

Jewish Community Secondary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	135747
Local authority	Barnet
Inspection number	381919
Inspection dates	15–16 May 2012
Lead inspector	John Meinke

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	342
Of which, number in the sixth form	N/A
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mike Grabiner
Headteacher	Jeremy Stowe-Lindner
Date of previous school inspection	N/A
School address	Castlewood Road New Barnet London EN4 9GE
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Introduction

Inspection team

John Meinke	Additional Inspector
Jennifer Barker	Additional Inspector
Peter Dannheisser	Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed 20 teachers teach 21 lessons, of which 5 were joint observations with members of the school's senior leadership team. In addition, the inspection team made short visits to a number of other lessons. The inspectors held meetings with two groups of students, members of the governing body and school staff, including senior and middle leaders. They took account of the responses to the on-line Parent View survey in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documents, including the school improvement plan, minutes of the governing body and school policies. They also analysed responses to the inspection questionnaires completed by 115 parents and carers and others completed by students and staff.

Information about the school

The Jewish Community Secondary School opened in new, purpose-built accommodation in September 2010 and currently has 342 students on roll in Years 7 and 8. Its projected roll by 2016 is 1,310, making it an above average-sized school when it reaches capacity. The school will open a sixth form in September 2012. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average. Most students are of White British heritage. The proportion of students supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above the national average. There is special provision for up to 49 students on the autistic spectrum, so far supporting 14 students. The school is currently oversubscribed.

The school has science college status. It has gained various awards including Investors in People. Given that the school does not yet have GCSE results, its performance has not been measured against the government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	1

Key findings

- This is a good school. Senior leaders have quickly established a culture of high aspiration and enthusiasm for learning, summed up by this comment from a parent. 'JCoSS has made an excellent start. Our son thoroughly enjoys going to school and is challenged to perform at a very high level.' Overall effectiveness is not outstanding because although the quality of teaching is consistently good and sometimes outstanding, it does not yet lead to outstanding progress in all lessons.
- The school sets ambitious targets for all students and their progress is rigorously monitored at school, group and individual level. Achievement is good and in some cases outstanding because of consistently good and sometimes outstanding teaching, along with high expectations.
- The quality of teaching is good and, in some cases, outstanding. Lessons typically feature well-planned activities which engage students' interests and enable them to lead their learning. Learning is exceptional when tasks are suitably adapted to meet the needs of learners and present a high level of challenge. It is less successful when tasks are less well matched to students' needs, or when resources, including additional adults, are not effectively deployed to support learning.
- Behaviour is good and often excellent. The highly inclusive nature of the school, along with a clear ambition for all students to be successful, promotes a great enthusiasm for learning. Students are rightly proud of their new school and its growing reputation. The school provides outstanding opportunities for students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The early success of the school has been achieved through an unrelenting drive for high quality teaching and exceptional progress. Staff performance is managed very effectively. The ambition to become outstanding is communicated clearly by senior leaders and the governing body. Leaders have a good understanding of the strengths and areas for development in teaching and there is a determined effort to raise its quality further.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching by:
 - planning tasks that are accurately matched to the needs of learners, including making astute and well-timed decisions about when to reshape activities during lessons
 - ensuring that resources, including additional adults, are as well deployed to support learning as is seen in the best practice across the school.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Students demonstrate great enthusiasm for learning and tackle challenging tasks with confidence and resilience. This is supported by the school's 'Building Learning Power' strategy which supports students' development of skills. In an art lesson students worked determinedly when asked to use their imagination to create artwork using a very limited range of materials. Students work together well and demonstrate responsibility when they are given the opportunity to lead their own learning. In a history lesson students managed a collaborative task well, including negotiating with the teacher on how long the task should take.

Students enter the school with prior attainment above the national average. Clear, challenging targets are set for students and their progress is carefully monitored. Decisive action is taken to ensure that students make good or better progress. Achievement in English is good and students acquire literacy skills well across the curriculum, including demonstrating high level communication skills through confident and articulate discussions. Good provision is in place for students who enter the school with low prior attainment in English and mathematics to ensure that they make accelerated progress. The most able are well catered for, for example through a gifted and talented book club which includes opportunities for national and international links and encourages students' reading for pleasure. Students make exceptionally good progress in mathematics because of good teaching and well-planned lessons which provide a high level of challenge. Almost all parents or carers who responded to the inspection questionnaire felt that their child was making good progress at the school and the inspectors agree.

Disabled students and those with special educational needs make good progress due to the good provision and support which has been put in place for them. The special provision for students on the autistic spectrum is led and managed extremely well. It provides a safe, structured environment for students where they are supported through a carefully managed range of strategies, including planned opportunities for integration into the main school. Students' progress is carefully monitored and their achievement is good. In an English lesson, structured activities including good use of visual resources and writing frames enabled students to develop their writing skills, including independent, extended writing where appropriate.

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Quality of teaching

Lesson observations, discussions with students and the quality of students' work indicate that the quality of teaching is good with examples of outstanding practice. The vast majority of parents and carers felt that their child was well taught and the inspectors agree. Positive relationships between students and adults promote a calm, purposeful atmosphere for learning. Teachers use their good subject knowledge to plan interesting, engaging and memorable activities, which are often related to real life scenarios through a themed curriculum. Clear learning objectives and success criteria are explained well by teachers and targeted questioning is used to challenge students and check their understanding. Tasks are skilfully adapted to meet the needs of individuals and the deployment of additional adults during lessons is, in the main, carefully planned. This ensures that they support learning and that disabled students and those with special educational needs make good progress during lessons. The planned curriculum provides excellent opportunities for students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through the exploration of ethical and moral issues and consideration of other cultures. Consistent application of the school's assessment and marking policies results in students receiving regular feedback on how to take the next steps in their learning.

In an outstanding mathematics lesson a well-planned sequence of activities led to a good pace of learning with a high level of challenge. Regular checking of understanding led to a palpable sense of achievement. In an outstanding music lesson an imaginative starter, based on the biography of a musician, captured students' attention and ensured a very high level of engagement in learning throughout the lesson. In a science lesson information and communication technology was used well to support learning and there was a clear focus on the development of students' high level evaluative skills.

In the small minority of lessons, where teaching was no better than satisfactory, planned activities were not always well matched to the different ability levels of students. Teachers sometimes missed opportunities to reshape tasks during the lesson to either consolidate learning or accelerate progress. While there is good practice in the school in the deployment of additional adults to support learning, particularly for disabled students and those with special educational needs, this was not so well planned in some lessons and their impact was less effective.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

The strength of this school is its strong ethos. The good values and sense of responsibility and respect for others permeate throughout. Comments, such as, 'My daughter has really developed a sense of responsibility to the community in and out of school,' reflect the overwhelmingly positive responses made by parents and carers in the inspection questionnaires. The very large majority of parents and carers indicated that their child felt safe in the school and students and the inspectors agree; the school provides a very safe and secure environment for learning.

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Behaviour is good, and often outstanding, around the site and in lessons. A small minority of parents raised anxieties about the impact of poor behaviour on learning. Discussions with students and the observations of the inspection team indicated that the school's behaviour management policy may not always be consistently applied to tackle low-level disruption during lessons. However, the large majority of lessons proceed without interruption and students demonstrate excellent, enthusiastic attitudes to learning, and the good and often outstanding behaviour seen during the inspection is typical of that over time.

Discussions with students and the school's behaviour records indicate that bullying is extremely rare and is dealt with effectively on the rare occasions it happens. Students understand the different forms of bullying, for example cyber-bullying and prejudice-based harassment, and they are confident that they can raise concerns and be listened to. The curriculum helps students to know how to stay safe through an extensive personal, social and health education programme which includes assemblies and talks by visiting guest speakers. Students have the opportunity to contribute to the development of the school through the school parliament and are able to manage their own behaviour appropriately. Attendance is above average.

Leadership and management

The headteacher and his team, along with the governing body, have successfully established a distinct identity for the school within its community as an inclusive, cross-communal school with high aspirations for its students. There is a clear ambition for all students to achieve at the highest levels, underpinned by robust systems for tracking and target setting and ensuring accountability. The highly-skilled governing body supports and challenges the school well and plays a significant role in the development of the school, for example ensuring that future planning, including for the new sixth form, builds capacity and sustainability. Many leaders carry multiple responsibilities with a sense of dedication and a strong desire for high achievement. Arrangements for safeguarding are robust and meet statutory requirements. The capacity for continuing improvement is strong.

School leaders and the governing body have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. There is a rigorous and consistent approach to monitoring the quality of teaching and leaders have a good understanding of how to raise its quality to outstanding. Performance management is robust and linked to an extensive programme of professional development.

The science specialism permeates the school and makes a tangible difference to achievement. The specialism underpins the development of students' skills across the curriculum through investigations and problems solving. The outstanding broad and balanced curriculum is being carefully developed to meet the needs of learners. It makes an outstanding contribution to students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through both the planned curriculum and a wide and varied enrichment programme. This includes: trips and visits, including international trips; partnerships with other schools, including in other countries; and local and international charities.

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There are many opportunities for students' spiritual development.

There is a strong commitment to equalities at the heart of the school's work.

Assessment data are meticulously analysed to ensure that individuals and groups make at least good, and improving, progress. Students are encouraged to be good, considerate individuals who recognise, value and respect individual differences.

There is a high level of engagement with parents and carers, demonstrated by very high attendance at parents' evenings and other events, and strengthened by good communications between home and school.

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	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is 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. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.

17 May, 2012

Dear Students



Inspection of Jewish Community Secondary School, London EN4 9GE

Thank you for the warm welcome that you gave to us when we inspected your school recently. On behalf of the inspection team I would like to thank you for sharing your views of the school and how well it prepares you for the future. You told us that your school is a safe place where you enjoy learning and we agree. This is a good school with outstanding features.

You told us, and your parents and carers agree, that you feel safe at school and that behaviour is good. A few of you, along with your parents, raised some anxieties about disruptions to lessons. However, the vast majority of your lessons run smoothly and behaviour is very good. You also said that bullying is very rare and dealt with effectively when it happens.

Most of you feel that you learn a lot during lessons and we agree that teaching is good and sometimes outstanding. Lessons are well planned with engaging activities that build on your great enthusiasm for learning and determination to do well. You learn especially well when you are given challenging tasks and have the opportunity to work collaboratively or independently. You are set ambitious targets and your progress is carefully monitored to make sure that you will achieve them.

You were very positive about the school's extensive enrichment programme which gives you many opportunities to take part in trips and visits, clubs and societies, sporting events and many other activities within the school, your community and nationally and internationally. The school encourages you to be good, considerate individuals who recognise, value and respect individual differences.

We have suggested some improvements which will help the school to improve further. We have asked teachers to make sure that they plan even more activities that are carefully matched to your needs and they take opportunities to reshape activities during lessons so that you always learn well. We have also asked teachers to pay greater attention to planning the involvement of additional adults to support learning.

We wish you all at the Jewish Community Secondary School a happy and successful future.

Yours sincerely

John Meinke
Lead inspector

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