

1. INTRODUCTION

1.0 The Inspection

This inspection was carried out under Section 23 of the Education (Schools) Act 1996. The purpose of the inspection was to report on:

- the educational standards achieved in Jewish Studies (*Limmudei Kodesh*) in the school
- the quality of Jewish education provided
- the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils and the school
- the arrangements for collective worship

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

1.1 Basic Information about the School

Name of School:	Bury and Whitefield Jewish Primary School
Type of School:	Voluntary Aided Mixed
Age Range of Pupils	3 -11
Headteacher	Miss C.S.Potter M.A.(Cantab) P.G.C.E.
Address of School	Parr Lane, Unsworth, BURY, BL9 8JT
Telephone no	0161-766 2888
Fax: no	0161-766 2888
E-mail address	bandwjps@ukonline.co.uk
Chair of Governors	Rabbi A. Jaffe
Head of Jewish Studies & Hebrew Department	Mr Ben-Zion Lewis
Name of Religious Adviser	<i>Va'ad Hachinuch</i>
Name of Foundation Body	The Spear Trust
Address of Foundation Body	26 Old Hall Road, SALFORD M7 4JH
Local Education Authority	Metropolitan Borough of Bury
Reporting Inspector	Mr John Gordon
Team Inspector	Mrs Loretta Harstein
Dates of Inspection	06-07 November 2001 20-21 Cheshvan 5762
Date of previous Section 23 inspection	05-06 November 1997 05-06 Cheshvan 5758

The School, its Catchment Area and Pupil Intake

Bury and Whitefield Jewish Primary School is a one-form entry voluntary aided Orthodox Jewish primary school situated in the Metropolitan Borough of Bury on the northern periphery of the Greater Manchester area. The Spear Trust is the sponsoring denominational foundation body and the school accepts the halachic authority of the Manchester Beth Din in matters of admission policy and

school ethos. The school, which occupies the premises of the former St George's Primary School, Unsworth, opened in September 1984 and was granted voluntary-aided status in 1987. It draws the bulk of its intake from the Jewish communities living in private residential housing in the Bury, Whitefield and Prestwich areas. The majority of the pupils live within one to two miles of the school. The maximum annual intake of the school is 35 pupils. There is a nursery class offering 25 full-time equivalent designated places, a reception class and, in Key Stage 1, one Year 1 and one Year 2 class; there is also one class in each of the four years of Key Stage 2.

1.2 School Data and Indicators

Pupils: The total number of pupils on roll at the time of the inspection was 194 (93 boys and 101 girls) so that there is an acceptable gender balance overall. The balance of genders in individual classes, however, varies.

Class ->	Nursery	Reception	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Total
Boys	11	11	8	10	9	12	12	20	93
Girls	12	10	16	20	2	13	15	13	101
Number on Roll	23	21	24	30	11	25	27	33	194

Special Educational Needs : There are 24 pupils with Special Educational Needs, all of whom have Individual Education Plans and eight of whom need the involvement of outside specialists. Only one child has a Statement of Special Educational Need. In none of these cases is the special need identified specifically related to Jewish Studies alone.

Free School Meals : Approximately 1% of pupils are eligible for free school meals.

Teaching Staff: At the time of the inspection the school had 11 teachers including the Headteacher and the Head of Jewish Studies/Religious Education. Of these nine are full-time and two part-time, representing a full-time equivalent of 9.7 teaching staff. In addition there are five other teachers of Jewish Studies of whom two are full-time and three part-time, the full-time equivalent being 4.5 teachers.

Class sizes: Jewish Studies and Hebrew are normally taught in whole class groups averaging 24 pupils in size though, from the Reception class upwards, pupils are heard reading Hebrew individually.

Teaching Time per week:

Stage	Hebrew and Jewish Studies
Foundation Stage	
Nursery	approximately 5 hours
Reception	6h 55mins
Key Stage 1	6h 55mins
Key Stage 2	7h 30mins

Destinations of Year 6 leavers: Many pupils of the school transfer to King David High School, Manchester for their secular secondary education since it offers opportunities for continuing Jewish education. Other pupils go on to Manchester Grammar School, Bury Boys or Bury Girls Grammar School, and Manchester High School, Withington.

