

Leeds Menorah School

Independent School

Inspection report

DfES Registration Number	383/6099
Unique Reference Number	108110
Inspection number	296836
Inspection dates	22-23 March 2007
Reporting inspector	Cecile Corfield AI

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 162A of the Education Act 2002 (as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005).

Inspection of funded nursery education is provided under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998

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Purpose and scope of the inspection

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

Information about the school

Leeds Menorah School is an independent Jewish day school situated in the grounds of the Beth Hamedrash Hagadol Synagogue in Moortown, a suburb of Leeds in Yorkshire. Some pupils travel each day from Sheffield and Hull. The school was established in 1978 and moved to its current premises in October 2004. The school is on a spit site, with the secondary school for girls situated a short distance away from the primary school where there is a nursery and a reception class with eight children on roll. Overall, there are thirty-three pupils in Years 1 to 10; nine of whom attend the secondary school. One pupil has a statement of special educational need.. Funded nursery education, provided for children over three, but under five years old, was inspected by a childcare inspector at the same time as this inspection. Currently, the school admits children below the age of three and this provision has not been registered with Ofsted as required by the Children's Act . 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.*'

Evaluation of the school

Leeds Menorah School is successful in meeting its aims and provides a good quality of education. Staff are committed to the academic and personal progress of the pupils. The small numbers of pupils in each class ensure that all are valued as individuals. The quality of teaching is good and this enables pupils to achieve well. The *Limmudei Kodesh* (religious) and *Limmudei Chol* (secular) curricula are relevant and interesting so that pupils enjoy learning. Pupils have good attitudes to their learning and their self-confidence develops effectively. Teachers provide good role models which promotes the school's positive ethos. The school makes satisfactory provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety. It meets most but not all of the regulations required for continued registration as an independent school, but must, with urgency, register its day care provision for children under three with Ofsted's Children's Directorate.

Quality of education

The quality of the curriculum is good. The prospectus sets out clearly the school's values and aims for its curriculum. The school commits itself to providing pupils with an education which helps them to reach their full potential. It is divided into two

parts: *Kodesh* (religious) studies in the morning and *Chol* (secular) studies in the afternoon and on Friday morning. The well-planned *Kodesh* curriculum is a major feature of the school's provision. It successfully promotes progression in knowledge and understanding of all relevant aspects of the Jewish religion. The *Chol* curriculum is broadly based on the National Curriculum and the school strives to give balanced provision in the time available. Most subjects of the National Curriculum are provided. Sufficient time is allocated to subjects with appropriate time given to literacy and numeracy each day. Art is taught mainly through the *Kodesh* curriculum, as is singing in Hebrew. The *Kodesh* and *Chol* curricula continue effectively in the secondary school and nine subjects are available at GCSE. Throughout both schools, the pupils' personal, social and health education is taught effectively through the *Kodesh* curriculum. In the primary school, for pupils in Years 4 and 5, citizenship is taught through a 'Changes' topic which deals, in part, with the historical effects of immigration on society, the constitution and the electoral system. Pupils in Years 3 and 6 do not yet have this opportunity. Pupils in the secondary school continue with aspects of citizenship in history lessons such as leadership, democracy and the European Union.

Although there are policies and long-term plans for each subject, planning is not always sufficiently detailed in setting out what will be taught, how and when, with clear learning objectives and guidance on the match of the work to the range of ability in each class. The school recognises that this is an area for development.

Provision for information and communication technology is satisfactory. The school has a suitable range of computers and printers, but these are not used as often as they could be to support learning in lessons. Not all age groups are timetabled to use the computers each week.

The school has appropriate procedures for the identification of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. One pupil has a statement of special educational need and is given effective support by staff and the local authority, with appropriate targets in his individual education plan.

The quality of teaching varies but is good overall. As a result, pupils make good progress and achieve well. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen. Pupils are suitably challenged by good questioning techniques and they respond with interest and enthusiasm. Teachers use effective strategies to manage pupils' behaviour which result in good relationships and the pupils' positive attitudes to their learning. Teachers have good subject knowledge and know their pupils well. Classes are small and informal assessment is effective in developing pupils' learning. Teachers have high expectations for academic and behavioural standards. As a consequence, the pupils behave well and achieve above average standards nationally at the end of primary and secondary education.

