



ADULT LEARNING  
INSPECTORATE



## Kisharon College

### CONTENTS

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#### [Basic information about the college](#)

#### [Part A: Summary](#)

[Information about the college](#)

[How effective is the college?](#)

[Quality of provision in curriculum and occupational areas](#)

[How well is the college led and managed?](#)

[To what extent is the college educationally and socially inclusive?](#)

[How well are students and trainees guided and supported?](#)

[Students' view of the college](#)

[Other information](#)

#### [Part B: The college as a whole](#)

[Achievement and standards](#)

[Quality of teaching, training and learning](#)

[Leadership and management](#)

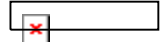
#### [Part C: Curriculum and occupational areas](#)

[Vocational subjects](#)

[Literacy and numeracy and communication](#)

[Independent living skills \(and Jewish studies\)](#)

## Basic information about the college

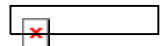


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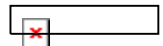
Name of college:	Kisharon College
Type of college:	Independent, specialist, day
Principal:	Rabbi Simcha Richland
Address of college:	54 Parson Street London NW4 1TP
Telephone number:	020 8457 2525
Fax number:	020 8457 2535
Chair of governors:	Jonathan Schonfeld
Reference number*:	ZZZ1163
Name of reporting inspector:	Susan Preece HMI
Dates of inspection:	24-28 January 2005

*\*charity or registered business number of the company running the college*

## Part A: Summary



### Information about the college



Kisharon College was established as a college in 2001. It offers education and training for orthodox Jewish men and women, all of whom have moderate learning difficulties. A smaller proportion of students also have severe learning difficulties and/or autistic spectrum disorders. Between 1992 and 2001, the provision was a day services centre. The college is part of Kisharon Services, a charity and registered company limited by guarantee. In addition to Kisharon College, the charity also has a number of other services. These include an integrated nursery, a day special school for children aged 3 to 16, a residential home for men, a business enterprise centre and supported living flats. The college has a management committee which reports to the Board of Governors. Kisharon College is located in the London borough of Barnet, within a large orthodox Jewish community and has easy access to shops and leisure facilities. Students come from the surrounding local authorities of Barnet, Hackney, Brent, Haringey, Harrow and Camden.

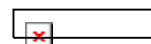
There are 48 students in total attending Kisharon College. Of these, 27 students are funded by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC), and the remainder are funded through social services. Of the

LSC-funded students, two thirds are aged 16 to 19 and one third are aged 19 and over. Within these groups, 15 are male and 12 are female. Most students are from orthodox Jewish backgrounds, but none are from minority ethnic groups.

The college is housed in a refurbished listed building which was previously a convent. The director of the college reports directly to the executive director for Kisharon Services. Within Kisharon College, there are four main units; the autistic unit which has 3 LSC students; the high dependency unit which has 6 LSC students; the further education (FE) department which has 14 LSC students; and the vocational training unit which has 4 LSC students. Students are allocated to one of the four units according to their ability and have access to all areas of the college curriculum, vocational training and independent living. Music, art, sports, literacy, numeracy and communication form a part of the programmes on offer. Students are also given the opportunity to take part in external work experience placements with supportive employers in the local area.

`Kisharon' is the Hebrew word for ability, talent or flair, and it is the aim of the college to discover, encourage and nurture the `Kisharon' of each student. Students' participation in synagogue activities, observance of festivals and performance of religious duties permeates all programmes. Teaching provision is segregated by gender in accordance with orthodox practice, although students come together during some social sessions. The college aims to provide an environment, according to the orthodox Jewish ethos, in which adults can receive training, leading where possible, to supported and open employment opportunities.

### **How effective is the college?**



The overall quality of provision is inadequate. The curriculum areas of independent living skills and literacy, numeracy and communication are very weak, unsatisfactory in Jewish studies and satisfactory in vocational subjects. The care and support needs of students are adequately met, but it is not possible to accurately identify achievements for many students. Assessment processes are inadequate. Activities and programmes are insufficient to match the needs of the more able students. The overall standard of teaching and learning is unsatisfactory. Leadership and management are very weak.

The college's key strengths and areas that should be improved are listed below.

#### ***Key strengths***

- good promotion of Jewish practices and observances
  
- skilful management of students' behaviours
  
- good individual support for students.

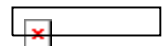
#### ***What should be improved***

- the unsatisfactory progress and achievements for many students

- the insufficient staff knowledge and specialist expertise
- the range and use of resources for learning
- inadequate assessments
- the inappropriate use of external accreditation
- the inadequate challenge for more able students
- the poor strategic planning
- the inadequate response to legislative requirements for the Race Relations (amendment) Act 2000 and the Special Educational Needs Disability Act 2001 (SENDA) and child protection procedures
- the ineffective quality assurance arrangements.

Further aspects of provision requiring improvement are identified in the sections on individual subjects and courses in the full report.

