

BRODETSKY PRIMARY SCHOOL INSPECTION REPORT

Local Authority: Leeds

Inspected under the auspices of Pikuach

Inspection dates: 3rd & 4th December 2024

This inspection of the school was conducted under section 48 of the Education Act 2005

Type of school: Primary

School category: Voluntary Aided

Age range of children: 2-11

Mixed /Single sex: Mixed

Number on roll: 230

Chair of Governors: Dr Jason Broch

Executive Headteacher: Charlie Kelsey

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Inspection team

Lead Inspector: Rabbi Yaakov Heimann
Team Inspector: Daniel Gastwirth

Introduction

Inspectors make judgements on the following three Key Areas:

- Quality of Jewish Education
- Jewish Personal and Spiritual Development
- Leadership and Management.

The inspection was conducted over two days by two inspectors, who observed *Limmudei Kodesh* (Jewish Studies) lessons from Pre-Nursery to Year 6, *Davening* (Collective worship), *Bentching* (Grace after meals) and Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 *Davening* (Prayer) assemblies. They also reviewed the *Pikuach* inspection questionnaires and had detailed discussions with pupils from Years 2 and 6 and also with *Limmudei Kodesh* (LK) teachers. Joint observations were carried out together with the Executive Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher/Head of LK/*Ivrit* (Modern Hebrew) to ascertain their knowledge and expertise in the monitoring process. Inspectors also met with the SENDCO (Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities Coordinator), School Rabbi, and LK governors. They scrutinised relevant documentation, including policy documents, curriculum documents, pupils' work and displays of pupils' work, and spoke to parents who were keen to share their views about the school.

Information about the school

- Brodetsky Primary School is a one-form entry, Orthodox, Jewish voluntary-aided primary school, which includes Pre-Nursery, Nursery and Reception classes.
- The school opened in 1959 and moved to its current site in 1982. It serves the Jewish community in the Leeds area. The majority of pupils live within easy travelling distance of the school.
- *Ivrit* is taught as part of the (LK) curriculum and is the schools' designated modern foreign language.
- Approximately 90% of the pupils are from the Jewish faith, with the remainder belonging to a wide range of other faiths. The majority of pupils are of white British heritage. The school is persistent in its aim to be inclusive of all pupils from all backgrounds, including those with SEND (Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities) and to ensure that they are able to access the full curriculum.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) is below the national average, at approximately 9%.
- Approximately 18% of pupils have English as an additional language (EAL).
- The school was judged to be 'Good' at its last Ofsted inspection, in November 2023.

Inspection judgement Grade

Quality of Jewish Education	1
Jewish Personal and Spiritual Development	1
Leadership and management	1

What is it like to attend this Jewish school?

- Pupils in Brodetsky Primary School benefit from learning in a positive, warm and all-inclusive environment. This allows them to focus on Jewish learning and explore Jewish identity in an atmosphere of respect and inclusion, irrespective of their background, gender, religiosity, and culture. As a pupil said, “Everyone in my class values me in all lessons, including my teacher.”
- Pupils gain through being taught by extremely dedicated LK teachers under the leadership of an outstanding Deputy Headteacher/Head of LK. As a parent commented, “The inspirational teachers impart pride and joy alongside a deep knowledge and respect for the range of families which make up the school.”
- Pupils benefit from being educated in a school where all staff, both LK and secular, work in tandem to promote and support the school’s Jewish ethos. As a senior leader said, “It is ‘Jewish first’ in this school.”
- Pupils have positive attitudes towards their LK learning, both formal and informal. This is because the bespoke curriculum, together with pupils’ active learning during the lessons and their positive relationships with their LK teachers, encourages them to fully engage in Jewish texts, learning and Jewish experiences and practice.
- The school consistently provides many well-planned and relevant Jewish experiences through both the formal and informal curriculum as well as links to other local organisations and the pupils participate in extra-curricular activities. A pupil said, “I really enjoy school, it is a fun positive place to learn and I love to do lots of different things out of school so we have fun and learn.”
- Children in the EYFS (Early Years Foundation Stage) benefit from a spacious unit and outdoor area. There is a range of indoor and outdoor cross-curricular activities allowing the children to learn through play.
- Pupils gain from attending a school where their parents have numerous opportunities to participate in a range of events throughout the Jewish year, ensuring that their families are involved in their Jewish learning and experiences. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school, as was highlighted through the numerous positive comments in the *Pikuach* Parental Survey and was echoed by parents who spoke to the inspectors during the inspection. One wrote: “The children have lots of opportunities to connect with their community. The school choir often sings at community events. Each Year group have a meaningful *Shabbos* (Sabbath) in a different *Shul* (Synagogue) and there are

