



# The Future of Jewish Schools: Three Years On

A Review of the Impact of the Jewish Leadership Council's Commission on Jewish Schools



Cover photos:

Main picture: Assembly at King David Junior School, Manchester, Photo courtesy of Mike Poloway.

Small picture back: The 2008 Annual Children's Dance Festival, courtesy of the Israeli Dance Institute.

Cover left: Participating in the Chumash Ceremony at Bury and Whitefield Jewish Primary School.  
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Cover middle: Communities Minister Andrew Stunell visits North Cheshire Jewish Primary School.  
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Cover right: Primary School Chumash Ceremony, Bury and Whitefield Jewish Primary School.  
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# Preface



## **THE FUTURE OF JEWISH SCHOOLS - THREE YEARS ON** **Review of the Impact of the Commission on Jewish Schools**

We are delighted to introduce this Review and to thank all those who have contributed to the ongoing success of our schools and Jewish education over the past few years. The publication of the Report and Recommendations of the JLC Commission on 'The Future of Jewish Schools' in July 2008 clearly demonstrated the level of commitment to maintaining a world class Jewish school system across all sectors of our community. This commitment was reflected in the swift decision of the JLC to adopt and promote the implementation of all of the Commission's recommendations presented to the Council by Commission Chair Professor Leslie Wagner. Genuine cross-communal support and the passion of many people across the sector have been the driving force behind the work of the Schools Strategy Implementation Group, chaired so ably by JLC Vice-President and Trustee Leo Noé.

The JLC, the Board of Deputies and the UJIA fully intend to ensure that the work begun by the Commission and SSIG continues enabling our schools go from strength to strength and thereby secure a vibrant future for our community.

### **Vivian Wineman**

President, The Board of Deputies of British Jews  
Chairman Council of Membership, The Jewish Leadership Council

### **Mick Davis**

Chairman Board of Trustees, United Jewish Israel Appeal  
Chairman Board of Trustees, The Jewish Leadership Council

September 2011

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# Foreword



It has been a huge privilege for me to chair the Schools Strategy Implementation Group (SSIG). All too often Reports sit on a shelf gathering dust and I take great pride in the fact that the JLC speedily committed itself both to ensuring this did not happen and to reporting back to the community three years on.

The team assembled to sit on SSIG have been outstanding colleagues; exceptionally hard working, challenging, thoughtful and respectful of one another. I would like to thank them all and say how much I have appreciated their input. In addition, we were wonderfully supported by a Professional Support Team, including a number of Headteachers, who gave sound advice throughout the three years. I owe them a real debt of gratitude. Where we considered particular expertise and focus was needed, working parties were formed. A team for the Redbridge Community Change Project chaired by Jonathan Goldstein, a group looking at Special Educational Needs chaired by David Ereira, a working party on Primary Schools chaired by Sarah Anticoni and a group looking at Orthodox Teacher Training, all generously contributed their time and expertise and I thank them all.

I am grateful to our professional staff: Alastair Falk the lead professional and Director of Educational Leadership at UJIA, who was generously seconded by UJIA to lend his extensive expertise and knowledge to our work; Caroline Garfinkel our administrator who, as well as everything else, has managed the website development so efficiently; and in particular Lira Winston, our and especially my coordinator, without whom none of this would have been possible. We recruited two consultants for specific projects, Peter Shaw and Simon Goulden, and their input has been extremely helpful. I am very grateful to the Professional Team at the JLC, in particular to Jeremy Newmark and Kate Shorts. I would also like to thank Jo Whyman in my office whose constant support was invaluable throughout.

The UJIA, the Board of Deputies and the small group of donors have also been most helpful and have never hesitated to help us when requested. All these organisations and individuals are truly committed to building a first class school system for our children. Professor Leslie Wagner in his Foreword to the original Report made the cogent point that the issues covered required 'long term solutions'. SSIG was under no illusions that everything recommended in the Report would be fulfilled within three years. It is particularly significant that as we reach this three year milestone we will be making a recommendation to the

community as to how work might be continued, and taken to the next level in the years ahead. Over the past three years it has become clear to me that our Jewish school system in the UK is envied by many other Jewish communities around the Diaspora. During his recent visit to the UK, Israel's Minister of Education told me that he thought there were many things that Israeli schools could learn from our own. My sincere wish and expectation is that the pivotal position that schools hold in our community continues to be recognised and supported over the coming years.

I am pleased to announce that Jonathan Goldstein has agreed to Chair the next phase and new chapter of our endeavour in support of Jewish Schools and that Sarah Anticoni has agreed to take on responsibility as Vice-Chairman. Whilst I will not be disappearing from the scene, I am confident that I pass on the work that we have done into good hands and that we will not be leaving a vacuum. The work being done is vitally important for our community. In order to ensure that we have a community tomorrow we need to look after and educate the young people of today.



**Leo Noé**

Chairman, Schools Strategy Implementation Group

Vice President, The Jewish Leadership Council

September 2011

## SECTION 1

# Introduction

- 1.1** The Commission on Jewish Schools, set up by the Jewish Leadership Council (JLC), published its report on 'The Future of Jewish Schools' in July 2008. The Report made 23 recommendations to the JLC which speedily established a Schools Strategy Implementation Group (SSIG) under the chairmanship of JLC Vice-President, Leo Noé. A full list of recommendations is in Appendix A.
- 1.2** SSIG membership was recruited both from the Commission itself and from central organisations. The group was charged with setting priorities and overseeing an initial implementation phase over a period of three years. At the outset all members of SSIG wish to record their thanks to Leo Noé, whose time, energy and commitment drove this project and helped ensure that the broadest possible range of community voices has been involved.
- 1.3** At the same time, a small professional support team was recruited including central organisation personnel and Headteachers. This group has met regularly and its advice has been extremely valuable throughout the three years. A list of SSIG members and all working groups can be found at the end of this Review. (Appendices B and C)
- 1.4** Schools received annual reports on progress. This Review will take a broader look at the achievements and developments over the past three years and suggest ways in which the needs of Jewish schools could be met in future.

## SECTION 2

# Changing Context

- 2.1** During the time SSIG has been in existence, there have been major changes in UK Jewry's educational map. New schools have opened, admission policies have changed and central organisations have refocused their involvement with schools. Of most significance though, is the continuing rise in numbers of children attending Jewish schools at both primary and secondary level. Around 60 per cent of Jewish schoolchildren are now entering Jewish schools. This most likely reflects their increasing attractiveness as standards remain very high and as choices available to Jewish parents widen. This may also reflect the beginning of a demographic shift in the mainstream community, mirroring the general trend. In June 2011 the Schools Minister, Nick Gibb, noted: *"It is clear that rising birth rates are increasing demand and pressure on primary school places"*. This is particularly noticeable in London boroughs with high Jewish populations.
- 2.2** Jewish schools continue to benefit uniquely in the Jewish world from Government support and funding. During the course of SSIGs life, three new state schools (JCoSS, Etz Chaim Jewish Primary School and Eden Primary) have either opened or are about to open, one independent school (Edgware Jewish Primary School) has been granted state aid and others are planning to apply. However, there is a continuing shift to encourage broader admissions for faith schools, reflected in the Government's new Free Schools policy. These can only offer places on faith based criteria to 50 per cent of admissions. Two Jewish schools, Etz Chaim Jewish Primary School in Mill Hill and Eden Primary in Muswell Hill, are among the first 16 to be approved by the DfE for Free School status. There are currently three more potential applications for this initiative but clearly for the strictly Orthodox world this is unlikely to be an attractive option.
- 2.3** Both primary and secondary numbers have risen significantly over the past three years. At primary level the pressure of demand has resulted in additional places being provided and planned, although whether supply and demand will be in balance remains an open question. At secondary level despite the increase in enrolments, spare places have emerged and an increasing number of non-Jewish pupils are being enrolled.
- 2.4** Another significant shift has been the changed policy on Academies. A number of Jewish schools have either become, or are in the process of becoming Academies. Undoubtedly this will offer opportunities for new networks and support services, particularly as the role of local authorities in providing educational services declines.