Throughout the school, teachers use time well. The pace of lessons is brisk and pupils are provided with interesting activities, as seen in a French lesson for Year 10

pupils who were learning about different forms of employment and how to conduct an interview. All teachers, both of *Kodesh* and *Chol*, have good subject knowledge and convey their enthusiasm to the pupils. Marking of pupils' work is constructive and helps pupils to improve their work. Homework is assigned on a daily basis and is tailored to suit the different age groups and abilities. Resources are adequate and the teachers make good use of worksheets, whiteboards and of the equipment that is available to them.

Assessment procedures are satisfactory but are at an early stage of development. A useful progress-tracking document is now in place and includes information from the last school year. Teacher-assessed statutory tests and optional tests are used efficiently in the primary school. In Key Stage 3, the statutory tests are marked externally. An annual reading test is undertaken.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is given good prominence in the *Kodesh* curriculum and, as a result, pupils have a good understanding of how to relate to others in a wholly appropriate way. They are given opportunities to contribute to the school community by being responsible for one another and by participating in whole-school activities. Pupils are encouraged to improve their self-knowledge and to grow in self-esteem and self-confidence. To support the *Kodesh* curriculum, the school has several incentive schemes to further promote its good behaviour and thought for others. Weekly and monthly assemblies celebrate those pupils who have shown good personal qualities. The school promotes *midot* (good character training) successfully. Knowledge and understanding of Jewish culture are good, but provision for promoting understanding of other faiths and cultures, though satisfactory overall, is at an early stage of development. Nevertheless, aspects of citizenship are taught to pupils in Years 3 to 6 and in the secondary school, the pupils study multi-cultural literature and poetry. The senior pupils are also involved with '*Leeds Safer Communities*' by providing exhibitions to raise awareness of Jewish culture. Attendance is good as pupils enjoy coming to school. To prepare for the pupils' future economic well-being, employment and workplaces are discussed extensively, looking at ways that people earn their living and play a part in the community.

Welfare, health and safety of the pupils

The provision for the pupils' welfare, health and safety is satisfactory. Although all policies and procedures are in place, the nominated person for child protection has not had recent training and the two First Aiders' qualifications are out-of-date.

The school has not experienced any serious misdemeanours by pupils in recent years, but is prepared to keep records if such incidents should occur. Fire drills are undertaken and details logged, but the school does not ensure that drills take place each term. Fire risk assessments are carried out twice a year. Pupils are encouraged

to eat healthily and the need for physical fitness is emphasised. All parents who returned the inspection questionnaire indicated that the school takes good care of their children.

Admission and attendance registers do not fully meet regulations. The admission register does not record the gender of pupils and the attendance registers do not indicate the reasons for absences. The school has not produced a three-year plan for improved accessibility with regard to the Disability Discrimination Act 2002.

Suitability of the proprietor and staff

The school does not meet all of the requirements, as three members of staff have not received their Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks. These have been applied for recently. When employing staff, not all of the required checks are carried out, for example, on medical fitness or evidence of professional qualifications.

School's premises and accommodation

The primary and secondary premises are suitable for their purpose. However, the accommodation at the secondary school urgently needs redecoration. The primary school is purpose built. Classrooms are bright and airy. The spacious central hall is used effectively for a variety of purposes. There are no specialist facilities and lessons such as science and art take place in the classrooms. The secondary pupils use a portakabin for science, and, although not ideal, the pupils achieve high standards nationally in science at GCSE. In both schools, pupils' work is used to good effect to enhance the environment.

The grounds at the primary school are used appropriately for games and recreation. The secondary school has a games hall indoors and a small area at the rear of the building for recreation. The school makes good use of a local leisure centre for tennis.

Provision of information for parents, carers and others

Provision for information for parents and carers is satisfactory. The brochure contains the required information for parents. Newsletters are only sent occasionally as the school feels that it has close contact with parents and the community each day. There is a meeting for parents and teachers each term and an annual report is provided.

Procedures for handling complaints

The complaints procedure meets all of the requirements.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school meets all of the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2003 as amended January 2005, with the exception of those listed below.

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety (standard 3) and must:

- provide training for the nominated person responsible for child protection and for the staff (paragraph 3(2)(b)).
- ensure that First Aiders have current qualifications (paragraph 3(6)).
- maintain an admission register and an attendance register in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (paragraph 3(9)).

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of suitability of proprietor and staff (standard 4) and must:

- prior to the confirmation of their appointment, ensure that staff at the school and any member of the body of persons named as the proprietor has been subject to a check with the Criminal Records Bureau to confirm their suitability to work with children (paragraph 4(b)).
- prior to the confirmation of the appointment of all staff, carry out appropriate checks to confirm their identity, medical fitness, previous employment history, character references and, where appropriate, qualifications and professional references and take these into account in determining whether their appointment will be confirmed (paragraph 4(c)).

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of the school's premises and accommodation (standard 5) and must:

- improve standards of maintenance of decoration in the secondary school premises

In order to comply with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 2002 the school should devise a three-year accessibility plan.

What the school could do to improve further

While not required by the regulations, the school might wish to consider the following points for development:

- provide a citizenship course for all pupils in Key Stage 2.
- further develop pupils' understanding of other faiths and cultures.
- ensure that lesson plans always indicate learning objectives and provide for different abilities.

What the school must do to comply with the Children's Act 1989 Schedule 9A as amended by regulations in 2003.

- the school should either cease to admit pupils below the age of three or register this provision separately with Ofsted.

Inspection of funded nursery education

Effectiveness of the funded nursery education

This inspection was completed on 22 March 2007 as a single inspection event with the s162A inspection of the school in which an integrated report template was piloted. The Early Years report has not been published separately.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff plan a wide range of topic activities around the Jewish calendar. Although many learning outcomes are achieved through the activities, planning does not show clear links to the early learning goals and it is not used to assess the next steps for children's learning. Staff have high expectations of behaviour and children respond well to positive praise and encouragement. They are motivated to learn and enjoy their play. However, children are not always given opportunities to freely choose and express their own creativity. Basic children's profiles are completed at regular intervals each term. However, these are not used effectively to plan for the next step of children's learning.

Children with learning difficulties and those who are learning English as an additional language receive good support from staff, who work closely with other professionals and parents to provide an inclusive environment. Staff place strong emphasis on helping children consider and respect others, ensuring children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The quality of the leadership and management of the nursery is satisfactory. Managers and teachers are aware of the need to introduce the Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage but this has not been implemented yet.

Partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. Expectations are met with regard to their children's education in the Jewish faith and they praise the support, friendship and warm environment within the setting. Details of the children's progress are discussed with them daily and at parents' evenings. However, there is no formal system in place to ensure that parents' and carers' contributions are recorded in their children's development files.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Recommendations or actions to improve the funded nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of the nursery education the registered person should take account of the following recommendations:

- develop planning to ensure that the early learning goals are incorporated into the provision of topics and extend observations to show how children are progressing along the stepping stones.
- ensure children are given continuous opportunities to freely choose and express their own creativity.
- develop a system that ensures parents and carers are included in the recording of their children's development and assessment files.

School details

Name of school	Leeds Menorah School		
DfES number	383/6099		
Unique reference number	108110		
Unique reference number (funded nursery education)	EY245579		
Type of school	Jewish day school		
Status	Independent		
Date school opened	1978		
Age range of pupils	3-16		
Gender of pupils	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 11	Girls: 26	Total: 37
Number on roll (part-time pupils)	Boys: 0	Girls: 6	Total: 6
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational need	Boys: 1	Girls: 0	Total: 1
Number of children receiving day care	Boys: 0	Girls: 2	Total: 2
Number of children receiving funded nursery education	Boys: 2	Girls: 4	Total: 6
Annual fees (day pupils)	£2,200		
Address of school	(Secondary)	(Primary)	
	2 Sandhill Lane	399 Street Lane	
	Leeds	Leeds	
	West Yorkshire	West Yorkshire	
	LS17 6AG	LS17 6HQ	
Telephone number	01132 697709		
Fax number	01132 942485		
Email address	jrefson@gmail.com		
Headteacher	Mrs Refson		
Proprietor	Rabbi Refson		
Reporting inspector	Cecile Corfield AI		
Childcare inspector	Ingrid Pine CCI		
Dates of inspection	22-23 March 2007		