intergenerational projects throughout the year too”.

- Safeguarding at Brodetsky Primary School is effective. Pupils feel safe when at school, know whom to speak to if they have a concern and are confident that issues will be addressed. A pupil said, “The teachers are kind and caring so I always feel safe around them.”

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Quality of Jewish Education

- The school’s Jewish curriculum intent is outstanding. It provides for most memorable experiences and a range of rich opportunities for high-quality learning for all pupils, including those with additional needs and those from different religious backgrounds.
- It is evident that LK teachers have a firm and common understanding of the school’s LK curriculum intent. During a *Chumash* (Bible) lesson where pupils were tasked with finding references in the *Chumash*, a pupil explained that they were doing this, “so that we can find the place of what we will be learning today”. One pupil said that “*Chumash* is different from the *Siddur* because it is part of the *Torah* although *Siddur* has our prayers in it”.
- The school’s implementation of the *Kodesh* curriculum is consistently strong. It contributes well to fostering pupils’ commitment to continued Jewish study and practice, as well as involvement in the community. As a parent said, “My child actively leads *Kiddush* (prayer recited at the onset of Sabbath at home, and also shared the *Bimah* (raised platform in the synagogue) with me when I led *Kabbalas Shabbos* (Prayer for bringing in the Sabbath) at my Synagogue. A pupil said, “I learn about *Tzedakah* (Charity) in school and so I gave my small clothes to charity.”
- An emphasis is placed on reading Hebrew fluently and accurately. The school follows the *Alef Champ* Hebrew reading programme, and it has had a positive impact on the pupils’ reading, as was evidenced through the Hebrew reading data which showed that the majority of pupils are working at the expected level and have made the expected progress.
- Pupils and their families have many Jewish learning opportunities through the means of well-planned extra-curricular activities that run throughout the year. Examples are the *Shabbatonim* (an event or programme of Jewish education held over the Sabbath). These are held several times a year in the various synagogues, and are events based around the *Chagim* (Jewish Festivals).
- *Ivrit* (Modern Hebrew) is successfully integrated within the LK curriculum to good effect. The younger years follow the *Chalav U’Davash* programme and the Key Stage 2 (Years 3-6) pupils follow the *Ivrit B’Click* programme.
- The work given to pupils across the school consistently matches the aims of the LK curriculum. Teachers use their understanding of child pedagogy to ensure that all pupils are able to both relate and engage in the curriculum in an age-appropriate manner that is meaningful to them.
- The impact of this is that the LK curriculum is consistently strong, with the vast majority of pupils being enthusiastic learners. As a parent said, “When my daughter comes home from school she can’t wait to tell me what she has learned, she loves to get a *Chumash* (Bible) out at home and reads from it.”
- Pupils are prepared for the next stage of their Jewish lives and are keen to seek opportunities to further develop their Jewish practice and learning.