- 2.5 The Supreme Court ruling over JFS school admissions also changed the Jewish school landscape. Many were deeply upset by this ruling and there continue to be voices arguing for trying to reverse the decision. In practice however, schools had to respond and applicants for most mainstream schools now need to provide a Certificate of Religious Practice (CRP). This has had the effect of bringing many people back in contact with synagogues at a time when the growth of Jewish schools was sometimes blamed for their absence.
- 2.6 This may also provide interesting new opportunities for schools and their local synagogues to work together. The CRP devised at the recommendation of the Chief Rabbi, for example, includes 'Gemilut Chasadim' – involvement with community activities – as one of the criteria of entry requirements. A number of schools have developed very successful parent education programmes to help build bridges between classroom and home. This was an area that many SSIG members felt should be expanded and supported further. They recognised that a Jewish school's remit goes far beyond teaching children during the school day.
- 2.7 Disquiet with the JFS ruling coincided with the emergence of a new grouping, the National Association of Jewish Orthodox Schools, (NAJOS), which has established itself as a voice for many schools in the strictly Orthodox sector. This is one of a number of changes that have occurred in the communal landscape since the Report was published. The United Synagogue's Agency for Jewish Education and MST (a centre for training strictly Orthodox teachers) both closed down. Leo Baeck College's Centre for Jewish Education reduced its personnel and reviewed its involvement with schools. The London School of Jewish Studies (LSJS) is becoming more involved in teacher training and professional development. New professional networks and development opportunities for teachers and school support staff have emerged through the Institute of Professional Development for Jewish Schools (IPDJS) and via the Jewish Educators Network. In addition to the original recommendations therefore, much of SSIG's work has been about responding to these developments.



**Israel's Minister of Education, Gidon Sa'ar MK, addressing children at the Independent Jewish Day School, London.**

Photo courtesy of The Independent Jewish Day School.

## SECTION 3

# Numbers

## SECONDARY SCHOOLS

- 3.1** The discussion on 'supply and demand' was a central, and somewhat controversial, aspect of the original Report. The statistics suggested that supply of mainstream secondary school places would quickly outstrip demand, but other voices argued that supply would create demand and that, once built, schools would fill.
- 3.2** In the event, both scenarios proved partially correct. As the Report indicated, the available Year 7 places in mainstream secondary schools expanded hugely from 680 in 2005-06 to 980 in 2010-11. And at the same time, the proportional take up in Jewish schools increased from around half to approaching two thirds of Year 7 Jewish children. The increase in demand however did not match the increase in places. As predicted, an increasing number of non-Jewish children have been admitted in recent years. The data available for all enrolments including non-Jewish pupils in 2010-11 show a gap of close to eight per cent (circa 75 places) between places and pupils enrolled. Schools are confident that this gap will be substantially reduced in 2011-12.
- 3.3** To increase take up, the Report had recommended a marketing strategy for Jewish schools. With the help of Marc Nohr, co-director of advertising agency KitKatt Nohr, Headteachers and governors from London's secondary schools spent time thinking about how to reach those who currently do not send their children to Jewish schools. Despite initial hesitancy, secondary schools agreed to contribute to a new website, [www.findajewishschool.co.uk](http://www.findajewishschool.co.uk), to help parents navigate the plethora of schools, both primary and secondary, and to answer parents' questions. Further marketing seminars were widened to include primary schools. A 'mystery shopper' exercise was undertaken with someone posing as a prospective parent, and out of this came a training day for frontline office staff.
- 3.4** The website, like the marketing, benefited hugely from the advice of a key professional who generously donated his time. Jonathan Simmons of Public Zone guided this project and helped in the development of [www.findajewishschool.co.uk](http://www.findajewishschool.co.uk). The website also became a model for successful, low cost partnerships. Funding from the Board of Deputies and UJIA enabled the project to launch successfully and secondary schools, together with the JLC, contributed to the costs of administration. As its success grew, a generous donation has enabled further development, and recently nursery schools have been added on to the site, video footage has been included and there are links to relevant articles. The Frequently Asked Questions section has been written with advice from Headteachers and parents can submit their own questions. This one-stop shop is now receiving over 2,500 unique visits each month, suggesting again that Jewish schools still remain a serious parental choice.

## PRIMARY SCHOOLS

- 3.5** If supply of secondary school places was evidently an issue, the primary picture was less clear. The statistics argued that supply just about matched demand but anecdotal evidence and school evidence suggests that there were very real pockets of pressure across London. Moreover, estimating school numbers is always an inexact science and both Barnet and Hertsmere, boroughs with large Jewish populations, are now facing significant pressure on Nursery and Reception places. Overall enrolment continues to rise. In 2010-11 60 per cent of primary age children were entering Jewish schools compared to 50 per cent four years ago.
- 3.6** The availability of places in primary schools became a major focus of public community discussion in the spring of 2010 when a number of parents used print and social media to express their distress at the apparent shortage of places, particularly in the Borehamwood area. SSIG, working with some of the parents, responded by establishing a working group in partnership with the Board of Deputies, and recruited an experienced consultant, Simon Goulden, to provide strategic assistance to new school groups and to existing groups planning to expand and seek state aid.
- 3.7** The introduction of the Free Schools policy seemed to raise new possibilities for groups seeking to open schools. SSIG organised an evening with the Director of the New Schools Network to explore this policy and whether it indeed might have something to offer Jewish parents. Although admission issues were potentially problematic, two new Jewish Free Schools are opening in September and there are further projects moving forward. Of particular interest is the impetus this policy has given to the South London Jewish communities who are currently exploring this opportunity.
- 3.8** Schools themselves responded to the immediate crisis with some schools opening a bulge class in September 2011 to meet the pressure for places. The calculation of new places available in Reception in the mainstream sector (compared to 2010-11) indicates 130 - 140 extra places over the next few years.

### Known EXTRA Reception class places in mainstream schools as at July 2011

School	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	
Kerem	20					Bulge class
Yavneh		60	60	60	60	New primary unit*
Etz Chaim	25	25	25	25	25	Free school
Eden	25	25	25	25	25	Free school
North West London	20					Bulge class
Rosh Pinah	30					Bulge class
Immanuel College	20	20	20	20	20	New primary unit
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>130</b>	* Awaiting permission

Some spare places are currently still available and in this situation, the temptation is for schools to retreat into competitive mode. The work SSIG initiated in the secondary sector however, argues strongly for closer collaboration between London's mainstream primary schools to help increase the total numbers opting for Jewish schools and to respond to local geographic trends.

- 3.9** In the strictly Orthodox sector demand continues to outstrip supply. A number of extra classes and new schools are trying to address this and the numbers of additional Reception places (compared to 2010-11) are in the table below.

**Known EXTRA Reception class places in strictly orthodox schools in London/Gateshead as at July 2011**

School	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	
Beis Yaakov Primary		29				Bulge Nursery
Bnos Beis Yaakov		16	16	16	16	Nursery Expanded to 24
Torah U'Mesorah (boys)	8	16	16	16	16	New Boys school – Nursery – Y2
Torah Temimah	5	5	5	5	5	Additional places to max 30
Pardes House Primary	5	5	5	5	5	Additional places to max 30
Menorah Primary	10	10	10	10	10	Increase from 50 to 60
Gateshead Tashbar	10	10	10	10	10	New school
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>62</b>	

- 3.10** The central issue of future projections remained unresolved, so the SSIG/Board of Deputies working party has begun to encourage all primary schools to collect and share sibling data to help plan in a more consistent and thoughtful manner.