1.3 Record of the Evidence Base of the Inspection

The inspection was carried out by a team of two inspectors over two days on Tuesday 6th and Wednesday 7th November 2001, corresponding to 20-21 Cheshvan 5762. The Section 10 inspection of the school by a team of OFSTED inspectors took place concurrently on these dates.

During the present inspection, observation was undertaken in 20 separate lessons, amounting to 13 hours of timetabled teaching, as follows:

Class	Nursery	Reception	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Other	Total
Lessons seen	1	2	2	4	3	3	1	3	1	20

Of these, one was a whole main school Hebrew singing lesson and one was a lesson in a subject of the secular curriculum into which a Jewish theme was integrated. Samples of children's written work and practical work were carefully scrutinised. Though some reading of Hebrew by children in the younger classes was heard, lack of available time during the inspection made it impossible to hear a representative sample across the full range of classes.

Collective worship (*Tefillah*) was seen in five separate assemblies, and the movement of children about the school and in the playground was carefully observed. In addition, children were spoken to at appropriate moments during lessons and, more informally, during lunchtime in the school hall.

During the inspection, discussions also took place with:

- **the Chairman and certain members of the Governing Body** concerning the general progress of the schools and matters relating to staffing and aspects of policy as they affect the Jewish Studies curriculum
- **the Headteacher** concerning the organization and management of the school; staff development; meeting children's special educational needs in Jewish Studies and other issues
- **the Head of Jewish Studies** concerning the development of Hebrew and Jewish Studies teaching; curriculum development and resources for learning and teaching; the use of the school's computers and educational software for Hebrew and Jewish Studies; Assessment, Marking, Recording and Reporting children's progress in Hebrew and Jewish Studies; the development of school library provision for Jewish Studies
- **the Early Years' Co-ordinator** concerning Hebrew and Jewish Studies in the Nursery
- **other members of staff** including Jewish Studies class teachers, classroom assistants and non-teaching staff.

School policy documents, the school development plan and other information about the organisation and management of the school, as well as budget figures as they affected the provision of Jewish Studies and Hebrew teaching were all examined both prior to and during the inspection. Parents' written responses to questionnaires on Jewish Studies and Hebrew teaching in the school were collected, scrutinised and considered. Prior to the inspection, there was also a consultation meeting of parents with the Reporting Inspector.

2 SUMMARY

2.1 Main Findings

1. The commitment of the Headteacher and the Head of Jewish Studies and their colleagues to the ethos and curricular goals of the school is very good and is a major strength of the school. Their care and concern for the educational, religious and physical welfare of their pupils is very evident at all times.
2. Throughout the school there is a strong emphasis on the *middot* which uphold moral values and behaviour, stressing both their Jewish and universal character. In this the staff are excellent role models for the children.
3. The quality of most of the Jewish Studies teaching observed is good and the standards achieved by the majority of pupils are sound when judged against the school's expectations. Children's progress and achievement in most Jewish Studies lessons seen were sound when judged by the school's expectations and, in a third of the lessons seen, were good or very good.
4. A good adult/pupil ratio in Foundation Stage (Nursery and Reception) and Key Stage 1 (Infant) classes ensures that pupils needing special help receive some support in Jewish Studies lessons. Arrangements for dealing with special needs in Key Stage 2 are not yet satisfactory. A special needs coordinator in Jewish Studies is required to improve the organization and management of effective help and support at all stages.
5. Throughout the school pupils' attitudes and responses to their Jewish Studies and the religious life of the school are good and positive.
6. Leadership of the Jewish Studies team is good and recognises the need to review, revise and improve existing work schemes, documentation and procedures so as to bring them in line with best practice.
7. The level of Jewish knowledge of the current teaching staff of the department is good and fully meets the demands of the curriculum they have to teach. The teachers are hardworking and sincerely devoted to their task.
8. The recently appointed Jewish Studies teachers have some gaps in their general professional skills which do not appear to have been fully addressed during their initial training before they joined the school.
9. This is particularly noticeable with regard to standards of marking and assessment of children's written work. Much of the work seen in exercise books was self-marked by the children. Insufficient attention is paid to the marking of children's written work by teachers. Written feedback to prevent error reinforcement and to ensure improvement by the pupils is not adequate.
10. Classroom monitoring of the quality of new teachers' lessons and of the methods they use is not yet satisfactory. The non-contact time of the Head of Jewish Studies is not yet sufficiently used for this important aspect of his duties.
11. With regard to acquisition of Hebrew reading skills, further refinement and development of present procedures and techniques for the assessment of both children's progress and difficulties is required. This would facilitate improvement in individual target setting for children experiencing difficulties.

12. Present approaches to practising of Hebrew reading by pupils should be kept under critical review. Reliance on the transliteration into English letters of Hebrew phrases, texts and names must be reduced to the absolute minimum in school-produced reading material since this ultimately delays children in developing confidence in their ability to sight-read Hebrew fluently and spell it accurately.

13. The school complies fully with the requirements of the Education Reform Act 1988 regarding daily acts of collective worship and the school's daily assemblies and collective worship are of sound quality.

2.2 Key Issues

1. Provision for dealing with special needs in Jewish Studies is uneven. A special needs co-ordinator for Jewish Studies needs to be nominated.

2. Procedures for identifying and noting the specific difficulties of pupils with problems in learning to read Hebrew and techniques for measuring their progress are not yet sufficiently developed.

3. Standards of assessment and of marking children's written work in Jewish Studies are not yet satisfactory and a high priority should be given to the further training of staff on these matters.

4. The teachers in the Jewish Studies department have in-service training needs which need to be actively addressed to improve their professional skills. The weekly timetabled departmental planning meeting can provide an opportunity for teachers attending in-service training courses to feed back the new information acquired to their departmental colleagues.

3. STANDARDS IN JEWISH EDUCATION

3.1 Achievement and Progress in Jewish Studies

3.1.1 The standards achieved by pupils in Jewish Studies are in the main satisfactory when judged against the school's expectations. In the school's own estimation, standards have improved since the last inspection. The evidence of the present inspection does not indicate that they have got worse. Oral response by pupils was generally of a good standard and most were able to express themselves quite fluently when answering questions from the teacher.

3.1.2 Overall progress by pupils in ten of the lessons seen was satisfactory. In two other lessons progress was good and in four other lessons very good. In only two of the lessons seen was pupils' progress unsatisfactory. In a few of the lessons observed, however, little if any new knowledge seemed to have been imparted.

3.1.3 School documentation stresses the importance of reading as the key to progress in all areas. In the Reception and Infant classes teaching children the *Alef-Bet*, the Hebrew vowels and how to decode and pronounce simple words printed in Hebrew block letters was satisfactory.

3.1.4 Though the school's Jewish Studies curriculum provides for it, no reading from continuous texts in Hebrew was heard during any of the lessons observed during the inspection. At best, children were asked to read isolated Hebrew names, words or very short phrases that the teacher had written up in Hebrew block letters on the board.

3.1.5 In the limited time available during the present inspection, it was difficult to judge whether there had been any overall improvement in standards of Hebrew reading by pupils compared to the findings of the last inspection report. The major opportunities for children to read continuous Hebrew text material occurred mainly during *Tefillah* in the various school assemblies. Here the Junior and older Infant children had their *siddurim* open at the relevant pages but it could not always be said with certainty that they were actually reading the text of the prayers. Much was really choral recitation of the *tefillot* which the children had already learnt by heart or were in the process of doing.

3.1.6 The reading performance of pupils up to Year 5 (Junior 3) is monitored by a teacher who withdraws them from Jewish Studies lessons to hear them read and help them improve their reading performance. Although the school's Jewish Studies policy document states that the diagnostic features of the specific problems of each individual pupil should be recorded, this was not yet being done satisfactorily in the detail required in each child's Home-School Record book. Lower achieving pupils in all Key Stage 2 (Junior) classes would benefit from regular help of this kind in further developing their Hebrew reading skills as they approach the stage of transfer to secondary school. A limited amount of work of this kind with Year 6 (Junior 4) pupils is sometimes undertaken when young students in training are in the school.

3.1.7 The standard of Hebrew handwriting seen was generally very good and this is a strength of the school. Though some excellent examples of Jewish Studies writing in English were on display in the school hall, scrutiny of a representative sample of children's exercise books showed that there was a high dependency on work copied from the board and on photocopied material supplied by the teacher and pasted into the exercise book by the pupil. There was little evidence for children's own creative writing and the development of their personal research skills in Jewish Studies.

3.2 Pupils' Attitudes, Behaviour and Response to Jewish Studies

3.2.1 Pupils' attitudes towards their Jewish Studies are generally good and positive and they accept the religious and social values which they are taught as part of the natural order of things.

3.2.2 Almost all the children showed an active interest in the content of their Jewish Studies lessons. They responded keenly to the teachers' questions during oral work in class and to participate in role-playing in simple dramatisations of stories from the *Parashah* of the week or elsewhere in the *Chumash*.

3.3 Collective Worship - *Tefillah*

3.3.1 Children's standards of behaviour during *Tefillah* in assemblies are very good and a credit to the school. They enter and leave the school hall silently to the sound of well chosen recorded music and during *Tefillah* they display the kind of respectfulness and willingness to participate actively, commensurate with their age and ability, which one hopes to find in all school prayer assemblies. All the boys wear *kippot* and most also wear *tzizit*.

Provision

3.3.2 The school complies with the requirements of the 1988 Education Reform Act by providing daily opportunities for collective worship. All classes begin the day with morning prayers (*Shacharit*) and an assembly. There is a full school assembly on Mondays and during the rest of the week there are prayers selected to match the age of the children. These are held either in their own classroom or in the hall. *Minchah* (afternoon prayers) is not said by any of the classes. During the weekly reading from the *Sefer Torah* on Thursdays, boys - who are at the pre-Bar Mitzvah stage - are called up for *aliyot* and for *Hagbah* and *Gelilah* to familiarise them with normal practice in the synagogue. *Kaballat Shabbat* assemblies are held for Nursery, Reception, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 classes.

3.3.3 Grace after meals (*Bensching / Birkat Mazon*) is recited by all the pupils after the lunchtime break immediately prior to afternoon lessons. The pupils have *siddurim* or cards to follow the text, but tend to recite the words by heart and do so far too quickly. In one class seen the teacher did not participate actively or monitor and regulate this activity.

3.3.4 At each assembly observed, the teachers who led the pupils in prayer were excellent role models, explaining the background or special significance of each section as appropriate. They encouraged the children with their enthusiasm and rewarded them with house points and commendations for concentration, participation or good behaviour. However, some of the secular teachers who sit at the sides of the hall are not able to participate actively in the davening and singing. They act in a supportive role in maintaining good behaviour during *tefillah*.

Planning

3.3.5 The school's *Collective Worship and Assembly* policy states that the daily worship is modified and progressively increased taking account of the age and ability of classes. Although this was seen to be successfully implemented in the various assemblies observed, the existing document does not clearly state in detail what is expected from each year group.

3.3.6 The whole school singing lesson observed, in addition to being thoroughly enjoyed by the pupils, was an excellent way of teaching the *tefillot*.

3.3.7 Assemblies are at present almost totally teacher-led although the Thursday Junior assembly provides limited opportunities for boys to act as *chazan* and children are sometimes called to the front to read short prayer extracts or *berachot* during other assemblies.

Content

3.3.8 The prayer content in all morning assemblies follows the pattern found in the *siddur* in use in the school. The vast majority of pupils join in actively, either following in their *siddurim* or reciting the prayers by heart.

3.3.9 Prayers are usually followed by general school news and announcements about the achievements of individuals or groups of children. Every opportunity is taken by the teacher leading the assembly to point out the moral message or *middah tovah* that these achievements represent.

4. QUALITY OF JEWISH EDUCATION

4.1 Quality and range of the curriculum

4.1.1 The Jewish Studies curriculum has a firm philosophical basis. The main areas of knowledge, topics and skills covered are well chosen to encourage childrens' spiritual and cultural development so that they can view the world from an orthodox Jewish perspective and cherish their Jewish faith and heritage. The curriculum provides a good foundation on which children can continue their Jewish education after they leave the school

4.1.2 The present policy for teaching Hebrew throughout the school places the emphasis firmly on Hebrew as the language of worship, prayer and study of sacred texts. Modern colloquial Hebrew (*Ivrit*) is only introduced in the Summer Term for Year 6 (Junior 4) pupils, many of whom hope to transfer to King David High School for their secondary education. Some parents feel strongly that the teaching of *Ivrit* should begin much earlier on and that, by not doing so, the school puts children at a disadvantage in comparison with pupils in other Jewish primary schools where this is the practice.

4.1.3 Satisfactory schemes of work for Jewish Studies for both the Foundation Stage (Nursery and Reception classes) and Key Stage 1 (infant classes) and Key Stage 2 (junior classes) are in place and these indicate a general awareness of the need for differentiation (meeting the needs of children with varying levels of ability) and progression in dealing with topics which recur from year to year.

4.1.4 The school's *Jewish Studies Curriculum Policy* document contains lists of main learning targets for each year group with regard to the major festivals. There are generally from three to six targets for each festival, rising to nine targets for the older junior pupils in their study of *Pesach* and *Shavuot*. As yet, the concept of defining levels of attainment to facilitate assessment has not been introduced. With regard to the remaining Jewish Studies subject areas, the school has yet to draw up fully defined attainment targets containing summary descriptions of the basic knowledge and skills that it expects children to acquire, together with clear definitions of levels of attainment for use in assessment of children's learning performance and progress in each area.

4.1.5 The school has a *Curriculum Integration Policy* document which deals with how to achieve meaningful cross-curricular links between work done in certain aspects of the Jewish Studies and the subjects of the secular curriculum of the school. The greater part of the document is devoted to suggesting ways of how techniques from other subjects can be used to enhance work in Jewish Studies and how the objectives of the main National Curriculum subjects can be realised during the teaching of Jewish Studies. Some examples of this kind of cross-curricular integration were seen during the inspection. These included a good lesson in which the Year 4 (Junior 2) class was learning and practising the mechanics of using the Hebrew numbering system. By the end of the lesson many of the children were able not only to write numbers correctly but also do simple addition and subtraction sums with two-digit numbers using the Hebrew notation.

4.1.6 The Jewish Studies curriculum is delivered not only through lessons specifically designated for the purpose but also through other successful school activities. These help children to become aware of their own place in the wider Jewish and general communities and their personal responsibilities towards them. The key Jewish value of charity is encouraged through regular daily collection for good causes and by the children maintaining a regular and lively contact with the residents of the Heathlands Jewish Retirement Home. There are visits to local orthodox synagogues. Many other informal extra-curricular activities add interest and enjoyment to the Jewish Studies curriculum.

4.2 Teaching

4.2.1 All the teachers in the Jewish Studies department were observed with their classes during the inspection. In nine of the twenty lessons seen the quality of teaching was sound; in six it was good and in three other lessons very good. All these lessons were successful when judged against the school's expectations. In these lessons the teaching approach was appropriate to the age and developmental stage of the children. Lesson objectives were carefully explained to children who were still at the pre-reading stage. In classes where pupils were capable of reading English, lesson objectives were carefully and clearly written on the board so that the children could see what their tasks consisted of and adequate time was allowed for the task to be completed.

4.2.2 In the two lessons seen where the teaching was unsatisfactory, this was due to inappropriate time-management or to the fact that the task or activity chosen was unsuited to the time of day when young children were already tired and restless and thus less able to sustain concentration.

4.2.3 In some lessons the work seen was very much teacher-led, leaving the children only minimal scope for originality but, otherwise, lesson objectives and content were generally appropriate. Children are regularly encouraged and praised for good work and frequent use is made of reward systems to motivate pupils.

4.2.4 In teacher-produced work sheets and lesson units where the bulk of the text is in English, the overall tendency is to represent Hebrew names and phrases by transliterations in English letters rather than in the original Hebrew. This was also the case in the whole-school Hebrew singing practice observed during the inspection where the texts projected onto the screen for the children to read and sing were in their transliterated versions.

4.2.5 This practice serves only to increase the children's dependence on transliterations for far longer than should be the case. It delays their acquiring confidence in their ability to sight-read new Hebrew names and text fluently and spell Hebrew accurately. There is no consistent policy of including as much Hebrew in the original block letters as possible in school-produced teaching material. As the teachers become increasingly familiar with the use of Hebrew word-processing programs, there should be fewer practical problems in so doing.

4.2.6 Lesson planning procedures in Jewish Studies have now been brought into line with those for the secular curriculum and the quality of individual lesson plans seen was good. The Jewish Studies team meets once a week to focus on short and medium term planning and to discuss issues relating to individual pupils. For the most part they show an awareness of the need for progression and differentiation of objectives to meet the needs of pupils with varying abilities. Implementation of these plans in the lessons seen was generally sound.