Jewish Personal and Spiritual Development

- Most pupils exhibit a keen awareness of the spiritual and display high levels of personal conduct. A pupil noted that, “All the prayers mean *Hashem* is our only God,” whilst another pupil said, “If I am ever scared, I remember God is always with me.” Pupils are aware of *Hashem’s* (God) role in their lives
- The manner in which the school goes about developing Jewish character and values, of all pupils from all backgrounds, is exemplary. Pupils exhibit a keen awareness of the spiritual aspects of Judaism and display high levels of good personal conduct.
- All pupils, irrespective of levels of religious practice, participate and feel included in the *Davening* (prayer) life of the school. *Davening* is participative, engaging and with a clear line of development as pupils progress through the school. The meaning of individual *Tefillos* (Prayers) are explained and it is made relevant to them. Pupils were seen *davening* with *Kavannah* (Sincere feeling; devotion of the heart). Through *davening*, pupils show appreciation, gratitude and a sense of *Morah* (Awe and Wonder). These pupils demonstrated an acknowledgement of the Divine and become aware of experiences in their lives related to the Divine.
- All members of staff are good role models for pupils’ behaviour, attitude and spiritual development. A pupil noted, “I love school, and I think it is the perfect place for educating and learning.”
- Year 5 travel to London for the *Etgar* (inter-school quiz on Jewish General Knowledge and History) and the pupils self-fund their trip through selling wrapping paper for *Chanukah* (Festival of Lights) gifts and *Mishloach Manos* (food gifts distributed on *Purim*) (A festival commemorating Esther, the Jewish Queen of Persia, who saved her people from annihilation by *Haman*, the advisor to the Persian king.
- The school recognises the importance of involving the whole family, which has a positive impact on the partnership of pupils learning between school and home. For example, the school recently introduced a *Challah* (braided bread eaten on the Sabbath and festivals) run on Fridays, where parents can pre-order *Challos* for *Shabbos*, and collect it from school at pick up time.
- The formal and informal aspects of the LK curriculum enhance pupils’ spiritual development and love for learning, both in and out of school. As a pupil said, “All the stories I have learnt in my Jewish Studies lesson helps me understand what is important to me.”

What does the school need to do to improve?

- Look for further opportunities to develop the spirituality of the pupils so that most pupils confidently convey their awareness of the spiritual in everyday life.

Quality of Leadership and management:

- The leadership in the school, including governors, articulates and communicates an outstanding commitment to high standards of work and learning and to pupils’ Jewish spiritual development. Working in tandem with the staff, they have developed a shared vision of where they want the school to be beyond the short term.
- The school’s leadership ensures that the LK staff receive effective professional development and that their pedagogical skills build and consistently develop over time.

- The Deputy Head/Head of LK is fully encouraged and supported by the Executive Headteacher.
- The Deputy Head/Head of LK models excellent practice in both academic and spiritual matters and works successfully to monitor, improve and support teaching, encouraging the enthusiasm of staff, whilst simultaneously challenging them to improve by ensuring that they receive relevant professional development. Staff reported high levels of support, with one saying, "I am very grateful for the way management has always supported me and is continuing to do so when I stumble on various difficulties."
- The LK team, led by the Deputy Head/Head of LK, are passionate about educating and inspiring their pupils along their Jewish journey, beyond the school day. For example, the pre-*Pesach Seder* is held during the evening before *Pesach* so that parents are able to participate in the event run by all LK teachers.
- The Executive Headteacher and Deputy Head/Head of LK have an excellent understanding of the pupils and their families and how to work with them, so that pupils can make the best progress in their Jewish learning over time. They have a keen understanding of the strengths and areas for development in all aspects of the school's Jewish education.

Statutory requirement for a daily act of collective worship (Tefillah)	Met
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Summary of Questionnaires

***Pikuach* invited parents and carers of pupils at Brodetsky Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school. 52 people responded to the survey.**

***Pikuach* invited pupils at Brodetsky Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school. 30 pupils responded to the survey.**

***Pikuach* invited members of staff at Brodetsky Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school. 11 members of staff responded to the survey.**

GLOSSARY

WHAT INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS MEAN:

GRADE	JUDGEMENT	DESCRIPTION
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils needs.

Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Requires Improvement	A school requiring improvement is not providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils.