

BEIT SHVIDLER PRIMARY SCHOOL INSPECTION REPORT

Local Authority: Barnet

Inspected under the auspices of Pikuach

Inspection dates: 20th June & 21st June 2023

This inspection of the school was conducted under section 48 of the Education Act 2005

Type of school: Primary School

School category: Voluntary Aided

Age range of children: 3-11

Mixed /Single sex: Mixed

Number on roll: 220

Chair of Governors: Daniel Wynne

Headteacher: Rabbi Jonathan Spector

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Inspection team

Lead Inspector: Rabbi Yaakov Heimann

Team Inspector: Mrs Esther Colman

Introduction

Inspectors make judgements on the following three Key Areas:

- The Quality of the Jewish Education
- Jewish Personal and Spiritual Development
- Leadership and Management.

The inspection was conducted over two days by two inspectors, who observed *Kodesh* (Jewish Studies) lessons, *Davening* (collective worship), whole school *Rosh Chodesh Davening* (new month prayer) assembly, reviewed the *Pikuach* (Jewish Inspection Team) questionnaires and had detailed discussions with all interested parties, including pupils and *Kodesh* teachers. Due to the number of pupils with SEND, there was a focus on the provision and opportunities offered to these pupils and tracking their progress.

Joint observations were carried out with the Headteacher, Head of *Kodesh* and SENDCO (Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities Coordinator) who is also the Deputy Head teacher, to ascertain their knowledge and expertise in the monitoring process. Inspectors also met with the school Principal, chair of governors, *Kodesh* governor and senior leadership team (SLT). They scrutinised relevant documentation, including policy documents, curriculum documents, pupils' work and displays of pupils' work.

Information about the school

- Beit Shvidler Primary School is an Orthodox Jewish school that mainly serves the local community in Edgware.
- The school is a one-form entry primary school, which includes Nursery and Reception classes. All classes, aside from Year 5 have the full quota of 30 pupils per class. Approximately 40% of the day is devoted to *Kodesh* lessons.
- Beit Shvidler Primary School is part of the Jewish Secondary Schools Movement (JSSM).
- *Ivrit* (Modern Hebrew) lessons are taught as a modern foreign language by a range of secular and Jewish Studies teachers within the school.
- The school was judged to be 'Good' at its last Ofsted inspection, March 2019.
- There is a very high ratio of SEND pupils. This has presented a huge challenge to the school. The school is persistent in its aim to be inclusive of all SEND pupils and to ensure that the planning for these pupils meets their individual needs.

- The percentage of pupils receiving Pupil Premium is 5% (11 pupils). There are 52 pupils on the SEND register (24%). Twelve pupils have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). The school has 23 pupils (10%) with English as an Additional Language (EAL).
- A new Headteacher was appointed in January 2017 and a Head of *Kodesh* in 2019. There is also a new team of *Kodesh* teachers.

Inspection judgement	Grade
Quality of Jewish Education	1
Jewish Personal and Spiritual Development	1
Leadership and management	1
Overall effectiveness	1

What is it like to attend this Jewish school?

- Beit Shvidler is an outstanding school where pupils benefit from a warm and caring atmosphere. Pupils learn in a positive environment, allowing them to focus on their Jewish learning in an atmosphere of respect and inclusion, irrespective of their background, gender, religiosity, and culture.
- Pupils receive an inspiring and holistic *Kodesh* education which is provided by a team of enthusiastic *Kodesh* teachers under the leadership of an outstanding Headteacher and Head of *Kodesh*. As a parent said: “The teachers instil a passion for *Kodesh* in the children, who are always eager to learn more.”
- Pupils benefit from being educated in a school where there is a clear ethos and vision which is disseminated by the school leadership to all staff, both *Kodesh* and *Chol* (secular studies). It is a major strength of this school and results in all staff working in tandem, with a passion to support the school’s Jewish ethos and the *Kodesh* education. As a teacher said, “From SLT to teacher to TAs (Teacher Assistants) there is a well communicated ethos that is understood and appreciated. The staff respect the ethos and help promote it to children and to parents alike.” A parent commented, “The values seem to always underpin everything they do at the school. My children have always received a good understanding of Jewish values.”
- Pupils are proud to belong to Beit Shvidler Primary School and have positive attitudes towards school and their *Kodesh* learning. This is because the curriculum enables them to actively engage in Jewish texts and to experience and participate in Jewish practice. The lessons are made relevant to them, which in turn makes their *Kodesh* learning exciting and engaging, as a Key Stage 2 (KS2) pupil commented, “The teachers are always here for me and encourage me with my learning. I have understood Hebrew and can translate a *Posuk* (verse) using my own knowledge.”
- Pupils gain from being in a school where there is a clear behaviour policy that is implemented by all staff. Behaviour of pupils in lessons and around the school is