- 3.11** By September 2013, three London secondary schools will have feeder primaries on their sites. Networking and sharing of good practice is always an important by-product when schools meet together and UJIA enabled two Headteachers to attend a meeting of a national network for schools that already have integrated primary and secondary settings.

- 3.12** SSIG, the BOD and NAJOS have all provided advice to parents unable to find a place and have acted as an informal hub of information about where places might be available. NAJOS has successfully persuaded many schools to offer Nursery places on the same date to try and ensure parents' decisions are made as fast as possible which frees places for those children without a place. Once again, though, the key question is how many places are actually needed each year, and it is forward planning and collecting accurate sibling data which should remain a key priority.

## REDBRIDGE

- 3.13** The Redbridge Jewish community faces a serious demographic challenge. This, combined with more Jewish secondary school places across London, has led to an increased number of non-Jewish children in two of the three local schools. The initial Report identified the work that had already begun in Redbridge between the two primary schools and King Solomon High School, all of whom recognised this challenge. To build on this, a Redbridge Community Change Project was established under the chairmanship of Jonathan Goldstein. Discussions had already begun about moving Ilford Jewish Primary School onto the King Solomon site and the group has been closely involved in liaising with the United Synagogue, assisting with plans for the new school and with negotiations of the purchase of Ilford Jewish Primary School (IJPS) by the Redbridge Local Authority.
- 3.14** With support from the UJIA, SSIG engaged the services of a change consultant to help the three schools shape a broader vision for Jewish education in North East London. This included an extensive survey of the attitudes of local parents and a series of meetings between the Headteachers and Chairs of Governors of the three schools with intense discussions within each school's governing body about a number of possible future options.
- 3.15** Planning permission has just been granted and IJPS is now poised to begin its new build on the King Solomon site. This will require a further £2m above the sale price which the JLC has committed to take a lead in raising. The bigger picture that has emerged from the discussions envisages all three schools working towards a Jewish education strategy for Redbridge. The preference of the Governing bodies is to explore the practicalities of one school for the ages of three through to 18 for North East London. However the current focus is firmly on the relocation of IJPS and the development of the KSHS site as a broader community facility.
- 3.16** This model of helping schools think about the future and how they might best serve and develop local community needs is a good example of the added value a central resource can bring.

## THE REGIONS

- 3.17** When the Report looked at regional centres, it recommended a closer relationship between the Leeds Jewish community and King David School Manchester. The introduction of Free Schools however inspired the Leeds community to re-engage with its long expressed desire for a local Jewish secondary school. A plan for a one-form entry new Free secondary school in Leeds was recently submitted to the DfE as part of a planned Leeds Jewish community campus with provision for youth. It has been turned down but may be resubmitted. The mainstream situation in Manchester echoes that in London and a number of schools currently have vacancies.

## RESEARCH

- 3.18** A number of recurrent questions framed the original Report. One of these was about the efficacy of Jewish schooling; always assumed, but little researched. Another question was why parents choose Jewish schools, something that seemed particularly important if market share was to be increased.

- 3.19** SSIG considered commissioning its own research on the changing attitudes of Jewish parents to Jewish schooling as recommended in the Report, but took the decision to postpone this until after the opening of JCoSS. In the meantime, the Pears Foundation agreed to fund a major research project on the impact of JCoSS on pupils and families over the course of seven years. Discussions with the lead professional Dr Helena Miller and with the Pears Foundation created a synergy whereby the Foundation supported widening the project to other secondary schools.
- 3.20** Six London secondary schools have now agreed to be part of the project led by Dr Miller who is Director of UJIA's Research and Evaluation Department and who will be working with Dr Alex Pomson at the Melton Centre, Hebrew University. The research will follow a cohort of students in each school entering Year Seven and track them every two years. It will also include interviews and follow up with parents who do not accept places at a Jewish school. This should yield particularly helpful data from the first survey onwards in the context of the recommendation of the Report. Longitudinal research of young people at schools is rare and this type of data has never been collected in the UK before. SSIG is extremely grateful to the Pears Foundation for its generosity in fully funding this exciting project which could place UK Jewry at the cutting edge of research into the impact of Jewish education. It also argues for a more permanent research capacity for Jewish schools.



**Induction Day for new students at JCOSS.**

Photo by Ben Turner, courtesy of the Jewish Chronicle.

## SECTION 4

# Teaching and Learning

## TEACHER TRAINING

- 4.1** Improving the teaching workforce lies at the heart of the current Government's education policy. It is committed to attracting the highest calibre of graduates and ensuring that teacher training happens largely in classrooms. The Jewish community has well established teacher training schemes that already attract high achieving graduates, with the School Centred Initial Teacher Training (SCITT) programme recently gaining an Outstanding OFSTED verdict. Many schools, however, continue to rely on unqualified teachers of Jewish Studies, and the Report called attention to this as an unacceptable state of affairs. SSIG remains committed to the aim that every Jewish class is taught by a qualified teacher.
- 4.2** Working through the UJIA Educational Leadership Department and LSJS, a new scheme was launched with Greenwich University to allow Jewish Studies teachers to gain credits for prior experience and learning so they can be fast tracked towards a degree. Once a teacher has a degree he/she can then move on to gain qualified teacher status. The BA degree courses at Greenwich are well subscribed with 12 students in the second year and 19 in the first year, with the students funding themselves. The high cost of university fees in the future could make this programme too costly and therefore talks are taking place with other institutions to look at alternative possibilities. What is clear is that schools are increasingly committed to ensuring that their JS staff is qualified. This is an issue right across the community and SSIG has set up a group specifically to look at the different paths for training within the strictly Orthodox community, and to ensure that information is shared and readily available. Among the issues which have been raised are the need for more training places, the possibility of specialist training in primary schools, the need for funds to facilitate training in independent schools and the establishment of a telephone hotline to assist potential trainees.
- 4.3** With the growth of the Jewish Curriculum Partnership (JCP) Ivrit programme (see Para 4.9) the need for qualified Ivrit teachers has become even greater. Government funding allowed for a pilot programme for primary language specialists in Ivrit, and this is an area for further collaborative work between the JCP and the Jewish Teacher Training Partnership (JTTP). At secondary level, approaches have been made to allocate some specialist Ivrit places in a local PGCE programme and each year a number of teachers gain qualifications through the overseas training route. The Government has recently announced extending automatic acceptance of overseas teaching qualifications to those gained in North America and it is worth lobbying to see if this might also be extended to Israeli qualifications.

- 4.4 Part of the impact of the United Synagogue's changed priorities away from teacher training was the need to find a new home for the two largest teacher training programmes. The SCITT programme has actually increased its capacity for next year to meet the demand of the growing number of primary schools. Numbers on the Graduate Teacher programmes have been reduced, however, as part of a wider national approach. It will be important to ensure routes remain open that allow for the specialist nature of Jewish Studies and Ivrit teaching and this may require a combination of appropriate lobbying and looking for new partners. The London School of Jewish Studies (LSJS) is taking over as the employer for the existing programmes. LSJS is already a partner in the Greenwich BA and Birkbeck MA courses and is increasingly committed to working in the area of teachers' professional development. LSJS also partnered IPDJS to hold a one-day conference in June attended by over 120 primary school Jewish Studies teachers.
- 4.5 It is important to remember that Jewish schools outside London face similar and often more challenging problems in recruiting high quality staff. In Manchester, teacher training has been organised for a number of years by Phaivish Pink, working with London Metropolitan University. He has also trained with staff from Leeds and Liverpool.
- 4.6 Changes to the Training and Development Agency (TDA) have meant that talks SSIG had initiated about a national Jewish training response have had to be put on hold. Another important change is the introduction of the idea of 'teaching schools'. SSIG's professional staff attended information sessions on this idea which was then fed back to schools. As the TDA move to a more centralised application system, SSIG is working to ensure a one stop phone line for those interested in routes to teacher training within the community.