4.2.7 Methods of lesson presentation seen tended to be restricted to the use of blackboard and chalk or whiteboard and pen and insufficient or no use is made of colour. The Head of Jewish Studies used a simple self-made coloured map of Eretz Yisrael in a lesson on the Sedra *Chayye Sarah* but otherwise the use of suitable maps - so essential for clarifying the detail of the lives and wanderings of the Patriarchs described in the *Chumash* - was generally lacking.

4.2.8 Insufficient use is made of the overhead projector and then only for projecting prepared written notes. The potential of this available piece of equipment for adding visual interest to lesson material is not being used and this is another area in which all the Jewish Studies teachers require in-service training. Similarly, although good use is made of recorded music at the beginning and end of school assemblies, very little use of audio-cassette players was seen in the classroom except by one teacher.

4.2.9 A small amount of homework is given to the pupils each week. The standard of marking in the samples seen was unsatisfactory. Some written homework was not marked at all and certainly not by the teachers. The marking seen made no useful comments and was therefore not helpful to the pupils. In-Service Training in this area is required.

4.3 Assessment, Reporting, Recording

4.3.1 This area is one of the weaknesses in the department that was highlighted at the last inspection report. The Head of Jewish Studies has plans to implement more robust assessment, reporting, and recording procedures in the future. Satisfactory and better informed planning for each child's Jewish educational progress depends on adequate time being given to developing and evaluating these procedures fully before implementation.

4.3.2 Some evidence of written testing was seen but there is no policy on written testing in Jewish Studies across the school. Teachers keep record books with the pupils' test marks but there is no record of comments or remarks that would give a more informed picture of the pupil's progress and attainment and facilitate educational continuity. Neither are other written records of any continuous assessment kept. Such records are essential to form the basis of pupil files, to inform future planning of lessons by identifying pupil needs and generally to promote pupil progress in Jewish Studies. Staff in-service training in assessment and recording techniques are not being given sufficient priority at present.

4.3.3 Summative written reports are sent to parents at the end of each school year. Very few file copies of reports were available for scrutiny. Those seen were computerised yet spelling or typing errors were found and in many cases teachers had filled in only about a quarter of the report pro forma. At present insufficient opportunity is given to Jewish Studies staff to participate in in-service training in report writing and the Head of Jewish Studies must ensure that each report sent to parents is comprehensive, informative and fully completed.

4.4 Pupils' Spiritual Moral, Social and Cultural Development

4.4.1 Since the last inspection the school has continued to foster the spiritual and moral development of its pupils based on traditional Jewish values. Pupils show due respect and concern for each other, for the belongings of others and school property. The school building is kept tidy and there is a notable absence of litter.

4.4.2 It is clear that all the staff of the school, both teaching and non-teaching, are in sympathy with the school's Jewish ethos and are excellent role models for the children. They take every opportunity that arises in the lessons and around the school building to encourage good *middot* (moral qualities and behaviour) in the children and to promote their moral development.

4.4.3 Jewish Studies wall displays in classrooms, whilst of a good standard from a presentational point of view, were sometimes lacking in topicality and imagination from the point of view of content. Virtually all were just two dimensional and represented rather a low percentage of the total wall display. More satisfactory use is made of the wall and display space in the hall but there is some wall space not yet in use in the school corridors which could be used for displays to promote themes such as 'kindness' and 'charity' (*chesed ve-tzedek*) and underpin the spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development of the pupils.

4.5 Equality of Opportunity

4.5.1 All pupils have equal access to the curriculum. Expectations of both boys and girls are equally high. Boys and girls are helped to feel valued by being given opportunities to explore their respective religious roles and duties as prescribed by *halachah* (religious law) and orthodox Jewish custom. The staff are particularly sensitive to the differences in the cultural background of pupils' families.

4.5.2 Provision is made for the support of statemented children and although help is available for those pupils who have learning difficulties in Jewish Studies, a more rigorous management of this issue is required.

4.6 Provision for Pupils' Support, Guidance and Welfare.

4.6.1 At this stage in its development the size of the school roll is small enough to make it possible for each individual pupil to be known personally by the Headteacher and Head of Jewish Studies. There are satisfactory procedures for passing on information and records between staff as children move up through the school to new classes.

