



# The Beis Yaakov Jewish High School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 134196  
**LEA** Salford  
**Inspection number** 282486  
**Inspection dates** 22 March 2006 to 23 March 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Mr Michael Blaylock HMI

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary	<b>School address</b>	Park Lane
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided		Irlams o'th Height
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 16		Salford, Greater Manchester M6 7RQ
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Girls	<b>Telephone number</b>	0161 7369286
<b>Number on roll</b>	187	<b>Fax number</b>	0161 7378443
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mr A Brandeis
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not applicable	<b>Headteacher</b>	Rabbi Goldblatt

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one additional inspector.

## Description of the school

The Beis Yaakov Jewish High School for Girls is a secondary school providing education and care for the girls of the strictly observant Jewish community in the Broughton Park and Prestwich areas of North Manchester. The school curriculum is a balance between Jewish studies and secular education (known as 'Torah im Derech Eretz'). To fully accommodate the demands of these two elements, the school day is longer than in most schools. The focus for this inspection of the school was the secular element of the school's provision.

There are currently 187 girls in the school, which includes a small number of girls from Leeds and Liverpool. It has seen a gradual increase in numbers in recent years. Year 7 is the largest year group with 54 girls. In January 2005 the school received voluntary aided status, moving from the independent into the maintained sector within the Salford local authority. New premises were under construction at the time of the visit. Having outgrown its previous accommodation, the school moved, in January 2005, into a former Salford special school while awaiting the move to the new accommodation, scheduled for September 2006. The current location of the school is approximately 3 miles from the community, resulting in the girls being bussed-in daily for school. A small number of post-16 pupils are educated in the school through a franchising arrangement with the local Pendleton Further Education College.

The proportion of learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is in line with the national picture, as is the proportion of girls with statements of special educational needs.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## **Overall effectiveness of the school**

### **Grade: 3**

The Beis Yaakov Jewish High School for Girls provides education and care for its pupils that is satisfactory overall and includes some good and even outstanding features. This judgement accords with the school's self-evaluation and represents a creditable outcome at this stage in the school's development, given the major recent changes including becoming voluntary aided, the move to temporary accommodation and the planning for the move to the new school building.

Achievement and standards are outstanding. Girls make excellent progress to achieve high standards in public examinations. They achieve well because the satisfactory teaching and learning in school is complemented by: the individual attention and support they receive in small sized classes; the strong work ethic within the school; and the high value given to education by the community the school serves.

The personal development and well-being of the girls are good with some outstanding features, most notably their excellent behaviour and their moral and spiritual development. A recently formed school council is beginning to give girls the opportunity to make a contribution to the school community.

The curriculum is satisfactory, partly constrained by the temporary nature of the current accommodation. The care, guidance and support that the girls receive are good; Beis Yaakov is a caring school in which the girls care for and support each other well. The use of assessment is variable, and systems for target setting and tracking pupils' progress are not securely in place.

The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory overall. The school's self-evaluation indicated a good knowledge of the school with judgements that were broadly in line with inspectors' findings. Since becoming a voluntary aided school, considerable progress has been made on issues of compliance, teachers gaining qualified teacher status, and police checks on staff, although there is more to be done in each area. The school has the capacity for further improvement and offers good value for money.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Continue to improve the quality of teaching and learning in ways that will interest and engage pupils as active participants in learning.
- Establish the consistent implementation of a common assessment system.
- Develop roles and responsibilities of middle management with clearly defined lines of accountability.
- Increase appropriate opportunities for pupils to participate and contribute more to school life.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 1**

Achievement and standards are outstanding. Girls enter the school with the full range of attainment levels, although the overall attainment on entry is above average. They make excellent progress to attain results that are well above expectation.

In 2005 84% of pupils achieved five or more general certificate of secondary education (GCSE) passes with grades A\*-C, including the core subjects of English and mathematics. This is consistent with results in the previous four years; these have fluctuated between 78% and 93%, as is to be expected given the low number of candidates each year. The value added data analysis indicates that these results represent excellent progress throughout Key Stages 3 and 4.

The results at Key Stage 3 confirm that girls make excellent progress, such that in 2005 over 85% achieved Level 5 in English, mathematics and science. This is well above the national averages. Three quarters of the girls also achieved Level 6 and above in mathematics compared to a national picture of approximately one half. These results represent a considerable improvement on the previous year.

All pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, make at least good progress in the supportive setting of the school's tight-knit community.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good with some outstanding features. The school provides an environment in which pupils feel safe, happy and respected, and which is appreciated by parents. The girls have very upbeat views about their education and inspectors were impressed by their enthusiasm when talking about the school.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is outstanding. The considerable emphasis placed on the moral and social aspects of their education, within the ethos of Torah values, leads to pupils' growing understanding of justice, right and wrong, and respect. These aspects are taught very well and contribute to the good attitudes and outstanding behaviour both inside and outside classes. Girls are acquiring a sense of responsibility for themselves, others and their surroundings.

They also develop a good awareness of the school and local community and make contributions to both. For instance, the organising and implementing of a Purim party for the senior citizens of the community. Pupils have also responded well to opportunities to express their views through the school council.

Pupils know and follow safe practices well. These include those which impact on their physical well-being. The school offers excellent provision for encouraging pupils to recognize the importance of healthy living. Attendance is in line with national averages, but there are no unauthorised absences. A consequence of the separateness of the orthodox Jewish community is that opportunities for developing workplace skills and skills for future economic well-being are limited.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 3

Inspection evidence confirmed the school's own judgement that the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall, although with some good features. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed in the course of the inspection, but neither were any lessons judged outstanding. Girls benefit significantly from the individual help and support they receive in small classes of less than twenty pupils.

With local authority encouragement and consultant support the school has recently encouraged structured lessons with learning objectives, starters, and plenary sessions to encourage more interaction, as advocated by the national strategies. This is proving a challenge for most staff, given the 35 minute lessons, and particularly so for some staff who are more comfortable with more traditional approaches. Longer periods of 50 minutes are under consideration for next year to better facilitate this development.

Features of the more effective lessons seen included: clear learning objectives, giving a sharp focus; good interaction between teacher and pupils, based on relationships of mutual respect; mini whiteboards to give immediate feedback to the teacher; and well planned lessons with inbuilt progression and identification of the learning demands on pupils. Teaching was less successful where there was limited interaction between teacher and pupils; insufficient opportunities for independent working; no differentiation, despite a wide range of attainment in the group; and a lack of pace.

One of the more unusual and particularly refreshing aspects of the lessons observed was the genuine appreciation expressed by the girls to their teachers in thanking them at the end of each lesson.

Systems for target setting, monitoring and tracking of pupils' academic progress are weak. Good practice in using assessment for learning is not yet embedded in all areas, nor consistent among staff.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory, with some outstanding features. Recent additions, for example in music, have enabled the school to meet statutory requirements. The curriculum is planned well to develop pupils' skills in literacy and numeracy, placing strong emphasis on the use of these skills throughout all lessons.

Although internet resources were printed out for use in one lesson, there is little use of information and communication technology (ICT) across the curriculum. This is partly a consequence of the temporary nature of the school's current accommodation. A high priority is being given to using ICT in plans for the new accommodation. Work related dimensions of the curriculum are also areas for further development

A strength of the curriculum is the fusing of the national curriculum with the underpinning faith values of the school to effectively meet the needs and interests of

all its pupils, including those pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Care and respect for others permeate the entire curriculum, which includes an expanding range of enrichment activities both within and without the community of school. Many pupils engage enthusiastically in the extensive extracurricular programme, particularly but not exclusively in musical activities. Other activities, such as visits to London and Llandudno, provide for the academic, personal and social development of the pupils.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The quality of care, guidance and support provided for all pupils is good and some elements are outstanding. The care and personal support for pupils is outstanding. In this school, every child matters. The work of the coordinator for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is effective at ensuring that the most vulnerable pupils are able to achieve as well as they possibly can. The school has remarkable success given the challenging circumstances and the range of difficulties that some children experience.

The school is a harmonious community where pupils feel safe. Pupils speak very positively about the staff and feel that there are many people that they can turn to if they have a problem. Child protection requirements and health and safety procedures are securely established and understood by staff. Very effective systems are in place to ensure that teachers and other adults have a good understanding of the pupils' pastoral needs and development. However, the provision for careers guidance is insufficiently developed.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. The headteacher is highly regarded in the school and the community. His leadership style is reflective and consultative. The school is eager to appoint another deputy headteacher to strengthen the current senior leadership team of headteacher with a deputy headteacher and a school coordinator, both of whom are part-time. Successful leadership and management is evident in maintaining the smooth running of the school while handling significant changes.

The school is working on a number of issues related to the move to voluntary aided status. Considerable progress has been made on complying with statutory requirements, although in a number of areas compliance is not yet complete. A number of these relate to the work of the governing body. Although the school is anxious to complete police checks on all staff, there are a number that are outstanding. Additionally, while most teaching staff are qualified teachers a small proportion are not. Rightly, the school is keen to encourage all teachers to achieve qualified teacher status. Half of the ten teachers without this are currently working towards achieving the status.

The school has a larger than normal proportion of part-time teaching staff. The school leadership is aware of this and the importance of regular communication. There is

some identification of responsibilities among the teaching staff, for example, for assessment and recording or for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, but there is scope for identification and delegation of responsibilities, with accountability, in order to move the school forward.

The governing body is supportive and strongly committed to the school. Governors bring a wide range of experience and expertise to their work and, in recognition of their limited expertise within education, have undergone some training. The governing body operates effectively providing both support and challenge to the headteacher. A healthy partnership has been forged with the local authority that has proved beneficial to the school in its move into the maintained sector.

The current accommodation, a considerable improvement on the previous house in which the school operated, is only temporary but serves the needs of the school well. There is great anticipation in looking to the move into new accommodation scheduled for Sept 2006. Resources are limited but overall the school offers good value for money. The school has the capacity for improvement; strategic appointments would further increase this capacity.



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## Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	3	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	NA	NA

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	1	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	1	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3	NA

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2	NA

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	No	NA

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	Yes
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	Yes

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

As you know, we visited your school recently to find out how well it is doing. Thank you for being so polite, friendly and willing to talk to us. It was useful to know what you think about your school.

There are some things that we think are really good about your school. These are:

- the enthusiasm from you and your teachers in wanting to do well
- the outstanding results and good progress you make in your work
- how well your head teacher and other teachers care for your well-being
- your parents are happy with the school and all it does for you
- your behaviour is outstanding and you are learning to be safe and have healthy life styles.

To improve the school further we have suggested that the school should:

- continue to develop your lessons in ways that will interest and engage you in being active participants in learning. This should help you enjoy your work and achieve well
- let you know more clearly what grades and levels you are working at, and to tell you, in more detail, how to improve those levels
- provide more opportunities for you to participate and contribute to the life of the school through, for example, the school council.

We wish you well for your exciting future as the school moves to its new building. Thank you for making us welcome in the school.