### **CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

- 4.7 There have been some key developments in Continuing Professional Development (CPD) which have opened new possibilities for Jewish Studies teachers. 'The MA in Jewish Education: Theory to Practice' funded by UJIA - who have a long history of supporting professional development - has proved particularly attractive to teachers, with over 35 currently enrolled on the course. It uniquely combines intensive study of Jewish texts with reflections on classroom practice. LSJS offers an MA in Jewish Education at King's College that can be combined with other courses to construct an individual mix.
- 4.8 In the current economic climate, it has not been possible to allocate the kind of 'substantially increased' resources which the Report recommended. SSIG is delighted however that UJIA continues to fund teacher development and that the Jewish Curriculum Partnership (JCP) has substantially increased its commitment to teachers' professional development.
- 4.9 The JCP has also played the lead role in responding to the Report's recommendation on teaching Ivrit. Once again it was an opportunity offered by Government policy with the introduction of a modern language into primary schools. This has become another major success story for the JCP with some 30 schools seriously engaging in extended teacher training. The JCP secured funding from the Wohl Foundation to produce a digital resource for Ivrit teachers to support the teaching

of Ivrit across all years of Key Stage 2. Central to its concept is the building of a bridge to Israel and developing the understanding of the lives of Israeli children. In May 2011, 65 teachers attended a training day and saw a preview of this new online resource 'Ivrit B'Click'. The expansion of the JCP's work and the enthusiastic response from schools to the School Kodesh Improvement Partner scheme demonstrate how important it is that the Report's commitment to Continuing Professional Development remains a high priority in the future.

### **SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (SEN)**

- 4.10** In light of the Report's recommendation, SSIG moved quickly to establish a small group, convened under the chairmanship of David Ereira, to look at SEN. The team included the Chief Educational Psychologist of a local authority, the head of Binoh at Norwood and the representative in Special Needs at the BOD. Consultations were held with a range of Heads, SENCOS and providers of services. A comprehensive survey of need was sent to schools, the replies analysed and a summary report circulated (Appendix D). It is clear that the level of need in Jewish schools is not significantly different from the national average but the changing socio-economic criteria for funding have already hit Jewish schools. In particular independent schools often suffer from an even more severe lack of resources.
- 4.11** The need to share good practice was highlighted by nearly all respondents. In part this is already met through two well established networking groups, one run under the auspices of the BOD and one by the IPDJS, both successful and well supported.
- 4.12** There were however a range of deeper, more structural issues that required decisions and funding at an institutional level and here there was less opportunity for sharing ideas and possible solutions. There was also a clearly identified need for better information, particularly for parents trying to navigate an often confusing system. One SENCO described much of his work as about battling for parents to receive their entitlements.
- 4.13** SSIG's role was not to raise funds but to listen to these issues and make recommendations. The working group agrees that there needs to be more of a central space for sharing institutional good practice and for setting the broader agenda for SEN in the community, particularly in the light of changing national circumstances. Next year, the SEN group is planning a Conference for Heads, SEN Governors and SENCOS built around responding to the Government's new proposals for SEN. It is anticipated that the Conference will also act as a springboard for a national bank of good practice in Jewish schools and for raising the profile of SEN as a key issue for schools and the wider Jewish community.

## SECTION 5

# Funding and Finance

- 5.1** Soon after the publication of the Report the financial world changed dramatically and setting up an endowment fund was deemed not to be feasible. Considerable time was spent by SSIG/JLC member, Bill Benjamin, looking at other models of funding including American central organisational funding. It is suggested that some thought might now be given by the JLC to employing someone on a contract basis to apply for Government grants for a range of Jewish organisations, of which education is but one area. SSIG also suggested a scheme to help build fundraising capacity within schools through training staff or parents.
- 5.2** At a meeting for school governors, one suggestion which emerged was that the JLC assist with a bulk purchasing scheme for schools, modeled on the successful work already in place with the Jewish charity sector. A number of companies were approached and a pilot project has just been launched with the United Purchasing Club as a strategic partner and delivery agent. Its Director is meeting with those schools that expressed an interest and he will be looking at a wide range of savings. Even here, the national climate has had an impact, with local education structures changing and the Government encouraging schools to collaborate on purchasing supplies and services.



**Results day at King Solomon High School.**

Photo by Marc Morris, Jewish News.

## SECTION 6

# The Political and Educational Environment

- 6.1** It will already be clear that Jewish schools exist within and reflect the wider political environment. The Board of Deputies and the JLC work closely together to monitor developments in government thinking and planned legislation. There is a watching brief on all DfE policy as it is announced and community representatives sit on DfE working groups. Schools appreciate the BOD's termly newsletter which contains a summary of recent policy developments. Several meetings have been held on Academies and Free Schools and further meetings to support schools in areas of new policy are planned for the coming year.
- 6.2** However, the sentiments against faith schools are strong and SSIG believes there needs to be a continuing and active lobbying campaign on the benefits of faith based schooling, in conjunction with other faith communities. The Board of Deputies has built a close and effective working relationship with other faith providers such as the Church of England Board of Education and the Catholic Education Service. These links are vital in terms of sharing expertise and lobbying collaboratively on issues of common concern. As the Report noted "*different communities have different rationales for establishing faith schools*". The continuing push towards more open admissions is seen by many as threatening the very 'raison d'être' of Jewish schools.
- 6.3** As part of a concerted effort to showcase Jewish schools and more generally expose leading decision makers to the positive dimensions of faith schools, the JLC and Board of Deputies are organising a series of visits to Jewish schools from key Government and Opposition politicians. These are providing an opportunity to talk about the distinctive nature and needs of Jewish schooling.

## SECTION 7

# The Future

- 7.1** SSIG was created to marshal the resources of all the major partners in Jewish schooling to deliver on the Commission's recommendations. As the three years draws to its end, the time has come to consider schools' current needs and what future structures might benefit this rapidly growing sector. Headteachers, educational agencies and charitable foundations have been consulted about possible future models. SSIG is particularly grateful to its Professional Support Team (Appendix C) for its advice and input.
- 7.2** There was unanimity that some form of central support is needed for schools. It was felt that the model of a three year plan has worked well, but that schools needed to be more closely involved in helping shape the next set of priorities. The basic combination of the JLC, BOD and UJIA working together and sharing responsibility was also considered to have worked well. Moving forward will require continuing collaboration between these organisations and also continuing involvement of new organisations that have emerged in the last three years. Careful thought needs to be given to creating a central reference point where all voices, especially schools, can be heard.
- 7.3** Over the past three years, SSIG has established a structure for involving just such a wide range of committed lay and professional voices. In a period of rapid educational change, Headteachers have told us that they like and value SSIG'S collaborative and responsive approach. Whilst not wanting a body that sets strategy, they nonetheless feel the need for space to consider strategic responses and to debate solutions. Schools already benefit from a range of services offering curriculum support, teacher development, quality assurance and research. The art will be to bring these together without compromising the independence of existing structures, to respond to the breadth and growth in the Jewish school system. To use language familiar to schools, it is about adding value.
- 7.4** Schools will of course choose whatever is most helpful to them. Common purchasing, for example, may be of more relevance to single form entry primary schools than to large secondary schools. Teacher training, on the other hand, is an area where a strategic community approach is likely to become increasingly important. Any new response must have a strong involvement from schools. They need to help create the agenda and monitor progress.

7.5 One constant theme throughout the last three years has been the interrelationship between the state and Jewish schools, even those in the independent sector. We now stand on the cusp of further major changes. As this report is being written, a White Paper has been published about opening up public services to charities and community groups. This will inevitably impact across the Jewish community. Welfare, Israel, religious life and security already benefit from strong central responses. We now need a similar commitment to Jewish schools, since they are building the community's future. Everything SSIG has been involved in over the last three years leads to one simple conclusion: we all have a responsibility to support Jewish schools as they continue to create the world class system our children deserve.



**At the Bury and Whitefield Chumash Ceremony.**

Photo Reproduced by courtesy of the Jewish Telegraph Group of Newspapers [www.jewishtelegraph.com](http://www.jewishtelegraph.com).



**Students sitting around a classroom desk at JFS.**

Photo by John Rifkin Photographer.

## APPENDIX A

# Recommendations Summary

These are the recommendations from The Commission on Jewish Schools' Report, 'The Future of Jewish Schools', published by the JLC in July 2008.

Each recommendation is followed by a brief comment, summarising actions and responses. Please note that wherever relevant, these are cross referenced with text in the main report.

### NUMBERS

*A major piece of research be commissioned immediately from independent and experienced researchers to investigate, through quantitative and qualitative studies, the changing attitudes of Jewish parents to Jewish schooling which can inform decision- making about school capacity in the community in the future.*

The Pears Foundation has initiated the largest single study ever undertaken on the impact of Jewish secondary schools on pupils and their families. This is a longitudinal study involving six London secondary schools and will undoubtedly have significant implications for future decision making. We are also getting interim results which will help us with future decision making. Paras: 3.18 - 3.20

*Schools take responsibility for a collective marketing and public relations campaign for Jewish schooling. The JLC member organisations led by the UJIA should offer professional advice and resources to the campaign.*

SSIG identified and offered serious professional marketing advice to a range of schools. The experience and impact of the work with secondary schools offers a strong model to primary schools. Para 3.3

*A Jewish schools information website should be established.*

www.findajewishschool.co.uk was established by the JLC in 2010, with financial backing from schools, the Board of Deputies and UJIA. It has grown quickly to receive over 2,500 unique visits in recent months. Para 3.4

*As the demand picture becomes clearer, communal agencies focus their efforts on making as much information as possible available and helping those schools with recruitment difficulties to formulate and deliver strategies to meet the challenges they face.*

The Redbridge Community Change Project is a good example of where this help has been given. On a broader level, a working group was established to look at the primary sector and, in particular, to encourage more accurate data collection. Paras: 3.6 - 3.16

*The Redbridge schools, with the help of relevant agencies, establish a Redbridge Community Change Project with the objective of agreeing and carrying through a programme of change to strengthen the schools and the community in Redbridge. The project should have an independent chair with associations with Redbridge, and should appoint a change manager as soon as possible.*

SSIG and the JLC made this a top priority, appointing a change consultant and helping drive through the sale and move of Ilford Jewish Primary School, while fully engaging with King Solomon High School and Clore Tikva Primary. A major fund raising initiative is underway. Paras: 3.13 - 3.16

*King David High School Manchester and the Leeds Jewish Community consider favourably the establishment of a formal relationship that recognises King David High as the secondary school for Leeds Jewish children. Such a relationship could provide for representation of the Leeds community on the King David High School Board of Governors, positive marketing of the school in Leeds and some financial support for travelling costs.*

The number of Leeds children attending King David High continued to grow and a specific governor representing Leeds was appointed. However the Leeds community have been pursuing the establishment of a 'free' high school as part of a new community initiative. Para 3.17

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

*All primary schools seriously consider introducing Ivrit as their foreign language and we urge central agencies to ensure that adequate support is provided for this.*

The Jewish Curriculum Partnership (JCP) has been extremely successful in its Ivrit project and 30 primary schools are now involved in their training and using the new resources being developed with the help of the Wohl Foundation. Para 4.9

*A regular survey of schools be undertaken to assess their current Jewish Studies teacher supply situation. This should include a profile against a number of criteria (e.g. age, gender, qualifications, length of service, salaries) of their existing staff and their estimate of likely demand in the coming year as well as for the two to three years beyond.*

This remains a priority, and we are grateful to those schools who have supplied information. It is hoped this survey might now be incorporated into the work of the new Jewish Teacher Training Partnership.

*All new Jewish Studies staff have a professional teacher training qualification, and schools take responsibility for ensuring that unqualified teachers have the opportunity to gain Qualified Teacher Status.*

A new degree course was devised specifically targeted at Jewish Studies teachers to provide them with the qualification needed to apply for teacher training schemes. Arising from this, a new work based BA in Jewish Education is now being constructed. Paras: 4.1 - 4.3

*A 'Teach Jewish First' scheme be established, modelled on the national Teach First scheme, and be marketed to students before they graduate.*

Staff met with Teach First and concluded this route would not be the appropriate model. However the founder of Teach First, Brett Wigdortz has offered help and advice to SSIG and JTTP.

***A Jewish Schools Training and Jobs website be established that would clearly explain the various routes into training to be a Jewish Studies teacher and how and where to apply. It would also carry advertisements for job vacancies in Jewish schools.***

A telephone hotline is planned together with a new website to give advice on all routes to training.

***The relevant central agencies help schools consider whether a more collaborative approach might address some of the teacher supply and development issues they face.***

This needs to be looked at now in the framework of the new Government proposals on teacher training and the development of Teaching Schools.

***The professional development of Jewish Studies teachers be accorded much higher priority by the central agencies, the schools and indeed the teachers themselves. This should include the allocation of substantially increased funds, the introduction of an entitlement for every teacher to have a personal development plan, a review of existing opportunities, and the appointment centrally of a director of continuing professional development to drive the project forward.***

UJIA has ringfenced additional funding for CPD. LSJS and the IPDJS have created a new conference for JS teachers in Orthodox primary schools and JCP has considerably increased its professional development work. However, not all of these recommendations were addressed and they remain key priorities for the future. Paras: 4.7 - 4.8

***Plans be developed to move towards a schools-based system of allocating funds for the professional development of Jewish Studies teachers.***

A number of models were explored to look at the best and most effective means of funding CPD. This will undoubtedly remain a key priority.

***Given the very high impact of informal education, a feasibility study should be undertaken of the viability of securing a suitable centre for the residential use of schools.***

Skeet House, near Lullingstone Castle in Kent, purchased in 1944 for the use of the Brady Club, was refurbished mainly through the generosity of the Jewish Youth Fund and with some help from the Children's Aid Committee. It has a fully kosher kitchen, good facilities and is widely used for residential programmes by schools and other communal groups.

***Pikuach should receive greater resources to enable it to work on developing standards for Jewish Studies and to widen the scope of its inspections to comment on the objectives and standards a school is seeking to achieve in its Jewish Studies work.***

The new OFSTED framework has provided an opportunity for Pikuach to revisit its model in consultation with a wide range of stakeholders

***A full review of special educational needs provision be carried out, involving full consultation with parents, schools and current SEN providers.***

As with Redbridge, a working group was established and a survey of needs was specially commissioned. A major Conference for Jewish schools, responding to the current Green paper, will be held in the summer of 2012. Paras: 4.10 - 4.13

## FUNDING AND FINANCE

*Research be carried out on parental attitudes to voluntary contributions, and ways of increasing the numbers contributing should be identified*

Following further consultation, governors indicated they prefer to deal with these issues on an individual school basis but they welcomed the offer of some in-school fundraising support.

*Synagogue organisations offer reduced membership prices and that Jewish schools suggest reduced voluntary contributions for all Jewish Studies teachers. A working group should be established to consider how this might be organised, introduced and further developed.*

Further consultations produced no practical support for this initiative.

*An expert group examine the feasibility of establishing an endowment scheme, the income from which would contribute to the recurrent funding of Jewish schools.*

With the downturn of the economy, this was not felt to be feasible at the current time. Nevertheless, a more permanent schools central group will look at employing a central fundraiser to assist schools.

Para 5.1

## POLITICAL AND EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

*The Board of Deputies, in consultation with all interested parties, strengthens its advocacy and lobbying on behalf of Jewish schools and allocates more resources for this purpose.*

Both the Board of Deputies and the JLC have responded strongly to increasing anti-faith school lobbying. The BOD has created a new information service and is looking at ways of actively increasing their lobbying capacity. Paras: 6.1 - 6.3

*The Department for Children, Schools and Families agrees a five year exemption to the oversupply criteria for admissions to schools newly entering the maintained faith sector.*

Changes in policy mean that this is no longer seen as a key issue.

## LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

*A Schools Strategy Implementation Group (SSIG) be appointed immediately with the task of ensuring that the recommendations in this report are considered and, if agreed, are implemented. The Group should have a three-year life and a membership and supporting team as set out.*

The group was convened under the Chairmanship of Leo Noé and first met in October 2008. It has been responsible for overseeing the work described in this Review and it has kept to its stated time scale.

## APPENDIX B

# Members of SSIG

**LEO NOÉ Chair of Schools Strategy Implementation Group**

Leo Noé is the Executive Chairman of F&C REIT, a specialist property asset management company with a global portfolio of properties under management valued at £7.5 billion. Leo was a member of the Commission on Jewish Schools and is an active participant in education strategy and planning projects. Through the Rachel Charitable Trust, he is a major benefactor to various charities within the UK and Israel and is a Trustee and Patron to a number of leading education and welfare institutions. He has a particular and keen interest in special needs education with involvement at communal and governmental level in both the UK and Israel. He was instrumental in securing SEN as a specialism under the schools funding programme and has committed his time and energy to SEN within the Jewish Community and to over 50 SEN schools outside of the Jewish community.

**SARAH ANTICONI Chair of Primary Schools Working Group**

Sarah Anticoni was a member of the Commission on Jewish Schools. She is a solicitor/mediator and partner with the law firm Charles Russell LLP. She sits on the Family Law Group of the Board of Deputies and the constitutional committee of the Federation of Synagogues. She has close family links to the Sephardi community. Sarah is a governor of the Etz Chaim Jewish Primary School opening in Mill Hill in September 2011.

**BILL BENJAMIN**

William Benjamin was a member of the Commission on Jewish Schools. He is Managing Director of a large private equity firm focusing on real estate investments in Europe and India. An American citizen, he moved to London in 2001. He is Vice Chair of the Assembly of Masorti Synagogues, a member of the JLC and has three children, all of whom attended Naima Jewish Preparatory School.

**ADAM DAWSON Board of Deputies**

Adam Dawson, a barrister, was a former Chair of UJS and the University Jewish Chaplaincy Board and has represented both organisations at the Board of Deputies over the last 12 years. He currently serves on the Executive of the Board. Adam has been the key mover behind the new Etz Chaim Jewish Primary School which opens in Mill Hill in September. He is its first Chair of Governors.

**JON EPSTEIN Movement for Reform Judaism (From May 2010)**

Jon, now retired, was Assistant Head of Tiffin School with responsibility for the sixth form and a Geography teacher. He is currently Chair of Governors at Akiva School and a JCoSS Trustee and member of the Governing Body. He is also Chair of Jewish Community Day Schools Advisory Board (JCDSAB). He has been a member of UJIA Education Leadership Policy group since its inception. He is a former synagogue chairman (NWRS) and member of the executive of the Reform Movement. He serves on School Admission panels and Young Offender panels in the London Borough of Barnet.

**DAVID EREIRA Chair of SEN Group**

David is Chairman of the Advisory Council of Norwood, Vice Chair of the Operation Service Committee of Norwood, a member of the Adoption Management Committee and on Norwood fundraising committees. He is a retired member of the BOD, and a retired Parent Governor of KSHS, where he held the SEN portfolio. He is a member of the Spanish and Portuguese community in Lauderdale Road and is Chair of the Building Committee.

**JONATHAN GOLDSTEIN Chair of Redbridge Community Change Group**

Born and raised in Ilford, Jonathan attended Ilford Jewish Primary School and has a detailed understanding of the area. Jonathan was Vice-Chairman of Jewish Care and is a trustee of Camp Simcha. He is also Chair of Governors at Kerem School, the independent Jewish primary school in Hampstead Garden Suburb. He has driven the Redbridge Community Change Project and been a key figure in the recent developments. Having previously qualified as a lawyer and been Chief Executive of Olswang from 1997 to 2007, Jonathan is now Deputy Chief Executive of the Heron Group.

**NAOMI GREENWOOD UJIA**

Naomi's professional career has been in education, in teaching and librarianship. She has held many communal positions, including being a member of the Chief Rabbi's Women's Review and on the board of the Chief Rabbi's Awards, a Governor of Immanuel College 1990-2000 and a Governor of the United Synagogue's Agency for Jewish Education 2001-2005. From 2001-2008 she was Chair of the Jewish Teacher Training Partnership and from 2007 -2009 Chair of Pikuach. She sits on the UJIA Advisory Board and the Advisory Board of LSJS. She has been Chair of the Educational Leadership Policy Group at UJIA since 2007, and also chairs educational appeals panels for the London Borough of Camden.

**RABBI JONATHAN GUTTENTAG Liason, Strictly Orthodox Schools**

Rabbi Guttentag is the Rabbi of Whitefield Hebrew Congregation, north Manchester, where he founded The Forum/Whitefield Community Kollel. Through this, he has developed the Whitefield Student Houses Project, and other informal education initiatives. While serving as a school governor he became active in the political sphere as Jewish Faith Representative to Bury Education Committee. Rabbi Guttentag is the founder and chairman of NAJOS, the National Association of Orthodox Jewish Schools.

**STEVE PACK United Synagogue**

Steve Pack has just been elected as the new President of the United Synagogue, having previously been a Vice President and before that, Treasurer. He is an active member of the Hadley Wood community. He is a Chartered Accountant recently retired from PricewaterhouseCoopers where he worked for over 20 years, specialising in Risk Management.

**RABBI AVROHOM PINTER Observer on SSIG**

Rabbi Pinter is principal of the Yesodey Hatorah Schools in Stamford Hill. He is a spokesman for the charedi community on many issues, particularly education, and is on the steering group of the London Jewish Forum.

**GERALD ROTHMAN Movement for Reform Judaism (retired April 2010)**

Gerald Rothman was a member of the Commission on Jewish Schools. He is a solicitor by qualification. After 15 years in private practice he spent the rest of his career in industry and retired in 2002 as the Chief Operating Officer of the companies that created Canary Wharf. He has been on the International Advisory Board of the Melton Centre in Jerusalem and was the Chairman of Leo Baeck College.

**PHILIP SKELKER**

Philip Skelker, Immanuel College's Head Master since September 2000, was educated at St Catherine's College, Oxford, where he was an Open Scholar, and Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge. He has taught English at the Watford Grammar Schools, the Hasmonean School and Eton College. He was previously Headteacher of King David High School, Liverpool and of Carmel College. In June 2001, Philip was awarded the Max Fisher Prize for his contribution to Jewish education.

**PROFESSOR LESLIE WAGNER CBE**

Leslie Wagner chaired the Commission on Jewish Schools. He was Chancellor of the University of Derby from 2003 to 2008 and Vice Chancellor of Leeds Metropolitan University from 1994 to 2003. He is a member of the Chief Rabbinate Trust and some years ago undertook the review of Jewish Continuity that led to the formation of UJIA. He is now living in Jerusalem, where he is a Fellow of the Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs, and a board member of the Pardes Institute.

**PROFESSOR ANTHONY WARRENS UJIA**

Anthony Warrens is Dean for Education and Professor of Renal and Transplantation Medicine at Barts and The London School of Medicine and Dentistry, Queen Mary University of London, and a practising Consultant Physician at the Royal London Hospital. He is also President-Elect of the British Transplantation Society. He is a Trustee of the UJIA and Chair of Council of the London School of Jewish Studies (LSJS, formerly Jews' College). He has two children, through whom he has experience as a parent, of one Jewish primary school and two Jewish secondary schools.

The President of the Board of Deputies (Henry Grunwald OBE QC and subsequently Vivian Wineman) together with the Chairman of UJIA (Mick Davis) sat as 'Presidents' of the group and attended its meetings on an occasional basis.

**SSIG PROFESSIONAL STAFF**

<b>ALASTAIR FALK</b>	Lead Professional
<b>LIRA WINSTON</b>	Co-ordinator
<b>CAROLINE GARFINKEL</b>	Administrator
<b>PETER SHAW</b>	Consultant
<b>SIMON GOULDEN</b>	Consultant

## APPENDIX C

# Members of Working Parties

**PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT TEAM**

Chair: Alastair Falk

Jon Benjamin

Dena Coleman

Simon Goulden

Jo-Ann Myers

Jeremy Newmark

Alan Shaw

Rabbi Dr Michael Shire

Colin Spanjar

Susy Stone

Philip Skelker

Lira Winston

Dr Raphael Zarum

**SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS****WORKING PARTY**

Chair: David Ereira

Alastair Falk

Mike Hymans

Gerald Lebrecht

Susan Pascoe

Lira Winston

**PRIMARY SCHOOLS WORKING PARTY**

Chair: Sarah Anticoni

Hannah Ashleigh

Adam Dawson

Alastair Falk

Simon Goulden

Colin Spanjar

Daniel Vulcan

Lira Winston

**REDBRIDGE COMMUNITY CHANGE  
PROJECT**

Chair: Jonathan Goldstein

Richard Burack

Daniel Carmel Brown

Alastair Falk

Diana Lazarus

Roz Levin

Spencer Lewis

Clare Mehlman

Jeremy Newmark

Lenna Rosenberg

Peter Shaw

Howard Stanton

Lira Winston

**STRICTLY ORTHODOX TEACHER  
TRAINING GROUP**

Chair: Alastair Falk

Michael Cohen

Rabbi Jonathan Guttentag

Judith Nemeth

Phaivish Pink

Michael Pollak

Jonathan Rabson

Sharon Raphael

Debbie Sheldon

Lira Winston

## APPENDIX D

# Review of Special Educational Needs Provision

Below is the summary of the SEN questionnaire returns received.

Mike Hymans very generously gave us his time and expertise to frame the questionnaire and to analyse the results and we are extremely grateful to him. We are also hugely grateful to those Headteachers and SENCOs who gave valuable time and careful thought to their responses.

**David Ereira, Chair SEN group**

## SUMMARY ANALYSIS OF QUESTIONNAIRE RETURNS

Sixty one questionnaires were sent out to maintained and independent primary and secondary schools across the UK, of which there was a 47 per cent return from primary schools and a 42 per cent return from secondary schools. These are good returns in relation to general survey questionnaire returns which are usually around the 20 per cent mark.

However, 95 per cent of the primary school returns were from London and the Hertfordshire area and 80 per cent were from the maintained sector. In comparison, 50 per cent of the secondary school returns were from the maintained sector and these were from a wider area than London and Hertfordshire.

Two per cent of children in the primary schools had Statements of Special Educational Needs (SEN) and a further 16 per cent had SEN without Statements: the stated figure is in line with national averages, with the non-stated figure being a little lower. In comparison, only one per cent of children in the secondary sector had Statements of SEN with a further 13 per cent identified as having SEN without Statements. There can be no definite reason for the difference in these figures: assuming the primary schools are all feeders for the secondary schools, it could mean for instance that at least half of the stated children might transfer to special schools at 11.

In the primary sector, the majority, that is 35 per cent of the stated children, have SEN commonly identified as *communication and interaction needs* and I would suggest that many of these needs would be closely aligned with an autistic spectrum disorder (ASD). In the secondary sector this percentage is 37 per cent, although an almost equally high number, 34 per cent, have SEN related to their cognition and learning.

This high incidence of children with ASD has, in my opinion, implications for staff training. This is especially because children and young people with ASD learn best with particular types of teaching approaches of which all staff may not be aware. Children with ASD also present staff with challenging behaviour that is often confused with social and emotional difficulties.

The relative high incidence of cognition and learning needs in the secondary sector presents subject staff with challenges in curriculum differentiation, especially when there is a wide ability range and/or a particularly skewed higher ability group or groups across the school. Nevertheless, secondary school returns suggest that 62 per cent of schools use curriculum differentiation by subject staff to meet stated children's SEN. A similar figure emerged for primary schools. It would seem from the secondary school returns that curriculum differentiation is really supported by teaching assistants (TAs) rather than subject staff. Individual withdrawal is also used as a means of supporting stated children by TAs and specialists in 62 per cent of secondary schools. The picture for in-class support is not as clear in primary schools. Of course what is not evident from the questionnaires is how much progress the stated children make.

All primary schools and 75 per cent of secondary schools in the returned samples used curriculum differentiation by class teachers for children with SEN who do not have Statements.

Both primary and secondary schools report a wide range of different ways of meeting children's SEN for both those with and without Statements. ICT and group work feature in both sectors, as well as the use of therapies such as speech and language and occupational and in this respect the HOPE Centre and BINOH are also included.

There is not absolute clarity about how SEN resources are allocated and how much was allocated from within schools' own resources and that provided by local authorities in both primary and secondary sectors. Of course this may relate to whether or not the special needs co-ordinator (SENCO) completed the questionnaire or not as SENCOs are often unaware of the allocation of resources in schools, especially if they are not part of their schools' senior leadership teams.

The adequacy of external support services were not rated particularly highly particularly in secondary schools and there were mixed responses about the satisfaction in both sectors with the statutory assessment process (Education Act, 1996).

The overall picture for continuing professional development for staff was good. However, one comment from three primary school returns that stick out in relation to the incidence of SEN is as follows:

- Hebrew staff would like more specific training especially as they have little understanding about differentiation and behaviour management as well as specific disorders such as ASD and ADHD.

Another comment that seems particularly pertinent:

- There is not enough opportunity for our staff as we are an independent school and do not have access to LA courses – private courses are very expensive and this is a major issue in our school for my SEN staff.

Although these are not repeated across the complete sample of returns, I would suggest that such comments may well ring true of schools who did not return questionnaires or indeed even from some schools that did, only they chose not to record such statements!

Finally, I have chosen to summarise some of the 'any other comments'...:

- Ongoing professional development is still required for staff, especially Jewish Studies staff
- Often a mismatch between how LA assesses need and school resources
- Challenging behaviour is always the most difficult part of inclusion
- Old buildings and lack of space can make additional provision hard to accommodate
- Managing parental expectations is often hard - more training /sharing on this would be good

### **Issues Arising**

1. How can good practice for meeting SEN for children with and without statements best be shared?
2. What would be a cost-effective way of providing staff training (teachers and teaching assistants) in meeting SEN in schools? And is separate and specific training required for Hebrew staff, especially in ASD and ADHD? Is separate training required for secondary staff in curriculum differentiation?
3. What should be suggested to schools about making resource allocation, both from within school resources and from the local authority, explicit to SEN staff? Do schools need support in monitoring the effectiveness of this additional resourcing? If so, who would be best placed to support them?
4. Should a central agency be approaching local authorities and other organisations to discuss the current concerns amongst schools about their support? Do there need to be community resources for alternative education to meet the needs of students with the most challenging behaviour and/or learning needs?
5. How can schools be supported in making 'reasonable achievements' to buildings and the curriculum to include the full range of SEN in line with the Disability Discrimination Act?

**Dr Michael Hymans. C.Psychol., AFBPsS., ACMI. Chartered Psychologist**

## APPENDIX E

# SSIG Primary School Strategy - July 2011

This is adapted from a longer report of the work carried out on behalf of SSIG by Simon Goulden. He was recruited in 2010 to assist the SSIG Working Party, jointly supported by the JLC and Board of Deputies, with strategic planning and to work in partnership both with new school groups and existing schools who were looking to expand. Although concentrating on the mainstream sector, Simon also held a number of discussions with members of the strictly orthodox sector to understand their needs over the next few years. SSIG is very grateful to him for his time and commitment.

## BACKGROUND

- 1.1 In early 2010, there had been much anxiety raised in the Jewish media about the perceived lack of primary school places. It became a major focus of community discussion, with parents making clear their distress and frustration at the apparent shortage of school places, particularly in the Borehamwood area. We now know that virtually all children initially without a place did, in fact, obtain one later on, provided that their parents were prepared for them to travel outside their immediate locality. This situation is not the same in the strictly Orthodox sector, where supply seems still to lag behind demand.
  
- 1.2 The change of government in May 2010 and the rapid development of the Free School system, together with the recognised 'bulge' of demand for reception places in September 2011, meant a closer look was needed at the situation. Since Free Schools are required by law to only offer places on faith based criteria to 50% of admissions and other criteria need to be used for the remaining 50%, it was initially thought that this may inhibit some groups from taking this particular route. However two Jewish schools, Etz Chaim Jewish Primary School in Mill Hill and Eden Primary in Muswell Hill, are among the first 16 to be approved by the DFE for Free School status and they will open in September 2011. Other groups are currently hoping to pursue this route, including one in Golders Green and one in South London.

## PROCESS

- 2.1 During the year, meetings were held with a wide variety of new groups and existing schools considering expansion, including Noam, Yavneh College, Side by Side, South Hampstead, Golders Green, B'nos Beis Yaakov (a new strictly orthodox girls' school in NW London) and a group wishing to set up a primary school in South London, an area devoid of Jewish schooling to date. A detailed written inventory was compiled of all potential school developments and project status reports were updated on a monthly basis.

2.2 To date, nearly thirty projects have been identified, of which almost all are in the Greater London / South Hertfordshire area. A map has been produced of current schools and new projects. This indicates four types of development:

- Free schools and new schools (independent or VA)
- Bulge classes for 2011
- Existing schools wishing to find a new site and/or move into the VA sector
- Long term plans.

For the map, go to

<http://tinyurl.com/jlcmap>

2.3 The experience of 2010 was that virtually all parents seemed to have been satisfied and there remained a number of empty Reception places in North and North West London, in addition to the mainstream schools in N E London. For September 2011, there again appear to be Reception places available in a number of schools.

2.4 Based on information gleaned over this past year, the calculation of NEW places available at Reception in the mainstream sector (compared to 2010) looks like this:

#### Known EXTRA Reception class places in mainstream schools as at July 2011

School	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	
Kerem	20					Bulge class
Yavneh		60	60	60	60	New primary unit*
Etz Chaim	25	25	25	25	25	Free school
Eden	25	25	25	25	25	Free school
North West London	20					Bulge class
Rosh Pinah	30					Bulge class
Immanuel College	20	20	20	20	20	New primary unit
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>130</b>	* Awaiting permissions

- 2.5** Serious thought needs to be given to a possible surplus of places and the resulting external pressures to fill empty places with non Jewish children. The task ahead therefore includes marketing, but also an understanding of local factors and the impact that new schools will have on existing ones. South London, for example, is an area that currently lacks any Jewish schooling and the project is supported by a wide range of communities and local individuals. Projects in North London, on the other hand, often develop in isolation and therefore formulating a strategy whereby the instigators of projects communicate with one another and plan coherently seems vital.
- 2.6** There are also a number of vacancies higher up mainstream primary schools. Currently, the best estimate of vacant places in mainstream schools at Key Stage 2 is 80. Almost all of these schools were full in Nursery/Reception and vacancies are usually due to emigration, job relocation and transfer to other schools. Making sure that schools and the wider community understand this is an important part of the risk management and public relations process.

### **THE WAY FORWARD**

There will be a need for continuing community engagement with the following areas:

- Regular monitoring of projects and data gathering of supply and demand, particularly sibling data
- Maintaining some form of information hub, partly through the website  
[www.findajewishschool.co.uk](http://www.findajewishschool.co.uk)
- Facilitating differing groups to talk to each other and to existing schools, to ensure sensible use of communal resources
- A review of NE London pending changes in the primary school provision facilitated through the Redbridge Community Change Group
- Replication of this work in the regions outside London where falling Jewish pupil rolls in mainstream schools are posing their own challenges.

## APPENDIX F

# Planning Application Agreed for New Ilford Jewish Primary School

### Press Release

28 July 2011

Last night the London Borough of Redbridge granted permission for the building of the new Ilford Jewish Primary School on the site of King Solomon High School, paving the way for the largest capital project the Jewish community of Redbridge has ever seen. The £10million development will see the primary school housed in a state of the art facility together with some significant refurbishment of some parts of King Solomon and enhanced community use of the entire campus. The Council has agreed to proceed immediately with the signing of an agreement to enable the new school to open in Sept 2013.

Following the planning meeting, Clare Mehlman, Vice-Chair of Governors at IJPS said “We are delighted with this news. It will be an enormous opportunity to reinvigorate Jewish education in the area and the whole community. The project has been made possible by the forthcoming sale of the current site to the local authority, together with the enormous support of the Jewish Leadership Council (JLC), who have backed the project both financially and with their expertise.” Spencer Lewis, head teacher at King Solomon High School said “King Solomon is very excited to be welcoming IJPS to the campus, which further demonstrates our partnership with other community organisations.”

Jonathan Goldstein, who chairs the 'Redbridge Community Change Project' on behalf of the JLC said ***“This is great news for the Jewish community in Redbridge and now allows all the stakeholders to begin a concerted fundraising campaign to raise approximately £2million, which is required to fund the gap between the sale of IJPS and the overall cost of the project. The JLC will be supporting this effort and is already working with the governors of both Schools to ensure the development is completed by September 2013, when the new primary school is expected to open.”***

Note to editors:

1. The Redbridge Community Change Project was created by the Jewish Leadership Council as part of the work of its Schools Strategy Task Force which is charged with implementing the recommendations of the 2008 JLC Commission on the Future of Jewish Schools (commonly known as the Wagner Commission).
2. For further information, please contact Daniel Carmel-Brown on 07770 335 428.

The Jewish Leadership Council exists to strengthen the major institutions of British Jewry, to promote cooperation between them and to help the leadership of our community articulate a confident and compelling narrative of mainstream Jewish life in the United Kingdom.

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**Jewish Leadership Council**

6 Bloomsbury Square

London

WC1A 2LP

[www.thejlc.org](http://www.thejlc.org)

020 7242 9734

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