4.6.2 Since children have mid-morning milk and supervised school midday lunches, the school is able to ensure the *kashrut* (conformity to Jewish dietary laws) of the food that children consume during the school day. The Head of Jewish Studies also acts as the school's *mashgiach* (supervisor of *kashrut*). During lunchtime supervision the Headteacher, Head of Jewish Studies and other duty staff maintain a discreet but positive check to ensure that all children have an adequate meal and that any special dietary requirements are met.

4.6.3 Since there is a prescribed school uniform for all pupils, few problems normally arise from the point of view of Jewish observance in matters of dress. However, during the inspection it was noticed that some of the girls' skirts, particularly in year 5 and 6, no longer conformed to school regulations about length. This was particularly noticeable during assemblies when the children sit on the floor and is not in keeping with the nature or spirit of the *tefillot*. The school is well aware of the problem, the solution to which lies in the cooperation of all parents in implementing the school's policy of maintaining modesty in dress. All staff of the school certainly set excellent standards with regard to appropriateness and modesty in dress.

4.7 Special Education Needs

4.7.1 There is a weakness in the management of Special Needs because the school has not designated a member of staff to be responsible for the management of Jewish Studies Special Needs. This person should consult with the secular Special Education Needs Co-ordinator, ensure that appropriate files and records are kept, attend outside agency meetings where appropriate, attend relevant courses and disseminate the necessary knowledge and information gained through in-service training to other Jewish Studies staff.

4.7.2 When the Jewish Studies teachers need advice and guidance in the teaching of children with special needs they do not have access to a colleague trained in Special Education. None of the present teachers have had in-service training in this area nor are they sent on courses in Special Education. This is a weakness in the Jewish Studies department.

4.7.3 Neither the *Jewish Studies Policy* nor the *Collective Worship and Assembly Policy* documents of the school specifically address the issue of children with special needs. Individual Education Plans make no mention of Jewish Studies. Throughout the school the Jewish Studies class teachers do not keep or contribute to any written records about Special Education Needs pupils. This is a shortcoming because, where at all possible, the department does try to provide help for many of these children. The provision is patchy and is better in the lower half of the school than the upper part where far less support is available. Where possible in the lower half of the school, classes are divided by ability into two sections for teaching.

4.8 Partnership with the Parents and the Jewish Community

4.8.1 Parents' views of the school and the Jewish education it offers are, in the main, good and supportive and many parents have a strong sense of ownership of the school. A minority of parents, however, have concerns about the position of the teaching of *Ivrit* in the curriculum. Their concerns about how much is taught about modern Israel within the Jewish Studies curriculum also show that they are not all sufficiently aware that the school's policy is to integrate this work into modules of the secular curriculum.

4.8.2 The school works hard to maintain a partnership with parents and has established effective links for communicating to them school expectations and information about school events and procedures through letters and circulars from the Headteacher and Governors. The quality of documentation and communications sent to parents is good. An illustrated information booklet of good quality is sent to all parents at the beginning of each school year. This gives concise details on most of the matters of concern to them and also contains an outline of its Jewish Studies curriculum. During the Autumn and Spring Terms there are evenings for parents to meet teachers to discuss their children's progress and a written report is sent to parents at the end of each school year.

4.8.3 In addition there are many other opportunities for parents to approach the school. Many parents bringing their children into the school in the morning and collecting them at the end of school use these opportunities for a brief informal discussion about their children with the Headteacher and other members of staff including the Head of Jewish Studies.

4.8.4 Parents are encouraged to help their children in learning to read Hebrew and the school has in the past run a short beginners'/refresher course in Hebrew reading skills for those parents needing it to support their children with their reading homework. In this connection the school's use of Hebrew Reading Record notebooks enables parents to see teachers' comments and to respond if they so wish.

4.8.5 All parents have opportunities to contribute to the Jewish life of the school through their automatic membership of the Parents' Guild and its fundraising and other support activities. They have opportunities to attend 'open house' assemblies, *Kabbalat Shabbat* assemblies, whole-school and class celebrations for major Jewish festivals and the demonstration Seder held to prepare children for celebrating the Passover festival. There is a good level of family attendance and support for these occasions which also provide further informal opportunities for two-way consultation and reporting to take place.

4.8.6 The school has developed a number of ways of interacting with the wider community. During the year the children of the school have visited local orthodox synagogues and the Rabbis of the surrounding Jewish communities serve on the *Va'ad Hachinuch* (Jewish Education Committee) of the Governing Body and regularly involve themselves with the school. Bury and Whitefield pupils have entertained the residents of the Heathlands Retirement Home for the Jewish elderly, many of whom are brought in to visit the school; they have also entertained children with learning difficulties from other schools.

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

5.1 Management

5.1.1 The school's vision of the Jewish education it provides is clearly set out in a policy statement which lists the aims and principles underlying its Jewish Studies curriculum. The delivery of this curriculum is sound and effective and is undertaken by the Head of Jewish Studies and his colleagues in consultation with the *Va'ad Hachinuch* (Jewish Education Committee).

5.1.2 Since the last inspection satisfactory progress has been made in improving the quality of curriculum policy documents and schemes of work so as to bring them in line with the standards required for the secular curriculum.

5.1.3 The leadership provided by the Head of Jewish Studies to his young and relatively inexperienced team of Jewish Studies teaching colleagues is good. Good use is made of the timetabled weekly departmental staff meeting for reviewing objectives and for short and medium-term planning purposes.

5.2 Staffing, Resources for Learning and Accommodation

Staffing

5.2.1 At the time of the present inspection there were a sufficient number of teachers in post to deliver the Jewish Studies curriculum in all the classes in the main school and in the newly opened designated nursery class. Turnover among the young members of staff during the past year has had an effect on continuity, stability and quality in Jewish Studies provision. This is an ongoing concern for many parents which is shared by the Headteacher and Governors. The element of continuity in the staffing is provided by the present Head of Jewish Studies who has been in post at the school for many years.

5.2.2 The school thus has the recurrent task of familiarising each newly appointed replacement teacher with the requirements of the school's Jewish Studies curriculum and arrangements. The regular timetabled weekly departmental staff meeting provides one opportunity for this to take place. A noticeable weakness in present induction arrangements, however, is that there is no classroom observation and monitoring by the Head of Jewish Studies of the quality of the new teachers' lessons or of the methods they are using.

5.2.3 As in many other provincial Jewish schools, teachers at Bury and Whitefield feel their remoteness from the major centres of Jewish Studies curriculum development and in-service training opportunities. There is no organised local programme to meet this need adequately.

5.2.4 In addition, it is clear that the newly appointed Jewish Studies teachers need further in-service training in essential areas of basic professional practice which have not been satisfactorily covered during their initial training. These include proper methods of assessment and recording of children's performance, marking of children's work, error analysis and the prevention of error reinforcement, as well as reporting and report-writing skills. The school has yet to make satisfactory arrangements to meet these training needs.

Resources for Learning

5.2.5 Present resources for the effective delivery of the Jewish Studies curriculum are adequate for the purpose. The main printed book resources seen in use for Jewish Studies were *siddurim* and materials from the two Hebrew reading schemes in use in the school. Provision of these for all pupils was satisfactory.

5.2.6 Quite apart from the learning resources and reference books kept in each classroom, there is a small central stock of story and reference books in English for Jewish Studies which occupy one shelf in the school library. These are available for borrowing by the children. Lack of shelf space, however, makes it difficult for these to be added to or satisfactorily displayed to best advantage for the children.

5.2.7 In the Jewish Studies teaching staff base there are sample copies of course books and other teaching materials which are available for reference purposes by the staff when developing their own teaching materials and worksheets. A start in cataloguing these and other teaching materials already in use has recently been made by means of a simple card-index system.

5.2.8 In addition to the computers in the specialist ICT room, one or two desk-top machines are available in the class bases and resource areas but these were not seen in use for work in Jewish Studies during the inspection. Another such workstation is available in the library area where individual Hebrew reading development work takes place. Both a laptop and a desktop machine are available for teachers' use in the Jewish Studies departmental staff base but not all the newly appointed teachers are sufficiently confident in using them. The school is still largely in the exploratory stage in identifying and acquiring useful software for Jewish Studies which is appropriate to the needs of the age-range of its present pupils.

Accommodation

5.2.9 The school has adequate accommodation of good quality in relation to the size of the present Jewish Studies classes. In some of the classrooms seen not enough wall display space was available for the display of children's work in Jewish Studies or relevant illustrative enrichment material.

5.2.10 Apart from general purpose classrooms there is also one recently installed specialist computer room which is equipped for teaching Information and Control Technology (ICT) and computer skills. This is available for Jewish Studies work but developing its effective use is still very much at the exploratory stage.