

# Bnos Yisroel School

## Independent School

### Inspection Report

DCSF Registration Number	355/6011
Unique Reference Number	105996
URN for registered childcare and social care	EY511447
Inspection number	331314
Inspection dates	6 November 2008
Reporting inspector	Ronald Cohen

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). The inspection of childcare was conducted under Section 49(2) of the Childcare Act 2006.

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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.

The inspection of registered provision<sup>1</sup> was conducted under Section 49(2) of the Childcare Act 2006.

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

## Information about the school

Bnos Yisroel School was established in 1965 as a mainstream *Haredi* (orthodox) Jewish religious school for girls to serve the strictly observant Jewish communities of Broughton Park and Prestwich, Greater Manchester. All the pupils come from strictly orthodox Jewish homes. However, they represent wide socio-economic differences and a relatively wide spectrum of Jewish cultural backgrounds (Chassidic and non Chassidic).

The school has grown from the original five pupils to the 538 who are currently on the roll, six of whom have statements of special needs. The rapid growth of the school encouraged the move to its present site in the mid 1980s, and it has recently completed the first phase of an ambitious building extension programme, to provide a new centre for its Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) provision. The school, though registered as a single entity, has three discrete and distinct departments: these are the Early Years, Primary and High School departments.

The three departments share common aims, which are to instil in the pupils *'a firm foundation in the orthodox Jewish way of life, together with a solid secular education'* whilst putting a strong emphasis on *'character development and personal behaviour'*. The school was last inspected in February 2006.

## Evaluation of the school

The school provides a good quality of education for pupils throughout the school. The provision for SMSC development is outstanding. Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. Pupils thoroughly enjoy their learning. There is a calm and purposeful atmosphere

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<sup>1</sup> Schools which provide childcare for children from birth until the term in which they reach their third birthday must register this provision separately with Ofsted.

where pupils and adults enjoy excellent working relationships. The school has responded well to the outcomes of its last inspection and has addressed the weaknesses identified successfully, meeting all the regulations. The school meets its aims particularly well, and the gratitude of parents, expressed in an overwhelmingly positive response, is testimony to this.

## Quality of education

The quality of education is good. Pupils, including those with learning difficulties, make good progress as they pass through the schools. This is because of the consistently good teaching which they receive and the good quality curriculum which offers a range of opportunities to support pupils' learning.

The quality of the curriculum is good in all three departments. It is broad and balanced and offers a good developmental school experience. It is made up of religious studies (*Limudei Kodesh*) and secular studies (*Limudei Chol*).

In the Nursery and Reception classes, the provision for children's learning and personal development is impressive in relation to their starting points and capabilities. The curriculum embraces the six areas of development of the EYFS and successfully promotes children's learning. An interesting feature of the curriculum is the learning of the Hebrew alphabet before the learning of the English alphabet. This has no apparent detriment to their subsequent learning of the English alphabet.

In the Primary and High schools, the time allocated to *Limudei Kodesh* and *Limudei Chol* is approximately equal, and their integration throughout the teaching day assures a parity of esteem, which is reflected in the impressive results in Jewish studies, and in the national tests and GCSE results which the girls obtain. The wide curriculum offers more practical subjects such as cookery, sewing, textiles and word processing (CLAIT) for pupils who benefit from more vocationally oriented options. However, it also offers the higher ability pupils the opportunity to take some GCSE subjects early, so that they can embark on an A level course.

An important feature of the provision is that the vast majority of lessons, both in religious and secular studies, are delivered by religious women, who present a powerful role model for the pupils, and who are exemplars of the underpinning ethos of the school.

Lessons take place in a calm and orderly environment. Pupils show positive attitudes to learning, and lessons are characterised by respectful and constructive relationships between teachers and pupils, and between pupils themselves. This gives learners confidence and adds to their enjoyment of lessons, while allowing valuable opportunities for co-operative work. Lessons are mainly well-structured and carefully planned, enabling pupils' knowledge and skills to build steadily and letting them see the links between their learning. Some of the best lessons provide opportunities to develop pupils' independent learning skills because teachers use questioning strategies which keep pupils involved, while enabling them to clarify their thinking and reflect on their learning.

Marking is carried out regularly in most areas, but there is some inconsistency, which means that pupils are not always given sufficient specific written feedback to help them improve.

## Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is outstanding. Moral values form a basis of the *Kodesh* Curriculum and an atmosphere of respect and harmony permeates the school. Pupils excel because of the encouragement that they give each other and the attention that they receive from their teachers and senior members of staff. An effective '*mechaneches*' (mentoring) system in the High School ensures that all pupils are genuinely cared for and robust incentive programmes throughout the school encourage outstanding behaviour and concerted effort. Pupils are given opportunities to arrange extra curricular activities and this bolsters self-esteem and confidence.

Pupils learn how to distinguish between right and wrong, as this is integral to the ethos of the school. They are taught to respect the law as a basic concept in Judaism, through the school's citizenship programme and through visits by external agencies. Effective elements of the curriculum provide them with a broad general knowledge of public services and institutions. They frequently put on concerts and shows for women in the community, visit the elderly, raise funds for charity and help young mothers with their children after school.

Pupils have an ingrained respect for people of other cultures as is evident in their dealings with external visitors and in their attitudes when speaking about the wider community. Issues of race, equality and prejudice are addressed in many strands of the curriculum including citizenship, history, English, cookery and sewing. There is full planning to extend these topics and those relating to moral conduct and attitudes. Lessons in moral conduct will be covered in even greater depth by the primary department when they start 'Project *Derech*' (the "path") at the beginning of next term.

## Safeguarding pupils' welfare, health and safety

The safeguarding of the pupils' welfare, health and safety is good. All relevant policies are in place and this provides a structure within the school that ensures the safety of the pupils and provides effective guidelines for members of staff. There are good levels of supervision. Pupils are taught the virtues of a healthy lifestyle through the relevant elements of the curriculum and school rules that promote healthy eating. The welfare of the pupils is promoted extremely well, and is exemplary in some significant elements in the Early Years and Primary departments. It is good in the High School department, but some of the best features of the other phases of education are not as consistently coordinated. All members of staff are checked for their suitability to work with children and details of the checks are recorded in a single central register. The school meets the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 2002.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

The overall effectiveness of the EYFS is good. Relationships between adults and children are excellent and these are the main reasons why children in all classes settle happily and feel safe and comfortable in their surroundings. As a result, they learn and develop well and enjoy their time in school a great deal. By the end of their time in the EYFS most children exceed the standards typical for children of this age. They do particularly well in their personal development.

The new centre has bright and airy classrooms, with very good access to outside play areas. There are still some gaps in outside provision, particularly in such areas as larger climbing frames, which will enhance children's motor development.

Many of the activities are stimulating and staff plan exciting lessons where there is a good balance of teacher led and child initiated activities, enabling children to make good progress in all areas of learning. However, this pattern is not yet fully embedded in the provision.

Personal development and well-being are very good. All staff have high expectations of children and their behaviour is excellent, and children thrive in an environment where they are highly valued. Children also work well alongside one another. The quality of the welfare, health and safety of children is outstanding. This is due to the excellent relationships which the school has built with parents. The setting is well equipped, and children are cared for well. The EYFS provision meets all legal requirements. Leadership and management are good. The senior staff have a clear vision of what is still required to maximise children's learning opportunities. Staff are skilled at observing how well children are doing and quickly move them on to more challenging activities to ensure their individual needs are met.

## Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school meets all of the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2003 as amended January 2005

## 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:

- streamline the welfare and care provision to embed within the High School, the consistency of coordination found elsewhere within the school
- enhance the outside provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage to help develop children's motor skills

## 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		✓		

### Pupils' 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 pupils

The overall welfare, health and safety of pupils		✓		
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### The quality of the Early Years Foundation Stage provision

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?		✓		
How well do children achieve in the Early Years Foundation Stage relative to their starting points and capabilities?		✓		
How good are the personal development and well-being of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?		✓		
What is the quality of welfare, health and safety of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	✓			
How effectively is the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?		✓		
What is the overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage including, where relevant, the quality of childcare?		✓		

## School details

Name of school	Bnos Yisroel School
DCSF number	355/6011
Unique reference number	105996
EY URN (for registered childcare only)	EY511447
Type of school	Jewish Girls
Status	Independent
Date school opened	1965
Age range of pupils	3-16
Gender of pupils	Girls
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Girls: 537
Number on roll (part-time pupils)	Girls: 1
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational need	Girls: 6
Annual fees (day pupils)	£ By donation
Annual fees (childcare)	£ By donation
Telephone number	0161 792 3896
Fax number	0161 708 0125
Email address	<a href="mailto:primaryschool@bnos.co.uk">primaryschool@bnos.co.uk</a>
Headteacher	Rabbi Y Lehmann Rabbi R Spitzer
Proprietor	Governors
Reporting inspector	Ronald Cohen
Dates of inspection	6 November 2008