least good and in some cases outstanding. No lessons seen were less than satisfactory. Teachers are very secure in their Jewish knowledge and they are exemplary role models. Their commitment to developing their pupils' Jewish knowledge and *middos* ensures that lessons are never less than engaging and, in many cases, stimulating and spiritually inspiring.

Many teachers make sound use of up-to-date classroom technology so that Jewish topics are presented in an acceptably modern, attractive and sophisticated way so as to enrich children's learning experience. Others, however, would benefit from targeted training so that they learn to use with confidence the interactive white boards already installed in the classrooms.

Although there are individual exceptions, almost all the children work well and learn with enjoyment. Differentiation is achieved largely by setting pupils in small ability groups. However, in a lesson environment where a didactic approach and directed teaching frequently predominate, there is a danger that independent learning skills are not always being allowed to develop and opportunities for children to learn to seek out information for themselves are being minimised.

Grade: 1

Curriculum and other activities

The present *Kodesh* curriculum was written for the school some seven years ago by a respected educational consultant. It certainly provides sufficient depth for children's learning needs. More breadth could be achieved, especially but not only at Key Stage 2, by seeking further opportunities for making cross-curricular connections between the knowledge and concepts learnt in *Kodesh* studies and those met in secular subjects. With imaginative planning this should not make excessive new demands on teaching time.

After having used this curriculum with success, the school is now evaluating how valuable the various component elements are. Senior management is aware of the extent to which the balance between these components may need to be varied and where innovation and change will help the school to respond better to perceived needs.

Grade: 1

Care, guidance and support

Care arrangements within the school throughout the day are effective and proactive; the sympathetic concern of both teaching and non-teaching staff for the welfare of the children is very evident at all times. The strong family atmosphere and the fact that many pupils have siblings in the school is reassuring for more vulnerable children.

The school complies fully with the statutory requirements of the relevant Education Acts by providing daily acts of collective worship (davening) for all pupils. This enables pupils actively to apply the devotional skills they acquire at school, at home and in synagogue. The teachers leading prayer assemblies constantly stress the importance of davening with *kavonoh* (devotion) and the sincere desire to fulfil the will of *Hashem* (the Almighty). The manner in which collective worship is conducted in school assemblies and before and after meals is a strength of the school and admirably reflects its Jewish ethos and values.

Grade: 1

Leadership and management

The quality of leadership and management is outstanding and has improved even further since the previous inspection.

The present Headteacher has been in post for two years and is highly regarded by Governors, staff and parents. He is actively involved in directing and developing the curricular policies and practices of the *Kodesh* department. As a result of the "Great Vision" survey of the views of parents, pupils and other stakeholders, he has formed a clear view of how the school needs to go forward and has identified the key areas where change and development are necessary.

The Governing Body is supportive of the Headteacher's vision and the way he is implementing school policies for *Kodesh* studies. They wisely delegate sufficient responsibility and powers of discretion to him whilst exercising, in the best sense of the word, their own powers of oversight of provision.

There are separate Heads of *Kodesh* for both Foundation Stage/Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, their posts being regarded as part of senior management rather than of middle management status. This reflects the importance of the role that the *Kodesh* curriculum plays in the whole provision of the school. They and the Headteacher provide confident, experienced and capable leadership for the whole *Kodesh* teaching team.

The continuing professional development of the *Kodesh* teachers is supported by the school. INSET sessions are organised - some for the whole staff and some specifically targeted – in after-school 'twilight' sessions and at other designated times. Induction arrangements for new teachers are in place and are given serious attention.

Grade: 1