### Quality of provision in curriculum and occupational areas



*The table below shows overall judgements about provision in subjects and courses that were inspected. Judgements are based primarily on the quality of teaching, training and learning and how well students achieve. Not all subjects and courses were inspected. Inspectors make overall judgements on curriculum areas and on the effectiveness of leadership and management in the range: Outstanding (grade 1), Good (2), Satisfactory (3), Unsatisfactory (4), Very Poor (5)*

Area	Overall judgements about provision, and comment
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Vocational subjects	<b>Satisfactory.</b> Teaching is satisfactory or better in most subjects and good in art, bookbinding and horticulture. Students are well supported in lessons through the use of effective behaviour management strategies. Individual learning plans (ILPs) lack coherence and many learning goals are insufficiently precise. Quality assurance arrangements are underdeveloped and work experience is not effectively integrated into the vocational curriculum.
Literacy and numeracy and communication	<b>Very weak.</b> Most teaching is unsatisfactory; baseline assessment is inadequate and there is insufficient, detailed target setting. Recording and monitoring of students' progress are unsatisfactory. Resources are inadequate, with staff lacking sufficient expertise and knowledge and leadership and management of the area are very weak.
Independent living skills (and Jewish studies)	<b>Very weak.</b> The contributory grade for Jewish studies is <b>unsatisfactory.</b> There is too much unsatisfactory teaching and the resources for learning are poor. There is inappropriate use of accreditation as a curriculum framework and a lack of challenge for more able students in independent living skills. Assessment is poor and leadership and management are very weak. The strong Jewish ethos promotes students' spiritual and moral development and the management of behaviour is good.

#### How well is the college led and managed?

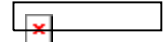
Leadership and management are very weak. The main mission of Kisharon College is fully understood by staff, students, parents, governors and members of the community. Management of the curriculum is unsatisfactory, with insufficient understanding in the college of key curriculum processes. Management responsibilities are not clear. The teacher observation scheme requires teaching observations twice a year, but it is not sufficiently rigorous and significant weaknesses in teaching and learning have not been identified. The college management committee, which reports to the main board of governors, has only been in place for a short time, and has not yet developed areas of responsibility for governors. Governors have not ensured that the college is up to date with recent equalities legislation, is compliant with student protection procedures and that the health and safety policy sites the most recent legislation. Financial management is unsatisfactory as the specialist support required on the individual learner schedules has not been provided. The college does not provide value for money.

#### To what extent is the college educationally and socially inclusive?

The college's response to social inclusion is satisfactory. The college provides for students with a very wide range of abilities, from those with severe learning difficulties to those capable of studying at foundation level or above. No students are from minority ethnic backgrounds, but all come from the Jewish community in North and West London, and the college accepts students with varying degrees of orthodoxy. At the time of inspection, 15 students were male and 12 female. Some 13% of staff are from minority ethnic backgrounds and overall 5% of the staff have a registered disability. The college is successful in one of its main aims to enable students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to participate in the observances of the Jewish community, where Judaism is a way of life. Students are encouraged to develop tolerance towards those of different faiths. However,

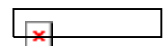
policy, and operates an equal opportunities staff recruitment system, the college is not fully compliant with the Race Relations (amendment) Act 2000 or the SENDA. The college does not teach key skills, although a few students could benefit from this. Provision for the development of literacy, numeracy and communication skills is very weak. The programmes taught do not meet the needs of all of the students and do not always build on their achievements. The accommodation is not adequately adapted for people with mobility difficulties.

### How well are students and trainees guided and supported?



Support and guidance are satisfactory overall. Individual personal support for students is good. Key workers provide daily timetabled individual support and students are well supported in their activities, particularly those related to religious observance. Daily communication books, identifying work completed and other issues are completed so that parents/carers are kept informed. Thorough individual and generic risk assessments are carried out and regularly reviewed. Specialist therapeutic support, such as dance and movement therapy and music therapy, is very good. However, although the recently appointed speech and language therapist provides very good support, it is only available one day a week for four hours in total. This is not sufficient, and students' needs for speech and language therapy have not been adequately met for some time. Student induction is effective and students are adept at finding their way around a complex building. However, the college has yet to complete a student handbook. Formal careers guidance is not satisfactory. The Connexions advisors sometimes attend formal reviews, but specialist careers guidance is not provided at the college. The transition programme is very new and the process has not yet had sufficient time to improve the students' experiences. The college is not compliant with child and adult protection procedures.

### Students' view of the college



Students' views about the college were taken into account and a summary of their main comments is presented below.

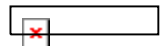
#### ***What students like about the college***

- lots of support
  
- tutors
  
- Oneg (weekly celebration in preparation for the Sabbath)
  
- the synagogue.

### ***What they feel could be improved***

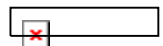
- the toilets are sometimes blocked
  
- there is no sink in one cubicle
  
- the food is sometimes oily.

### **Other information**

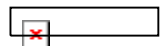


The college inspection report will normally be published 12 working weeks after the inspection. Once published, the college has two months in which to prepare its post inspection action plan and submit it to the local LSC. The college's action plan must show what action the college will take to bring about improvements in response to issues raised in the report. The governors should agree it before it is submitted to the local LSC. The local LSC should send to Ofsted only action plans from colleges that have been judged inadequate or have been awarded a grade 4 or 5 for curriculum provision, work-based learning and/or leadership and management.

### **Part B: The college as a whole**



### **Achievement and standards**



1. There are no differences in standards and achievements between the provision for students aged 16 to 18 and those aged 19 and over. Students, of separate gender and funding streams, are taught in one of the four main units based on their level of ability and individual needs.

2. Many students make good progress with managing their behaviours and become more confident. For example, a student who had some difficulty respecting the property of others has responded well to staff intervention. The student is now able to attend a work experience placement. Many students make significant gains in their ability to participate in important rituals and rites associated with the Jewish faith, for example, by developing increased ability to recite prayer, behave appropriately within prayer sessions and in putting on Tefillin (phylacteries) for morning prayer. However, most students do not make the progress they are capable of in literacy, numeracy and communication, independent living skills and Jewish studies.

3. It is not always possible accurately to identify the full range of students' progress. For many

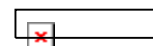
students, achievements, such as being able to make an informed choice or behaving in a socially appropriate manner, are very significant, but are not always captured effectively. Recording of progress is not adequately related to students' starting points; it is not possible to evaluate progress over time. Pass rate data indicate that between 2002 and 2004 13 students gained Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN) qualifications such as the FE Award and the Silver/Bronze Award and several have achieved modules in ASDAN Towards Independence, National Proficiency Certificates Tests (NPCT) and Oxford, Cambridge and RSA exam board (OCR) new computer literacy and information technology (CLAIT) at level 1. Within college, students' accomplishments are celebrated through displays, key worker sessions, internal certification, student diaries and during the weekly Oneg (weekly celebration in preparation for the Sabbath) where those male and female students who have made the most significant progress are recognised through 'students of the month' award.

4. The outcomes of assessment and planning do not provide adequate information upon which to develop precise and meaningful individual learning targets. Each student has a number of subject-specific ILPs. These plans lack coherence, are insufficiently comprehensive and do not adequately identify the small steps of progress needed by students for the next stage in their life.

5. Whilst destination data are recorded, they are not effectively used to inform curriculum development. Of the 11 students who completed their LSC programme in 2004, 5 returned to do other programmes within Kisharon, 2 relocated to live in Israel, 2 got married and moved into sheltered accommodation and 2 entered into open employment.

6. Retention rates are high, averaging 95% over the past three years, and this is in line with other specialist colleges. Punctuality to lessons is generally good. During the week of inspection, the attendance rate was 94%.

### Quality of teaching, training and learning



7. There is too much unsatisfactory teaching. Poor teaching is characterised by insufficient staff expertise, weak assessments and target setting, poor lesson planning and inadequate recording of students' progress. Staff place too much emphasis on meeting the requirements of the awarding bodies at the expense of helping students to develop the skills they need. Some students are working towards accreditation which is not appropriate or relevant for their future lives. Too many lessons are poorly planned with little clarity about what is to be achieved. For example, one student had as a target 'to improve communication skills'. Lesson planning in general does not sequentially build upon students' skills and prior learning. For example, in one lesson, a student was being taught the five stages of cleaning a mirror and in another lesson students were learning to count change using plastic money instead of real coins.

8. The quality of teaching Jewish studies to the female students is good. The teachers have a clear understanding of the abilities of the students and present lessons that are appropriate to their needs. For example, in a lesson on the festival of Tu Bishvat (New Year for Trees), the teacher encouraged each student to identify various fruits and to recite its correct blessing. In an art lesson, where students were learning about mixing colours and painting, the teacher effectively motivated students to complete their work and develop good behaviour through the use of reward symbols. Students were successfully focused on their individual task throughout the lesson by the appropriate and challenging activity. Relationships between staff and students are good.

9. The range and use of specialist resources is unsatisfactory. Less than half the teaching staff have a recognised teaching qualification, but most are working towards a basic qualification in teaching. Few teachers have a specialist teaching qualification, although a few are currently being supported by the college to take NVQ level 3 in learning disability and autism. No teaching staff have specialist qualifications in literacy and numeracy. Whilst there are adequate opportunities for staff professional



development, there is no overall training plan. Support staff are contracted in from external agencies and the quality of this support is variable.

10. The staff-student ratio is good and most class sizes are small. Whilst a range of successful therapists do make valuable contributions to supporting students' learning, the time allocated for these interventions is very limited. The synagogue is a very good resource and reinforces the Jewish religious ethos of the college. The opti-music programme and equipment is valuable in encouraging students' listening skills and social interaction but it is underused. The use of information and learning technology (ILT) is underdeveloped. There is a shortage of computers in many teaching rooms and an inadequate range of specialist software and age-appropriate learning materials.

11. Some teaching accommodation is poor. Although there is a lift, many areas of the college are not easily accessible for people with mobility problems. The room where female high-dependency students are taught is too small and there are steps up and down into the room. A number of these students have significant co-ordination and mobility difficulties and the inadequate accommodation restricts their independence. In addition, the room is partitioned and the wall does not reach the ceiling. When therapy sessions are held in adjoining sections, the noise is distracting. Practical and vocational activities take place in workshops, most of which are suitably equipped. Health and safety procedures are adequate, but the health and safety policy does not site recent legislation. Individual and generic risk assessments for students are rigorously carried out and regularly reviewed.

12. The assessment and monitoring of students' progress are unsatisfactory. Initial assessment, although conducted over a period of time, is not sufficiently comprehensive and lacks specialist multi-disciplinary contributions with which to inform students' individual programmes. The assessment outcomes do not take sufficient account of previous specialist reports and previous achievements. There are no effective baseline assessments to provide adequately detailed information upon which to develop precise and meaningful individual learning targets. Small steps of learning are not recorded systematically or in detail. Progress made by students since entering the college cannot be measured. Teacher records and student reviews often describe the activities in which the student has been involved rather than identify what has been learned as a result. In the more successful lessons, for example in the high dependency unit, individual student's progress is effectively identified in relation to core areas of learning such as communication and behaviour. This good practice is not shared across the college.

13. Opportunities to assess students' skills and competencies outside of the specific subject areas, as in the case of the indoor garden project, are missed. There is no effective co-ordination of target setting and assessment outcomes across the four units. Although some staff do formally review progress with students at the end of each lesson, the process lacks rigour and is not effectively used to assist with the planning of future lessons. The self-assessment report recognises that assessment and internal moderation are in need of improvement.

14. The curriculum at Kisharon is particularly effective in enabling students to follow Jewish observances. Students are given good and sensitive practical support to enable them to participate in prayers and other observances. The dance and movement therapy, music therapy, and speech and language therapy, contribute well to students' programmes, although there is insufficient provision to meet the needs of all students. The therapies was a strength at the last inspection. The enrichment programme is satisfactory. It is offered after lunch, with a few evening activities. Regular activities include board games, art, music, information and communications technology (ICT), and sports. Students attend on a voluntary basis and the programme meets the interests of many students.

15. However, although the vocational subjects are relevant for students, much of the formal curriculum does not meet the needs of all of the learners. The most able students follow programmes that are well below their abilities, and in some cases students who are at or above foundation level are given tasks that include cutting out and sticking. The independent living skills programme is overly dominated by accreditation and insufficiently focused on students' previous experience and possible future destinations. There is insufficient planning for the development of students' literacy, numeracy and communication skills. In Jewish studies, the curriculum guidelines are insufficiently comprehensive. Jewish studies does not adequately help all students to increase

and develop their understanding and knowledge of the Jewish faith.

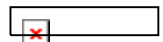
16. Overall, there is too little understanding of ways to develop and implement a curriculum that meets the needs of a particularly diverse group of students, and the current programmes lack coherence. Work experience is not effectively integrated into students' main programmes. The transition programme in preparation for leaving the college is in the early stages of development.

17. The staff are particularly good at managing behaviour that is challenging. Behaviour management plans and strategies are written for students in the high dependency unit, and staff spend much time discussing how to work effectively with students. Members of staff co-operate in supporting each other when necessary. Specialist therapeutic support is very good, though insufficient, and students' needs for speech and language therapy have not been adequately met for some time. Students can be referred for specialist counselling, and use is made on an individual basis of a range of local specialists for very specific needs that students may have.

18. Personal support for students is good. Students have a key worker, whom they meet at the beginning and end of each day, where immediate issues can be raised. Key workers help to induct new students successfully into the college. Daily communication books, identifying work completed and other issues are completed, so that parents/carers are kept informed. Key workers keep regularly in touch with parents/carers where appropriate. The key worker may, in consultation with the senior tutor, recommend changes to a students' programme. The senior tutors have overall responsibility for students' individual programmes, which are reviewed annually or earlier if required. Staff are good at providing support to students in activities related to Jewish observance, such as daily prayers, both in the synagogue at Kisharon, and when they attend a local synagogue on Sabbath.

19. Formal guidance is not satisfactory. Students receive little guidance about future destinations. Connexions advisors sometimes attend formal reviews, but do not provide careers guidance at the college. The work experience co-ordinator helps those students who could progress to open or supported employment to make decisions about possible jobs. However, the transition programme is very new, and students are not always on programmes that build on their strengths. The induction of students helps them to settle in well and find their way around a complex building. However, the college has yet to complete a student handbook.

## Leadership and management



20. Leadership and management are very weak. The college mission is understood well by staff, students, parents/carers, and the local community. Many of the staff are enthusiastic in the support that they provide for the students in furthering this mission. The college operates a system of supervision that provides support for many members of staff. However, the system is not consistently implemented and a few members of staff receive very little supervision and support. Staff meetings focus mainly on student issues and day-to-day operational issues. Not all departments hold regular staff meetings and key information is not always effectively disseminated. Managers have not kept up to date with curriculum developments in the post-16 sector, and the staff are not sufficiently aware of good practice in the sector. The college is yet to complete the effective transition from being a day centre to a specialist college of FE.

21. The college has undergone significant growth in the last few years. Strategic planning and monitoring have not successfully addressed the challenge of balancing growth in the provision with maintaining quality in teaching and learning. In 2002, the provision moved into new accommodation. The building is listed and not easily adjustable for students with physical disabilities and/or mobility difficulties. However, development plans have as a target an increase in the number of students with complex needs. A significant increase in student numbers in the last two years has not been accompanied by comparable improvements in accommodation, which is now too cramped for the

current numbers and not suitable for students with mobility difficulties. There are too few members of staff with sufficient experience of teaching and learning and of curriculum development. There is no one with overall responsibility for each of the curriculum areas, and there are weaknesses in the management of curriculum areas. Management responsibilities are not clear.

22. The appraisal scheme has lapsed, and is to be revived. Senior tutors have received training in order to appraise staff. Members of staff have good access to professional development opportunities and training, and the college responds to individual staff requests for training. However, the college has not identified training priorities that reflect the significant changes that have taken place, and does not have a training plan. There is too little sharing of good practice.

23. The college has a range of policies as a guide for staff. The policy for staff induction involves specific training sessions. Guidance in the induction pack covers a range of topics, including an introduction to disability and aspects of good professional practice. However, the extent of further support provided in the first few months is dependent on the individual manager and not all teachers have been inducted appropriately. Although the college has a range of policies, they are not all regularly updated to take account of legislative changes. The health and safety policy not based on up-to-date legislation. The college does not have a formal personal relations policy to guide staff on how best to deal with sensitive issues regarding students' personal development within the parameters of the orthodox Jewish ethos.

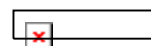
24. The college is not compliant with previous child and adult protection procedures, nor the most recent safeguarding requirements. Members of staff have not had recent training in these procedures and many staff do not know the name of the designated officer to whom they should refer in the event of suspected abuse. The college is not compliant with the requirements of SENDA or Race Relations (amendment) Act 2000 and staff have not had the required training to show how these acts impact on their practice. It is made clear in the induction handbook that members of staff are expected to challenge any instances of discriminatory behaviour, and the college encourages a climate of respect through its religious teaching. However, equality of opportunity is not explicitly promoted through the curriculum. The college follows equal opportunities guidelines in its recruitment procedures, but has only recently introduced monitoring forms. These show that 13% of college staff come from minority ethnic backgrounds. The college has a complaints procedure, but it is not clearly communicated to students.

25. Quality assurance procedures are not effective. The main mechanism for quality assurance is the teaching observation scheme. Observations should be carried out twice a year, although this requirement has not been followed by all line managers. The teaching observations involve the use of a comprehensive proforma, but the evaluations are not rigorous, with key weaknesses in teaching not identified. Nearly all staff are graded good or better against all of the teaching and learning criteria. The inspectors found a significant amount of unsatisfactory teaching. Curriculum managers have different approaches to other aspects of quality assurance. Some regularly carry out supervision of staff, review curriculum documentation, and have staff meetings that include discussion of curriculum issues, but not all do this. Similarly, involvement in the self-assessment process is variable, with staff in some units having a significant input into the report for their areas, others less so. Parent and student views are not systematically collated to inform the self-assessment. The report reflected in some detail on the curriculum areas. However, significant weaknesses in teaching and learning, curriculum development and assessment practice were not identified.

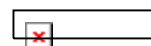
26. The college management committee has only recently been established and has held three meetings. The committee reports to the main board of the governors, which oversees the work of the Trust. The college management committee currently has five members, and is looking to increase this number to include a wider representation. The members are fully committed to the college, but as yet the specific responsibilities of each member have not been defined, and the committee has not yet received training in relation to its responsibilities. Governors have not ensured that the college policies in relation to student protection and equalities legislation are met. Indicators to measure annual performance have not yet been established. The college does not yet analyse data in relation to students' achievements and destinations so that the performance can be measured. It has plans to develop a management information system.

27. Financial management is not satisfactory. Although the financial procedures are satisfactory, and rigorously overseen by the trustees, college expenditure is not monitored in relation to provision for individual students. It is not possible to identify whether students receive sufficient specialist support. The college has recently appointed a part-time speech and language therapist, but many students who are in the third year of their programmes have not received the speech and language therapy support they require. Managers do not regularly or rigorously audit the students' individual learner schedules. The curriculum has significant weaknesses. The college does not provide value for money.

### Part C: Curriculum and occupational areas



#### Vocational subjects



Overall provision in this area is **satisfactory (grade 3)**

#### **Strengths**

- good teaching in art, bookbinding and horticulture
- very good management of classroom behaviour.

#### **Weaknesses**

- lack of integration of work experience
- underdeveloped quality assurance arrangements.

#### **Scope of provision**

28. The vocational programme provides ASDAN modules in art and carpentry. The college also offers in-house certificates in art, bookbinding, carpentry, hot foil printing and horticulture. Students are able to attend Barnet College of FE to complete an ASDAN 'Towards Independence' module in pottery and ceramics. This course is taught in the general FE college for three hours a week over a period of five months. There are four LSC-funded students in the vocational unit. Vocational subjects are also accessed by the 14 students based in the FE unit two of whom are studying for the OCR New Clait IT qualification at national vocational qualification (NVQ) level 1. There is a work experience programme currently provided for 12 students.

### ***Achievement and standards***

29. Students make effective progress in developing practical skills in a range of vocational areas and satisfactory progress in achieving units towards their ASDAN awards or college certificates. Within bookbinding, many students are able to work independently, safely and acquire good practical skills. Within the printing area, students make a range of products, including gift cards, personalised headed notepaper and bookmarks. These products are sold in the local community. In most of the vocational areas, students learn to use and operate equipment in a safe manner. Some students are successfully engaged in an indoor gardening project which is bringing together the work of students in horticulture, carpentry and art. This project-based approach enhances the students' wider skills and increases their confidence while contributing to the life of the whole college community. However, ILPs lack coherence and many learning goals are insufficiently precise. Recording of achievement is inconsistent overall and is not sufficiently accurate to measure the students' learning over time. Attendance is as expected for a specialist college. Students were generally punctual during the week of inspection.

### ***Quality of education and training***

30. Teaching is satisfactory or better in most vocational subjects and good in art, bookbinding and horticulture. For example, in a horticulture lesson where students were preparing and potting tulip bulbs, teaching was well planned. Students had to collect and distribute soil, fill pots, drill holes and plant bulbs in a pattern. Activities were well matched to the needs of individual students. Support workers made appropriate interventions, but allowed students to learn from their mistakes. The teacher promoted student interest and involvement through regular and realistic praise and skilfully managed one student's inappropriate behaviour and encouraged her to participate in the activity. Students enjoyed the experience, were eager participants and took pride in their achievements.

31. In the less successful lessons, teachers do not plan lessons to meet the individual needs of the students. In a carpentry lesson to make a planter, the teacher missed valuable opportunities to extend students' learning. Tasks were completed by staff instead of giving students adequate time to complete the activity themselves. Opportunities to question students were missed. For example, when attempting to saw a wooden plank with a knot the student was told to cut from the other end, but no explanation was given for this instruction. When a drill did not work the student was not asked to investigate the reason, the teacher simply pointed out the missing battery. ILPs are underdeveloped and do not adequately inform teaching and learning. Teachers do not always evaluate the outcomes of lessons effectively and some records consist mainly of descriptions of what students have done, rather than what they have learned.

32. The quality of resources is satisfactory. The staff student-ratio is very good in all classes. Most staff are appropriately qualified in their vocational area, although many do not have appropriate teaching qualifications. Overall, accommodation is satisfactory and most workshops are adequately equipped for the specific subject. However, the shared room for printing and bookbinding is unsatisfactory and students become distracted by noise from the adjoining area. The temperature in the horticulture cabin is sometimes too low. There are not enough computers in the printing area. The hot-foil printing machine can be safely operated by a range of students and it has the added benefit of being able to produce instant results.

33. Assessment procedures are underdeveloped and do not adequately identify the skills students need to develop for their future lives. There are no baseline assessments. Mid-year and end-of-year reviews reports describe activities in which students have been involved, but do not adequately identify learning.

34. Vocational courses satisfactorily meet the needs of a wide range of students with differing abilities. Students are able to learn a variety of practical skills which will enable them to move on to other higher-level practical courses. However, the lack of integration of work experience within the vocational programme is a key weakness. The 12 students on work experience programmes are ably supported by the work experience co-ordinator, who has found many appropriate placements close to the college, to allow students to continue to take part in Jewish observances. A few students are able to attend Kisharon's Business Enterprise, which is on the college site, for experience of

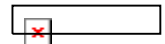
supported work activity. However, the work experience is an isolated activity, not linked to other aspects of students' programmes.

35. Support for students is satisfactory overall. The management of students' challenging behaviour in lessons is very good. Where individual guidelines have not been identified, staff are able to deal intuitively with potentially very disruptive behaviour. Personal support for students is good. Tutorials are informal, but students have effective individual support from their key workers. The transition arrangements are underdeveloped with minimal involvement of Connexions advisors.

### ***Leadership and management***

36. Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. Strategic planning of the area is underdeveloped. The senior tutor meets frequently with teachers in a supportive role. Quality assurance arrangements are underdeveloped. Internal lesson observation grades do not match the grade awarded by inspectors. The self-assessment for the vocational subjects is detailed, but is not aligned to the common inspection framework, nor does it rigorously identify key strengths and weaknesses in the areas. There is no formal agreement to assess the quality of provision for Kisharon students attending pottery lessons at Barnet College. The promotion of equality and diversity is included in Jewish studies, but it is not actively promoted through the vocational curriculum. Racism and bullying are not tolerated.

### **Literacy and numeracy and communication**



Overall provision in this area is **very weak (grade 5)**

#### ***Strengths***

- there are no key strengths.

#### ***Weaknesses***

- much poor teaching
- unsatisfactory recording and monitoring of students' progress
- inadequate resources
- inadequate assessment
- ineffective leadership and management.

### ***Scope of provision***

37. Literacy, numeracy, and communication programmes are provided for all students through discrete lessons and integrated across all areas of the curriculum.

### ***Achievement and standards***

38. Individual students' achievements are not adequately tracked across all curriculum areas and it is not possible to identify sufficient progress for all students. Achievement data are not analysed in literacy, numeracy and communication. Some students repeat work they already know well or are working at levels significantly below their ability. Some students make achievements in their speaking and listening skills in Jewish studies, for example, in reciting and chanting prayers and their literacy skills in interpreting Hebrew text. Identification of students' literacy, numeracy and communication targets on subject-specific ILPs is inadequate. Where identified, targets often lack precision. There are insufficient links between practical subjects and literacy, numeracy and communication lessons. However, staff in the high dependency unit successfully identify and record students' communication objectives. In some other areas, objectives for students in literacy, numeracy and communication lessons are appropriately specific and measurable. Examples of these include, 'to follow a three task instruction without help' and 'to listen to a short text and to answer questions from the content without prompting'. There are many missed opportunities to develop and reinforce numeracy, such as money skills.

### ***Quality of education and training***

39. Much of the teaching is poor and lesson planning is inadequate. Most lesson plans contain general targets and do not clearly show how the specific literacy, and numeracy needs of each student will be met. There is over emphasis on the requirements of national awarding bodies and insufficient attention is given to linking the teaching of practical subjects to the development of students' individual literacy, numeracy and communication needs. There is insufficient difference in learning activities when students with a wide range of abilities are in the same class. Teachers do not use a variety of teaching methods and activities to make learning interesting, stimulating and relevant. In a carpentry lesson, the teacher gave too much information for the students to understand and spoke without pause, and at a great pace, for the first 20 minutes. Students sat passively throughout this period. In a 15-minute art and craft lesson for male students with autism, the teacher unrealistically expected the students to draw, colour and cut out a tree from paper and then stick it on to a larger piece of paper. The students did not have the levels of understanding or co-ordination skills to complete this activity. There is over-reliance on inappropriate paper-based activities for students with limited reading and writing skills. Students do not have sufficient opportunities to review and evaluate what they have learned.

40. However, in one excellent art lesson, literacy and communication skills were effectively being developed. Students were producing colour wheels to distinguish the difference and relationship between primary and secondary colours. The teacher asked appropriate and open-ended questions which required students to think carefully before responding. This skilful approach effectively supported students' communication, problem-solving and decision-making skills. Students' writing skills were being developed by them identifying a word of the day, such as primary, and then writing it in a sentence.

41. Too many teachers have a limited understanding of how students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities learn effectively. Learning resources and materials are inadequate. There is a limited range of reading materials, some of which are child focused and not appropriate for adults. The range of IT-based software is equally limited. The use of ICT in lessons to support learning is underdeveloped. Staff do not have sufficient expertise in teaching literacy, numeracy and communication and have limited knowledge of appropriate adult curricula. No teaching staff have specialist qualifications in this curriculum area. Staff skills in Makaton are underdeveloped. Resources for students with communication difficulties include access to switch technology. The

opti-music sound beam equipment is a valuable but underused resource.

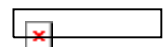
42. Assessment is inadequate. No baseline assessments are conducted to identify students' levels of literacy, numeracy and communication. Consequently, the starting point for each student relates to what they can do and what they need to learn is not identified. For example, one student in a meal preparation lesson was asked to complete two pictorial worksheets on dangers in the kitchen. The activity involved colouring in the appropriate parts on each picture and then listing the dangers. Reports provided by the student's previous school indicate she has functional literacy and numeracy skills at a much higher level than the task required. Literacy, numeracy and communication skill levels of students are not effectively identified and placed within the appropriate national adult curriculum framework. ILPs do not sufficiently identify literacy, numeracy and communication skills. Overall, learning objectives are subject specific and are inappropriately linked to external accreditation. Where literacy, numeracy and communication targets are identified, they tend to lack precision. For example, targets included 'to count amounts of money and work out change', 'cut timber to length' and 'to make improvements in communication skills'. Mid-year and end-of-year reviews are too general and do not provide adequate detail about students' achievements and their future needs. They include comments such as 'improvement in communication' or 'improvement in behaviour'. The needs of students with autistic spectrum disorders are not sufficiently taken into account when planning the timetable. The many changes of subject and activities in one day are not appropriate for students with autism who find change difficult.

43. Support for students is satisfactory overall. Individual support for students is good. Tutorials are informal and students know who to go to if they need help. The college has recently appointed a part-time speech and language therapist for four hours a week. This is, however, insufficient to meet the needs of the 14 students who have been identified as having communication difficulties or autistic spectrum disorders. The therapy support is good and the therapist is currently working with six students in lessons to identify communication goals. Teachers are becoming increasingly involved in identifying procedures to support students' communication goals. A library project has been devised for five students in the FE unit in which specific communication goals have been identified for each student when they go to the library, for example 'to make a request independently at the librarian's desk'. Strategies have been identified for staff to use in support of students. Staff and students are responding very positively to this specialist input, but it is at an early stage of development. Transition planning is underdeveloped.

### ***Leadership and management***

44. Leadership and management are very weak. The college does not have a formal policy on how literacy, numeracy and communication are to be taught and managed. There is no effective co-ordination across the college with the different units working in isolation from each other. The college has not appointed a co-ordinator for literacy, numeracy and communication, but the FE unit manager has recently been asked to take responsibility for this area. He has not received any training or additional support for this role. Quality assurance procedures are inadequate. Internal observations of lessons lack rigour and result in overly generous judgements and grades compared to those awarded by inspectors. There is little sharing of good practice. There is no explicit promotion of equal opportunities within curriculum. Strategic planning of how the provision will develop in the college is unsatisfactory. Self-assessment is weak and the process is not formalised. A brief self-assessment report has only recently been produced but it lacks rigour.

### **Independent living skills (and Jewish studies)**



Overall provision in this area is **very weak (grade 5)**

Contributory grade for Jewish studies is **unsatisfactory (grade 4)**



### ***Strengths***

- good promotion of Jewish ethos
- good management of behaviour.

### ***Weaknesses***

- too much unsatisfactory teaching
- poor resources for learning
- poor assessment
- lack of challenge for more able students
- weak management of the curriculum.

### ***Scope of provision***

45. The college provides independent living skills and Jewish studies as an integral part of the curriculum. A wide variety of topics are covered. In addition, students take part in twice-daily prayers (Tefillah), the celebration of the Sabbath (Oneg) and participate in a range of Jewish celebrations and rites. In independent living skills, the majority of students work towards national awards in ASDAN Towards Independence. Independent living, for which discrete lessons have only recently been introduced, include in a range of other courses across the college such as art, music, life skills, tea making, relaxation and personal care.

### ***Achievement and standards***

46. Students achieve a range of modules in ASDAN Towards Independence such as making pictures, personal safety and every day living. In independent living, there are insufficient opportunities for students to develop and practise skills in a realistic context. A few students have learned to travel independently. Both male and female students make gains and are better able to participate appropriately in the observation of their Jewish faith. Many students increase their ability to recite and chant the prayers, to concentrate for longer periods and to use their prayer books. The overall achievement for female students in Jewish studies is good. For example, in a Chumash (Torah) lesson some students demonstrated good proficiency in Hebrew reading and were able to translate key words and phrases. However, the overall achievement in Jewish studies for male students is unsatisfactory. The standard of teaching is poor and many students do not understand what is being taught. Punctuality is satisfactory and attendance is good.

## ***Quality of education and training***

47. There is too much unsatisfactory teaching with almost half of all lessons judged to be unsatisfactory. Planning is not sufficiently individualised, target setting is poor and there is inadequate use of practical and realistic activities to promote learning. For example, in an independent living skills lesson, which took place in a kitchen, there were no planned opportunities for students to do practical work. In other lessons, students who are learning to travel independently, spend too much time planning journeys on the Internet, rather than actually travelling. In some lessons, the quantity and complexity of language used by teachers is not appropriate for the needs of the students. In the better lessons, staff working with students with additional needs use signs and symbols well to create opportunities for students to communicate choices. The general standard of teaching to underpin and develop students' religious knowledge is unsatisfactory overall. Teaching in this area is very weak for male students. Curriculum planning is inadequate and schemes of work and lesson plans are underdeveloped. For example, in a lesson for a male student to review weekly Torah portion the lesson content was more like a sermon. The student did not understand what was being said and there were no opportunities for him to participate in any meaningful activities. By the end of the lesson, the student was disinterested and unco-operative. In Jewish studies for female students, there is more focus on helping them to develop an increased understanding of their faith. In another lesson for females involving the story of Yisro and Moshe, some students displayed good knowledge of the subject and the teacher was able to effectively draw out important 'middos' (Jewish values) about not embarrassing or making fun of others.

48. Teaching resources are unsatisfactory. In the high-dependency unit for females, the lack of space severely restricts the opportunities for students with significant mobility difficulties to move independently. The recently developed kitchen area is not used effectively to teach and reinforce practical skills. Students with autistic spectrum disorders cook in the main dining room. They do not have the opportunity to locate ingredients or equipment and cannot easily make the connection between the food they prepare and the finished product. They do not have access to the cookers. The acoustics during some lessons are poor as a result of partitioned rooms, or the inappropriate grouping of some students. Music resources, such as the light to sound Opti-music, are a valuable medium through which students can create and interact with music. The synagogue is a very good and well used resource that reinforces the Jewish religious ethos of the college. Many tutors lack formal teaching qualifications and the specialist skills needed to understand the effect that students' difficulties and disabilities have on their learning.

49. Assessment procedures are unsatisfactory. Pre-entry assessment reports are not used effectively to inform planning or to adequately identify support needs. At times, students are working at a level below that achieved at a previous placement. For example, a student who is able to cook at home and has good literacy skills was required to cut and stick pictures to identify which items go in the fridge or the freezer. There is insufficient analysis of the skills students will need in their future lives and no effective baseline against which progress can be measured. Reports and records of progress often describe what activities the student has done. Achievements are often recorded in terms of the completion of a unit of accreditation, rather than in effectively identifying what has been learned. For example, tutors frequently refer to general improvements in behaviour, but the type, frequency and extent of improvement is not always clear. There are some examples of effective recording of progress over time, but the information contained in these does not always relate to the targets identified on the ILP.

50. Some teaching materials are not age appropriate. For example, students in some lessons related to counting and change use plastic money and worksheets with coin stamps. Students spend too much time completing paper activities as portfolio evidence for accreditation, rather than developing skills through practical application. Too many ILP targets are vague and mainly subject based. Students' programmes lack coherence overall. There is a strong Jewish ethos which permeates all aspects of the college. Students develop skills in relation to rites and Jewish observance which enable them to play a greater part in their community. The college nurtures a culture of treating others with dignity and respect through the Jewish faith. However, there is no curriculum framework for the teaching of Jewish studies.

51. Support for students is satisfactory. The management of students' behaviour and individual

personal support is good. In one lesson, a tutor worked skilfully to help a student to reduce both the inappropriate volume of her voice and her self-harming behaviours thus enabling her to access the community. Students in the high-dependency unit have effective behaviour plans. All students have daily access to their key worker. Therapies effectively support learning, although they are insufficient in quantity. Communication diaries are well used as a means of sharing information with families/carers and in providing relevant topics for communication with students.

### ***Leadership and management***

52. Leadership and management are very weak. There is no individual member of staff with specific curriculum responsibility for co-ordinating and managing independent living across the college. Strategic planning is poor. Quality assurance process lack rigour. The self-assessment report is detailed and involved staff, but it does not sufficiently relate to the criteria in the common inspection framework or adequately identify all the weaknesses in this area. Teaching observations do not effectively identify good practice or areas for development. Where areas of good practice do exist, they are not effectively shared across the college. Too little has been done to support staff whose practice has been identified as in need of improvement. Opportunities for professional development for teachers of Jewish studies are limited. The college effectively creates a culture in which all are treated with dignity and respect, and issues of discrimination are tackled. However, equal opportunities are insufficiently promoted within the area of independent living. The approach to many such issues is reactive rather than positive promotion.