outstanding and they display *Derech Eretz* (respect) to all around them. For example, the pupils speak respectfully to their teachers and to each other. Pupils were also seen to stand up every time a teacher walked into the class.

- Pupils in the EYFS (Early Years Foundation Stage) benefit from a spacious unit and outdoor area. There are a range of indoor and outdoor cross-curricular activities allowing the children to learn through play. The children in EYFS were able to articulate what they had learnt. Inspectors observed the Nursery in the middle of a *Shabbos* (Sabbath) project. Children could rotate between making *Challos* (braided bread), which involved measuring ingredients to make and knead the dough and a shop stocked with a range of real foods used on *Shabbos*, which they could purchase with toy money. When a boy in the shop area was asked what he was doing, he barely paused to reply, “We are very busy. Busy for *Shabbos*.” Remarkably, as part of the *Shabbos* preparation, children could buy food from the shop, place it in a bag and add a personal note which was then placed in a GIFT (Give It Forward Today) box. A girl told an inspector that: “People who do not have lots of money will get the food.” The importance of caring for others is thus imbued and embedded in the pupils of Beit Shvidler Primary school from a young age.
- Safeguarding at Beit Shvidler Primary School is effective. Pupils feel safe when at school, know whom to speak to if they have a concern and are confident that their issue will be addressed. Indeed, over 90% of pupils who responded to the pupil online survey said they knew whom to go to if they had a problem. As one Year 6 pupil said: “The teachers are kind to everyone.”
- The school has addressed the key areas for development highlighted in the previous *Pikuach* report (2017) and has made great advances since then. For example, there is now a robust system to monitor teaching and assessments, and the curriculum has been developed and expanded with new relevant curricula added.

What does the school do well what does it need to do better?

Quality of Jewish Education

- Teaching in Jewish education is outstanding across the school. Pupils benefit from a *Kodesh* curriculum that provides memorable experiences and rich opportunities for high-quality learning for all pupils. The curriculum, including the informal curriculum and extra-curricular, such as the Year 5 *Shabbaton* (*Shabbos* away), enhances pupils’ spiritual development and their well-being. A Year 6 pupil said, “Jewish learning teaches me to thank God. I love learning about *Kodesh*.”
- Pupils are proud to be Jewish and have a close connection to *Yiddishkeit* (Judaism) because of a well-constructed and sequenced curriculum that provides both skills and Jewish knowledge for communal involvement. The *Kodesh* curriculum enhances the Jewish ethos of the school as it enables pupils to explore what Judaism means to them and how they can apply it to their learning. A Year 6 pupil said that the Jewish learning, “Helps me not to speak *Loshon Hora*” (slander). There is also a *Loshon Hora* wall display in the Year 6 classroom, which is focused on pupils. A parent commented, “My children have obtained a good understanding of actual Jewish values, like, do not speak *loshon hora* etc.”
- Pupils’ learning is enhanced by having *Kodesh* teachers who have a firm and common understanding of the school’s *Kodesh* intent and what it means in practice, ensuring a consistently strong implementation of the *Kodesh* curriculum. This contributes well to fostering pupils’ commitment to continue Jewish study and involvement in the community. They also learn through a range of resources that inspire and motivate them,

such as effective use of ICT (Information and Communication Technology). Classrooms are equipped with internet and interactive whiteboards, and this helps engage pupils throughout the curriculum.

- Teachers use their understanding of how pupils learn to ensure that all pupils, including those with SEND, are able to engage with and relate to the curriculum in a way that is meaningful to them. As a Year 6 pupil said, “When I need my teachers, they are always here to help me and make me understand it more.” The outcome is that pupils are enthusiastic learners as they move through the school, displaying a thirst for learning, and actively participate in both formal and informal learning.
- Due to the emphasis on learning skills, pupils gain from learning *krioh* (Hebrew reading) and *Chumash* (Bible) to an extremely high standard. Pupils develop fluency, accuracy and confidence in their Hebrew reading according to their own levels of ability. This was evidenced through hearing pupils of varying abilities read in a range of classes, in particular Year 2 and Year 6, and observing a Reception *Krioh* (Hebrew reading) lesson. As a Reception parent commented, “I’m thrilled that my child can read Hebrew by the end of Reception.” A Year 6 pupil said that he is good at, “*Davening* (prayers) and translating *Chumash*.” The school could further broaden the curriculum through offering more consistent *Mishna* (Oral Law) learning.
- The school’s assessment of pupils’ *Krioh* and General Knowledge is used effectively to identify gaps and to address these through interventions. In April 2023, 83% of Year 2 pupils were working at expected level in *Krioh* and 82% were at the expected level in Jewish General Knowledge. This is an improvement from April 2022 where 74% of pupils were working at expected level in *Krioh* and 75% were at the expected level in Jewish General Knowledge.
- In April 2023, 83% of Year 6 pupils were working at expected level in *Krioh* and 80% were at the expected level in Jewish General Knowledge. This is an improvement from the previous assessment in September 2022 where 68% pupils were working at expected level in *Krioh* and 76% of pupils were at the expected level in Jewish General Knowledge. This is clearly a result of the effective systems introduced by the school.
- The school is always ready to embrace new teaching techniques and has recently purchased a programme called *Kriah* Master, which they will begin using in September 2023. This will enhance the already high level of support given to SEND pupils in their *Krioh* learning. Nevertheless, the school acknowledges that some resources used for SEND pupils could be enhanced to enable these pupils to make even further progress in their learning.
- Pupils are encouraged to share their learning with their families. A Key Stage 2 pupil said, “I enjoy learning *Parsha* (weekly portion of the Bible) each week and then I discuss it at home.” However, there is further scope for the school to involve parents in their children’s learning. As a parent commented, “The school should go back to adult education programmes for the parent body.”
- The lessons from which pupils benefit most are those where they are actively engaged, through using mini whiteboards, talk-partners and reading *bechavrusa* (study partners). In the more textual based lessons, pupils’ learning would be enhanced by having a larger range of engaging activities in lieu of completing worksheets.
- Pupils have the opportunity to explore and experience *Yiddishkeit* and learn about aspects of the Jewish Way of Life such as *Shabbos*, *Kashrus* (Kosher dietary laws), *Brochos* (blessings) etc. Real-life experiences such as a *Shabbos* project in EYFS and the *Kashrus* lesson in Key Stage 2, make the learning relevant and are an essential part of the curriculum. Pupils were given food wrappers and they had to see if it had a *Hecsher* (Rabbinical supervision), and name the Rabbi supervising, as well as the country he lived in. This helps them to identify a range of *Kashrus* authorities which they see now and will use when they leave school. Pupils with SEND are actively involved in these lessons and are able to access the learning.

- Pupils celebrate and learn about the history, *Dinim* (laws) and customs of the *Yomim Tovim* (Jewish Festivals) as they occur throughout the year. The pupils have a good knowledge of *Yomim Tovim* and the *Halochos* (laws) relating to them.
- Lesson observations and book scrutiny are used effectively to monitor progress and feedback is given by teachers. Parents are full of praise for the education their children receive. A parent said, “The culture at the school is really conducive to generating a real love of *Yiddishkeit*, and another parent commented, “My son is so happy to come to school each day and is enthused about learning.”

Jewish Personal and Spiritual Development

- The way in which Beit Shvidler Primary School develops pupils’ Jewish character and values is exemplary. The school consistently provides rich Jewish experiences in a coherent and planned manner, through both formal and informal curriculum and extra-curricular activities, linking with other organisations.
- All members of staff are good role-models for pupils’ personal behaviour, attitude and spiritual development. An example of this was seen at the *Rosh Chodesh Davening* assembly where all staff present, both *Kodesh* and *Chol*, *Davened* from *Siddurim* (Hebrew prayer books), modelling to pupils how to *Daven*.
- There is a positive vibe in the school, with the tone set by the SLT, and the behaviour of pupils across the school towards adults and other pupils is exemplary. There is a mutual respect between the staff and pupils. Inspectors heard from pupils that when they ask a difficult question in class, their teacher will: “Go home and spend the time to look at a question and come back the next day with an answer.” Another pupil said, “When I am hyper, my teacher lets me get out of the classroom to do push-ups. He first understands the problem and tries to solve it. He helps me learn.”
- Pupils exhibit a keen awareness of the spiritual aspects of Judaism and display high levels of personal conduct. For example, they constantly refer to their Judaism, *Hashem*, the importance of learning *Torah* and keeping *Mitzvos*.
- Pupils, including those with SEND, are aware of Hashem’s (God) role in their lives and can see how *Hashem* helps them (acknowledging the Divine - *Emuna*). A Key Stage 2 pupil said, “When we learn about *Hashem*, I feel such a strong connection. I am going to cry because I am overcome with emotion that I am in *Hashem*’s special nation.” Pupils explore their relationship with *Hashem* during ‘*Tefilla* (prayer) Talk’ as well as in other *Kodesh* lessons.
- Pupils are very aware of the awe and wonder (*Morah*) of *Hashem*. A Year 6 pupil said, “We learnt that *Shlomo Hamelech* (King Solomon) says that we take just our *Mitzvos* (good deeds) and *Aveiros* (bad deeds) to *Olom Habo* (world to come).” This point was reinforced during Year 3 *Davening* where pupils learnt about the second paragraph of *Shema* and about the rewards for learning *Torah* and keeping *Mitzvos* (Commandments) as well as the punishment for not listening to Hashem.
- All pupils participate fully, and feel included, in the prayer life of the school. For example, in the whole school *Rosh Chodesh Davening* Assembly, Reception pupils were paired up with a Year 6 pupil, enabling the younger pupils to join the rest of the school in *Davening* parts that were unfamiliar to them. This contributes enormously to the spiritual and moral development of the pupils. *Tefillah* is woven seamlessly into the fabric of daily life, through *Brochos* and *Birkas Hamazon* (*Grace after meals*). Many pupils were seen to *Daven* with *Kavonoh* (sincere feeling, devotion of the heart), pronounce the Hebrew words correctly, and have an understanding of parts of the *Tefillah*.
- *Davening* in Beit Shvidler Primary School includes ‘*Tefilla* Talk’. For example, in Year 2, pupils were encouraged to think about what they can thank *Hashem* for in each *Brocha* and in Year 4, pupils heard that in *Shema* we crown *Hashem* as our King. Year 5 pupils discussed “What does *Az Yashir* (song after the splitting of the Red Sea) mean?” whilst

Year 6 focused on the similarities and differences between the weekday and *Shabbos Amida* (part of prayer recited whilst standing) as well as the *Halochos* if one recited the weekday *Amida* on *Shabbos*. The 'Tefilla Talk' builds on pupils' prior learning, taking into account pupils' intellectual, emotional and spiritual growth.

- Pupils commented that they enjoy *Davening* and that it adds meaning to their lives. A Year 5 pupil said, "I love to *Daven*. I *Bentch* (recite Grace after meals) and say *Shema* before I go to bed." When pupils *Daven*, they begin to show appreciation, gratitude, awe and wonder (*Morah*), for example at waking up, being alive, eating food, and reciting *Brochos*. These pupils demonstrated an acknowledgement of the Divine, and become aware of experiences in their lives which cannot be perceived by their senses.
- Pupils responded enthusiastically and very positively when asked if they are happy at school. In discussions with inspectors both inside and outside the classroom, pupils consistently relate to their Jewish learning experiences.
- Over 80% of pupils said that the school encourages them to become involved in the wider community. Pupils told the inspectors how school has impacted their lives outside school. For example, a Year 6 pupil said, "I help out with charities like Camp *Simcha* (charity that supports families with sick children), Jewish Care for *Yom Hashoah* (Holocaust Remembrance Day) and a few others." The pupils demonstrated their awareness of both their own feelings, and the feelings of others. They treat others considerately, and display respect towards their teachers.
- The displays around the school are interactive and focused on pupils. For example, there is a 'Thank you *Hashem*' display on which pupils could write anything they were thankful for. This included notes like, 'Thank you for my parents', 'thank you for life', thank you for giving me good friends' and 'thank you *Hashem* for giving me a big family'.
- In the *Ish Echod B'lev Echod* (One Man and One Heart) display, pupils highlighted how we can all be different yet be friends and play together. The school is actively engaged in British Values. In both *Kodesh* and *Chol* (secular) pupils learn the skills to be thoughtful, tolerant and caring citizens. These values are incorporated into all aspects of school life, for example collecting charity for a range of Jewish and other UK charities such as Camp *Simcha* (for children with cancer), Jewish Care old age home and Macmillan Cancer Support.

Leadership and management:

- The Leadership and Management is outstanding because the SLT, including governors, have an accurate knowledge and understanding of both the school's strengths and areas requiring improvement. Together with the school Principal, they articulate and communicate a strong commitment to high standards of work and to pupils' Jewish spiritual development. The governors hold the leadership to account. They have developed a shared clarity of where they want the school to be beyond the short term. In turn, these points have been communicated effectively to the staff.
- The governors are actively involved and know the school well, including the progress of each class, which classes have a higher ratio of pupils with SEND and the required support needed for interventions.
- Since the previous *Pikuach* inspection (2017), the governors have appointed a new Head of *Kodesh*, and SENDCO. Together with the Headteacher, they model excellent practice in academic and spiritual matters and work successfully to monitor, improve and support teaching. They also encourage the enthusiasm of the *Kodesh* staff and challenge their efforts and skills to good effect.
- The SLT are a highly effective team and support one another, working in tandem to drive change and raise standards of learning. They jointly implement the vision and ethos of the school. The leadership team have a good understanding of the strengths of the school and areas for development in all aspects of Jewish education provision.

- The SLT regularly review all elements of learning and implement necessary changes. For example, *Alef Beis* (Hebrew alphabet) is no longer taught in the Nursery; instead they begin learning it in Reception. Assessment data shows improved standards by the end of Reception. They also review pupils with SEND and put in place a high level of support for them. The SENDCO looks at the holistic child and carries out regular learning walks, in order to advise teachers and teacher assistants how to best support these pupils.
- The school benefits from governors, including a dedicated *Kodesh* governor, and a Principal, who make themselves available to guide and advise the SLT. The Principal also sits on the Board of the JSSM, of which Beit Shvidler is a member.

What does the school need to do to improve?

- To review some of the resources used for SEND pupils, ensuring that the most appropriate resources are used to support their learning so that they make best progress.
- To ensure that pupils are fully prepared for their next stage of the Jewish education when they leave Primary school, the school may wish to consider a more consistent teaching of to the study of Mishna in upper Key Stage 2.

Statutory requirement for a daily act of collective worship (tefillah)	Met
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Summary of Questionnaires

Pikuach invited parents and carers of pupils at Beit Shvidler Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school. 72 people responded to the survey.

Pikuach invited pupils at Beit Shvidler Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school. 31 pupils responded to the survey.

Pikuach invited members of staff at Beit Shvidler Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school. All Kodesh staff responded as well as some other members of staff to the survey.

GLOSSARY

WHAT INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS MEAN:

GRADE	JUDGEMENT	DESCRIPTION
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Requires Improvement	A school requiring improvement is not providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils.