

Menorah Grammar School

Independent School

Inspection Report

DCSF Registration Number	3026089
Unique Reference Number	101387
Inspection number	329558
Inspection dates	24 September 2008
Reporting inspector	Bezalel Yodaiken

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).

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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 Children, Schools and Families about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

This was a light touch inspection (LTI) which focused principally on the quality of education provided by the school; its provision for the students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development; the arrangements for safeguarding students and the improvements the school has made since the last inspection.

Information about the school

Menorah Grammar School was established in 1978 with the aim of providing a high quality education within a caring and secure *Torah* environment. Its purpose is to provide education for boys from the strictly observant Jewish community of North West London and to successfully blend religious and secular education. There are currently 150 students on roll within the age range of 11 to 18 of which 22 are post 16 year olds. The school provides a designated special educational needs department; the Darchei Noam Centre which is linked closely to the mainstream educational provision of the school. All students go on to study in *Yeshivah* (Talmudical College) having taken GCSEs and some 75% of students having taken A levels. The school was last inspected by Ofsted in November 2004.

Evaluation of the school

The quality of education provided at Menorah Grammar School is good with some outstanding features. These features include the Darchei Noam Centre, the spiritual, moral and social development of students and the pastoral care given by the staff to meet the individual needs of students. All but one of the regulations for registration are met. The curriculum is broad and balanced within both *Limmudei Kodesh* (LK) and secular studies. However in most subjects there is no comprehensive written overview of the curriculum, to ensure continuity and progression in the experiences provided, as students move up the school. The quality of teaching is good overall resulting in students making good progress. Students benefit from excellent role models resulting in their behaviour being good and often outstanding. The school has made progress since the last inspection in providing for the creative needs of Key Stage 3 students and in beginning the process of tracking students' progress. An overwhelming majority of parents who returned questionnaires expressed their satisfaction with the educational provision at the school. The school meets its aims of providing a high quality education within a caring and secure *Torah* environment.

Quality of education

The quality of education is good. The curriculum is broad and balanced and offers a good developmental school experience. It is made up of LK and secular studies. The LK curriculum forms some 55% of the timetable and covers many basic skills. Students are given experience in all the required areas of learning. The subject matter is appropriate for all ages and aptitudes. However the continuity and progress of students is compromised because a curriculum overview is not written down in all subjects in sufficient detail. There has been some work done recently in this area particularly in mathematics and the senior management are correct in making this a priority for development. The special education needs department within the Darchei Noam Centre provides an outstanding provision and uses the curriculum most effectively to support students, many of whom have full statements. The LK curriculum very effectively incorporates many aspects of the Every Child Matters agenda. The Year 9 leadership training programme, which incorporates cognitive development strategies, is an innovative and notable aspect of the curriculum and impacts positively on academic progress as well as self-esteem.

The quality of teaching is consistently good. Teachers plan their lessons in ways that hold students' interest and attention. Relationships between adults and students in lessons are good. Staff are specialists in the subject they teach. They know the students well and work effectively to encourage them and build their self-esteem. Teachers use probing, questioning strategies to challenge students and assess their understanding.

The assessment strategies used by staff are satisfactory. The school is in the process of developing a framework of assessment for tracking progress of students throughout the school in all subjects. It has identified tracking students' progress linked with setting individual targets as the focus of professional development in the short term. Students make good progress overall and students with learning difficulties make outstanding progress. This is because teaching is of a consistently high quality and the school nurtures very positive attitudes to work, so that students are highly motivated and dedicated to their studies. Last year's results in mathematics and science were outstanding, with results in other subjects at GCSE and A level being above average.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils

The provision for students' spiritual, moral and social development is outstanding and cultural development is satisfactory. The headteacher leads by example and together with his staff has developed a very positive school ethos, in which students can grow in self-confidence and develop strong moral, social and spiritual values. Throughout the school day moral teaching plays a very important part and permeates every aspect of the school. During LK lessons values such as thinking about other peoples' feelings, looking after lost property to return it, and being kind to poor people are discussed at length. The way in which the Darchei Noam Centre is integrated within the school is very effective. The centre is situated in a high profile

position and both students who learn there and others have a great pride in the success of the department. The expertise of the head of the centre and his staff ensures that students feel very good about themselves and make outstanding progress. The spiritual development of the students is outstanding with the *Beis Hamedrash* (study hall), where prayers take place and students of the higher end of the school learn, is a centre piece of the school. Uplifting prayer sessions take place daily and guest speakers frequently address the school there on spiritual matters.

The senior management and staff have high expectations of behaviour. Consequently behaviour is good overall and often outstanding. Students are polite and friendly to visitors and are supportive of one another. They form a cohesive family group and older boys are good role models for the younger students. LK lessons and discussion times help students to understand their responsibility to others and to the broader community. Students are taught to distinguish between right and wrong and are provided with a knowledge of public services and institutions in England, within the secular strand of the curriculum.

Students' attitudes to work are good. They enjoy their lessons and are keen to come to school. They feel they are well prepared for their future. Learners are presented with a satisfactory variety of activities which help them appreciate their own and other cultures. This takes place within LK, history and geography lessons and reinforces the concept of unity within diversity. Teachers encourage students to show respect for their own culture. The teaching of tolerance and respect for those of other cultural traditions is satisfactory. Consequently the provision for students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development overall is good.

Safeguarding pupils' welfare, health and safety

This aspect of the school provision is satisfactory overall. An appropriate number of staff have been trained in the most recent safeguarding requirements and there are robust procedures for ensuring that students are safe in school. Staff are deployed in order to provide a good level of supervision and to ensure student safety at all times. The school does not have effective risk assessment systems in place to ensure that the building is free from the risk of fire. The school's provision to promote healthy lifestyles is ineffective. Students feel this is an area in which they would like to see more input. The school fulfils its duties under the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 2002. It has effective recruitment procedures in place to ensure that all staff, including temporary staff, have undergone the necessary checks before commencing work at the school. A central staff register has been compiled in line with the latest statutory requirements. All staff have had the required enhanced checks with the Criminal Records Bureau.

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 that listed below.

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

- ensure that the school has a satisfactory level of fire safety, identified by its risk assessment, under the Fire Precautions (Workplace) Regulations 1997, and by any report from a local authority (paragraph 3(5)).

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:

- further promote healthy living
- compile a comprehensive curriculum overview in both LK and secular studies which maps out the curriculum in all year groups. This should include mechanisms to track continuity and progression of students' experiences as they move up through the school
- continue to develop processes for effective assessment that track students' performance with the aim of providing individualised targets.

Inspection Judgement Recording Form

outstanding	good	satisfactory	inadequate
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The quality of education

Overall quality of education		√		
How well the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of pupils		√		
How effective teaching and assessment are in meeting the full range of pupils' needs		√		
How well pupils make progress in their learning		√		

Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Quality of provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development		√		
The behaviour of pupils		√		

Welfare, health and safety of students

The overall welfare, health and safety of pupils			√	
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School details

Name of school	Menorah Grammar School
DCSF number	3026089
Unique reference number	101387
Type of school	Secondary School
Status	Independent
Date school opened	1978
Age range of pupils	11 - 18
Gender of pupils	Boys
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 150
Number on roll (part-time pupils)	Boys: 0
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational need	Boys: 18
Number of pupils who are looked after	Boys: 0
Annual fees (day pupils)	£6,000
Address of school	Abbots Road Edgware Middlesex HA8 0QS
Telephone number	0208 906 9756
Fax number	0208 959 1557
Email address	admin.mgs@hotmail.co.uk
Headteacher	Rabbi A Goldblatt
Proprietor	Menorah Grammar School Limited
Reporting inspector	Bezalel Yodaiken
Dates of inspection	24 September 2008