

Leeds Menorah School

399 Street Lane, Leeds, West Yorkshire, LS17 6HQ

Inspection dates	23–25 April 2013	
Overall effectiveness	Good	2
Pupils' achievement	Good	2
Pupils' behaviour and personal development	Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching	Good	2
Quality of curriculum	Good	2
Pupils' welfare, health and safety	Good	2
Leadership and management	Good	2

Summary of key findings

This school is good because

- Teaching is good; pupils enjoy learning and are consistently engaged in lessons. As a result, they achieve well and make good progress.
- The curriculum is good. It is broad and balanced and provides pupils with a rich Jewish and secular education.
- Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage has improved since the last inspection.
- Behaviour is outstanding; outstanding arrangements for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils contribute to their outstanding personal development.
- Leadership and management are good. Senior leaders are highly committed to securing the welfare, health and safety of pupils and to developing and maintaining high standards. They ensure that teaching is consistently good resulting in good achievement and progress.

It is not yet outstanding because

- The use of information and communication technology (ICT) is not fully developed throughout the school.
- Systems for the monitoring of lessons are not fully embedded; this slows down the development of teaching and pupils' learning.
- Curricular documents are outdated and do not reflect the good curriculum provided. As a result, the school does not build on its strengths methodically.
- Systems for checking on its own performance are not fully developed and up to date. As a result, the approach to maintaining high standards and identifying areas for development is inconsistent.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets schedule 1 of The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, as amended by The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection was carried out with one day's notice.
- The inspector observed 12 lessons taught by 11 different teachers.
- The inspector looked at pupils' work and held meetings with members of the senior management team, staff, the proprietor and pupils. The inspector took account of the views expressed in 10 questionnaires returned by parents and carers, 15 from staff and 28 from pupils.
- The inspector looked at the school's documentation including schemes of work, teachers' planning, records of pupils' progress, assessment records and records related to the professional development of staff. He checked the school's compliance with the regulations for independent schools.

Inspection team

Chanan Tomlin, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Leeds Menorah School is an independent Jewish day school for boys and girls aged from three to 16 years of age situated in the grounds of the Beth Hamedrash Hagadol Synagogue in Moortown, a suburb of Leeds.
- Generally, boys attend the school until the end of Year 6 after which they go on to secondary schools in larger Jewish communities. Girls continue with their secondary school education in the school and leave after Year 11.
- The school was established in 1978 and moved to its current premises in October 2004. It is on a split site, with the secondary school for girls situated a short distance away. While most pupils live in Leeds, some come from as far as Sheffield.
- There are 31 pupils on the school's roll, nine of whom attend the secondary girls' school. There are five children in the Nursery and Reception classes of the Early Years Foundation Stage; all are in receipt of nursery funding. Two pupils have a statement of special educational needs.
- The school's aim is 'to produce educated and well-adjusted observant Jews who will become an integral part of and contributors to modern society.' The last inspection took place in February 2010.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Broaden and enrich the curriculum by improving the use of ICT in the primary part of the school.
- Further improve leadership and management by:
 - establishing a more consistent system of lesson observations aimed at further improving the quality of teaching and pupils' learning
 - maintaining an up-to-date system for checking on the school's performance so that leaders take a consistent approach to maintaining high standards and identifying areas for development
 - ensuring that documents and policies consistently reflect the curriculum provided by the school.

Inspection judgements

Pupils' achievement

Good

Pupils' achievement is good. Considering their different starting points, pupils make good progress in both secular and religious studies because of good teaching. By the end of primary school, pupils acquire good levels of religious knowledge and Hebrew reading skills and are fully competent at translating and analysing classic religious texts. They reach good levels of secular learning and are well-equipped to succeed in secondary school. Girls that attend the secondary school leave with a good number of GCSE qualifications, most having achieved high grades. They are all well-placed to succeed in the religious seminaries that they attend after they leave.

Pupils are serious about learning; they acquire knowledge quickly and gain secure understanding of the subjects that they are taught. They are quick to develop learning skills and become competent in reading, writing, communication and mathematics. Pupils are highly motivated; they take great interest in their studies and become responsible learners, keen to acquire the knowledge and skills that will help them in the future. More able pupils are challenged appropriately and attain very high standards. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, including those with a statement of special educational needs, succeed in their studies and make good progress. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress towards the early learning goals in all areas of learning; they achieve good standards in literacy, numeracy and communication skills.

Pupils' behaviour and personal development

Outstanding

Pupils' behaviour and personal development are outstanding. Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is exemplary. They have excellent attitudes towards learning, are happy and well-adjusted and are always fully engaged in lessons. They enjoy school and appreciate the efforts of staff. One pupil commented, 'All around, it is a really good school!' Pupils are active learners, are keen to understand and acquire knowledge and often initiate discussions and debates among themselves and with their teachers. Lessons are orderly, calm and purposeful and the atmosphere in school is very conducive to learning. Pupils feel that they are part of a family; older pupils get along exceptionally well with younger ones and acknowledge that they serve as role models for them. Pupils are aware of the different types of bullying but assert that bullying does not exist in the school. Pupils respect each other and their teachers and appreciate the importance of learning. As a result, they thrive, achieve well and make consistently good progress.

Teachers and senior leaders provide high levels of care; they ensure that pupils have the attention that they need to be happy and succeed. Pupils acknowledge this and say that they feel safe and secure. Attendance is very good; the school day and lessons start punctually. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Pupils develop spiritually through regular prayer, religious observance and study. They gain a keen understanding of moral issues through an emphasis on morality that pervades the curriculum. As a result, they are proud of their convictions and maintain high standards. In keeping with the school's aim to encourage pupils to become 'integral parts of and contributors to modern society', they learn the importance of reaching out to less observant Jews and members of the wider community. As a result, they welcome visitors and are intuitive about people's needs both in and out of school. They work together for the good of the school and to benefit the community through charitable work, visiting the local home for the elderly and through arranging events such as an annual Purim Carnival.

Pupils learn about the legal system and public services through citizenship, English and history. They are offered a balanced presentation of opposing political views when such issues are discussed. They learn about other cultures through geography, history and many elements of religious education. The 'Shalom (Peace) Project' encourages pupils to research and explore the

cultures and customs of other members of the Leeds community such as the Polish, Pakistani and Afro-Caribbean communities. As a result, they grow to appreciate cultural diversity and are keen to learn about other cultures and customs. Pupils grow in self-confidence and esteem through active participation in debates and discussions, leading prayers and through opportunities for role-play and drama in a range of subjects. In addition, they take part in a monthly 'team of the month' assembly when individuals and teams are rewarded for performing acts of kindness to members of the school and wider communities.

Quality of teaching

Good

The quality of teaching is good. As a result, all pupils, including those that are more able, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs achieve well and make good progress. Pupils with a statement of special educational needs are particularly well provided for and make consistently good progress. Teachers and senior managers provide a positive environment for learning. Teachers expect pupils to succeed and make progress; they convey this expectation well to pupils and pupils respond with high levels of interest and engagement. They plan lessons well and ensure that time is managed optimally. They employ effective teaching strategies and use a range of resources in order to foster the interest and engagement of pupils with varying abilities and needs. As a result, pupils develop knowledge and skills in all areas of study quickly.

Reading, writing, communication and mathematics are taught effectively and pupils apply these skills well in all subjects. Teachers encourage pupils to think for themselves and to learn both independently and collaboratively. Teachers are skilful in the ways that they initiate discussions and debates through careful questioning and challenges. As a result, pupils take responsibility for their learning and are keen to explore and investigate. Teachers assess progress regularly; they keep careful records and track progress in order to ensure that pupils are aware of their levels of achievement and areas that need improvement. Behaviour is consistently managed very well; pupils know what is expected of them and disruptive behaviour is very rare.

Teachers in the Early Years Foundation Stage have improved their understanding of early years requirements since the last inspection. They now employ a wide range of strategies to promote children's learning and their social, physical and economic well-being. Teachers compile profiles to record children's achievement and progress. As a result, children in the setting thrive, achieve well and make good progress.

Quality of curriculum

Good

The curriculum is good and has a strong impact on pupils' learning and achievement. It is divided into two strands, *Kodesh* (religious studies) and *Chol* (secular studies). The *Kodesh* curriculum meets the need of all pupils and provides opportunities for them to expand their knowledge and make good progress in Hebrew reading, *chumash* (Torah) with commentaries, *halacha* (religious law) and *Mishna* and *Talmud* for boys. The *Chol* curriculum is broad and balanced and provides valuable experiences in all of the required areas of learning with a particular focus on reading, writing, communication and mathematics skills. Information and communication technology is developed well in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in the secondary school, but less developed in the primary school. Both curricula are well organised and planned to allow good progression in learning to take place; they are supported with detailed schemes of work that demonstrate how pupils of varying abilities are to be supported and challenged. However, some policy documents have not been reviewed recently and do not fully reflect many of the good things that the curriculum actually provides. Often, *Kodesh* lessons include important elements of secular education. Examples of this are lessons about the festival of Chanukah when pupils learn about the Greeks, lessons about the *Mishkan* (sanctuary in the desert) which supports work in design and technology when pupils make a scale model of the *Mishkan*, and *Mishna Succah* lessons when they make model *succahs* or huts.

Pupils are prepared well for their future economic well-being through a strong focus on literacy and numeracy. They leave school with good standards and are well-placed to further their education. Teachers in the Early Years Foundation Stage have good knowledge of the learning, development and welfare requirements and ensure that all children have a daily programme which is well-suited to their needs, interests and capabilities. As a result, children in the setting achieve well and make good progress.

Personal, social and health education is good. Pupils receive clear guidance from their teachers in many aspects of their personal lives including their social and interpersonal interactions. They learn about healthy lifestyles through science when they learn about nutrition and harmful habits such as smoking. They learn about exercise and keeping fit during physical education and swimming sessions that take place on alternate weeks. Extra-curricular activities are very well suited to the needs and interests of the pupils. These include cooking evenings; a leadership course and outreach volunteer work for secondary-aged pupils; festival workshops and '*Mishmar* Night', a Thursday night learning session for pupils in the primary school. In addition, all pupils enjoy trips that are appropriate to their ages and interests. These include residential trips for older girls to Sweden, Denmark and London and trips for younger pupils to the Yorkshire Show, Tropical World and places of historical interest.

Pupils' welfare, health and safety

Good

Pupils' welfare, health and safety are good and all regulations are met. Staff are highly committed to ensuring that pupils are well cared for and they are competent in promoting pupils' health and safety. Arrangements for safeguarding are robust; a policy for child protection is implemented effectively and all staff, including the designated person for safeguarding, have been trained appropriately. The school is diligent in its procedures for the safe recruitment of staff; staff and the proprietor have criminal records bureau clearances and all required checks are recorded in a single central register. The school conducts regular risk assessments for the premises and activities both in and out of school including school trips. Fire risk assessments are carried out regularly; fire drills are regular events and are recorded appropriately. Supervision is consistently good. Staff help create and maintain a calm, purposeful learning environment where pupils behave well.

All of the required policies and procedures necessary to ensure that pupils are protected and supported are in place, including those for first-aid and anti-bullying. They are comprehensive and well implemented. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, staff are well deployed to ensure that children's welfare and learning is supported well. Pupils are serious about maintaining healthy lifestyles and are aware of the things that they need to do in order to keep safe. The school works very well with parents, carers and external agencies to ensure that pupils are safe at all times. The premises comply with all health and safety requirements.

Leadership and management

Good

Leadership and management are good. The proprietor and senior managers are ambitious and expect high levels of learning and care for all pupils and are successful in achieving these goals. They communicate these expectations to staff effectively and this results in good outcomes for pupils. Teaching is good as a result of accurate monitoring and a focus on the professional development of staff. However, an effective system for observing lessons in order to further improve teaching is not fully in place or consistently implemented. Although leaders are fully aware of the school's strengths and areas that need to be developed the systems for checking on the school's performance are not fully developed.

Senior leaders have developed good working relationships with parents, carers and external agencies to provide pupils with a good education and high levels of care. Parents, carers and staff are extremely positive about all aspects of the school. One parent commented, 'The children are thriving – we are grateful to be able to send them to such a wonderful school!' The school's ethos

promotes outstanding behaviour and the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is exemplary. Staff and resources are deployed well as a result of the careful monitoring and planning by senior staff.

The premises and accommodation are suitable and include a large central hall, sufficient classrooms and an outdoor area for play and physical education. All areas of the school are well maintained and decorated to sufficiently support the curriculum on offer. The school meets all of the requirements related to the provision of information to parents and carers and the complaints procedure includes all of the required details. The proprietor and school managers have ensured that all of the independent school standards are met.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	A school which provides an exceptional quality of education and significantly exceeds minimum requirements.
Grade 2	Good	A school which provides a high quality of education that exceeds minimum requirements.
Grade 3	Adequate	A school which meets minimum requirements but needs to improve the quality of education it provides.
Grade 4	Inadequate	A school where minimum requirements are not met and/or the quality of education has serious weaknesses.

School details

Unique reference number	108110
Inspection number	420192
DfE registration number	383/6099

This inspection was carried out under section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Type of school	Orthodox Jewish
School status	Independent School
Age range of pupils	3–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	31
Number of part time pupils	2
Proprietor	Leeds Menorah School Trust
Chair	Rabbi J Refson
Headteacher	Mrs E Refson
Date of previous school inspection	23 February 2010
Annual fees (day pupils)	£0–£4,100
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