



# The Future of Jewish Schools

The Commission on Jewish Schools

**JEWISH LEADERSHIP**  
C O U N C I L

Cover photo from the 2008 Annual Children's Dance Festival, courtesy of the Israeli Dance Institute

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# Foreword



The Commission was set up 12 months ago by the Jewish Leadership Council, its first exercise in strategic planning for the Jewish community. While the starting point for our work was the anticipated supply and demand imbalance in Jewish schools in London, our terms of reference charged us with considering other strategic issues. We realised from the outset that it was essential to engage those closely involved with Jewish schools in our work, and we sought to do this first through the publication of a consultative document in autumn last year. The document set out the issues that we thought were important and asked for respondents' views. I am pleased to say that it was generally well received and stimulated a healthy response.

I am grateful to all those who sent in written responses, many of which we followed up with meetings. We also met with others whose views we wanted to hear, consulted expert witnesses and visited a number of schools. We established three Advisory Groups covering headteachers, the United Synagogue and the Reform, Liberal and Masorti communities. They provided valuable input at different stages of our work and the leadership of their convenors, Philip Skelker, Steve Pack and Andrew Gilbert, is particularly appreciated. Indeed, we are extremely grateful to all who responded to our requests for giving their time and their views to the Commission.

For me, and I'm sure for my fellow commissioners, the last year has been a tremendous learning experience as we have sought to understand the issues we faced, heard the often contrasting views of people who feel strongly about these issues, looked at the evidence and in due course made our judgements. In selecting the members of the Commission, we sought people with a track record in their chosen field who had shown themselves capable of strategic and analytical thinking and who were not formally associated with any interest group within the community. We chose wisely, and as our work has progressed I have been impressed by the way my colleagues have sought to check every argument and proposal against the views and evidence that have been put to us. I have also appreciated the collegiate atmosphere they have brought to our deliberations, which has made chairing our meetings relatively easy. It has been a pleasure to lead them and I thank them for all they have contributed.

The support of our professional and administrative team has been immense. Alastair Falk, Alex Goldberg and Jeremy Newmark, the professional support team, used their different specialist expertise to guide us

through numerous minefields, helping us to understand complex issues and making us aware of relevant documents and other information. I am particularly grateful to Alastair for his wide-ranging involvement and wise advice as Secretary to the Commission. Our thanks go to the UJIA for releasing him part-time for this important work, and to them and to the Board of Deputies for their material support.

The work of our administrative team has been indispensable. In the early days, Emma Levy provided support to the production of the consultation document. Since January, Lira Winston, as project manager, has kept us to our timetable, organised superbly our complex schedule of meetings and visits, and worked tirelessly to produce the finished report. In this latter task, she has been helped by Jo Grose, our editor. Throughout the 12 months, Zippy Myers, our administrator, has attended assiduously to all the detailed jobs that can make life miserable if they are not done well. I thank all of them for their commitment, dedication and effectiveness.

The issues we cover require long term solutions, and that is what we have sought to provide in this report and its recommendations. We hope that what we say will be welcomed, but if that is all that happens then nothing will change. Our most important recommendation is therefore our final one, the need to set up a Schools Strategy Implementation Group to take the proposals in this report forward. If that happens there is hope that we can build on the current success of our schools and move to new levels of achievement.

We have much to be proud of in our schools. Our main message is that we will be even prouder of them in the future if the changes we recommend are introduced. For me personally, the highlights of the year have been our visits to the schools. It was a privilege to share, if only for an hour or two, the unique atmosphere of learning, commitment, care, seriousness, fun and Jewish spirit that is created there. For anyone who may be concerned about the future of our community, an hour or so in a Jewish school is the perfect antidote.

**Professor Leslie Wagner CBE**

July 2008

## **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

To consider the internal and external strategic issues facing Jewish schools to 2020 and to make clear recommendations on how they should best be addressed to ensure the development of a strong, vibrant and high quality Jewish school system. The issues include:

- Future demand and supply
- School leadership and governance
- Jewish curriculum development
- Teacher training and supply
- Quality and standards
- Marketing and promotion
- Wider educational and political issues
- Funding

## A NOTE ON DEFINITIONS

- D.1** In our consultative document we divided schools into two categories, strictly orthodox and mainstream. This followed the categorisation in the Board of Deputies Community Policy Research Group's report, *The Supply and Demand for Jewish Day School Places in Britain*. The focus of that report was future projections of the Jewish school age population. As these projections were based on marriage and birth data, where the trends are very different in the strictly orthodox community from the rest of the community, this distinction makes sense. Individual schools were allocated to the appropriate group on the basis of the community from which they primarily drew their pupils.
- D.2** For most schools, the categorisation is obvious and non-controversial. Yesodey Hatorah Senior Girls School is strictly orthodox, both in terms of its rabbinical authority and the community from which it attracts its pupils. JFS is clearly a mainstream school in terms of the communities from which it attracts its pupils and because it obtains its religious rulings from the Chief Rabbi. For others, the categorisation is less clear. The Hasmonean Schools can be categorised as strictly orthodox in that they are part of the Jewish Secondary School Movement and obtain their religious guidance from rabbis of the Union of Orthodox Hebrew Congregations. However, most of their pupils come from the mainstream community in terms of marriage and birth rates, albeit the more highly observant end of that community. In looking at future pupil projections, it is more sensible to categorise Hasmonean Schools as mainstream. We were pleased to hear from the leadership of Hasmonean Secondary Schools that they had no difficulty with this categorisation. In discussing future numbers, therefore, and in some other parts of the report, we keep to the simple distinction between strictly orthodox and mainstream.
- D.3** We recognise, however, the rich diversity within these broad groupings. Within the mainstream group, for example, a distinction can be made, as we have identified, between highly observant (e.g. Hasmonean Schools), centrist orthodox (e.g. JFS), progressive (e.g. Akiva School) and cross-community (e.g. the planned new JCoSS). We will make these distinctions when it is appropriate to do so in the text. Within the strictly orthodox group there are various Hasidic and non-Hasidic schools, and a distinction can also be made between those schools that focus mainly on Jewish studies (Limmudei Kodesh) and those that seek to provide their pupils with a high standard of both secular and Jewish studies education. All the former are independent schools, while the latter are a mixture of maintained faith and independent schools.

### **OUR VISION**

The vision that has informed our work is that Jewish schools, collectively, should reflect the religious diversity of the community, and thus provide the opportunity for every Jewish child who wishes to attend a Jewish school to do so. Jewish Schools should seek to meet the educational needs of every child, enabling them to develop their potential to the full. Through their ethos and Jewish education provision, schools should motivate and inspire their pupils to become knowledgeable, proud and committed Jews, secure in their identity, and they should encourage their pupils to engage with and contribute to the wider society.

SECTION 1

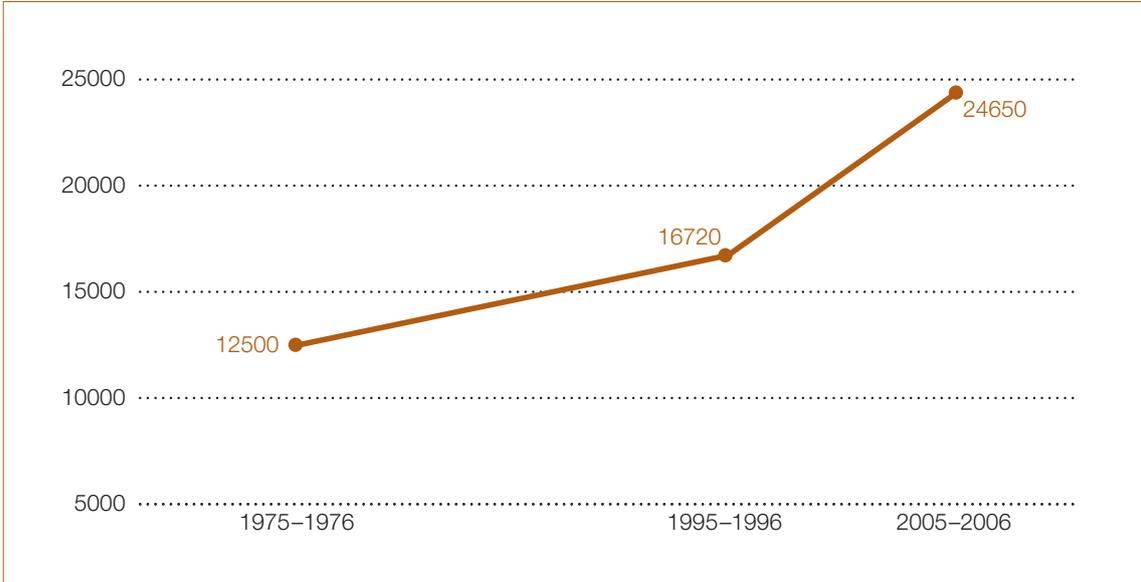
# Jewish Schools Today

## NUMBERS

- 1.1 Jewish schools have never been more popular. The key facts are as follows:
- There are now more than 26000 Jewish pupils attending Jewish schools compared to less than 13000 some 30 years ago.
  - Over the last decade, enrolments overall have increased by 50 per cent and in the mainstream community by 30 per cent.
  - Today, some 60 per cent of Jewish children of school age attend Jewish schools compared to around 25 per cent 30 years ago.
  - About half of these come from the strictly orthodox community (see note on definitions) where it is assumed that the demand for Jewish schooling is 100 per cent.
  - The other half come from what we have termed the mainstream community, accounting for over 40 per cent of its school age population. In London, where the majority of Jewish children live, children from the mainstream community make up about 50 per cent of the total in Year 1 and Year 7 of Jewish schools.
  - Within both the mainstream and strictly orthodox communities, the numbers attending Jewish primary schools are higher than those attending Jewish secondary schools.

Figure 1 charts growth over the past 30 years. Detailed current school enrolment data is provided in Appendix 4.

FIGURE 1:  
**Jewish pupil numbers enrolled in Jewish Schools 1975–2005**



- 1.2** A major difference between the two sections of the community is that while the majority of mainstream schools are maintained faith schools, largely supported by public funds, the majority of strictly orthodox schools are independent, reflecting their more detached approach to wider society and their focus on intensive Torah study. In the strictly orthodox community, school demand is directly related to birth rates, which have recently been estimated to be growing at four per cent per annum.
- 1.3** In the mainstream community, matters are a little more complicated. Birth rates and population change in this group tend to follow that of the general population, and evidence over the last decade shows that both have been declining. Although most recent indicators show a stabilisation in the birth rate, and even some small growth when the strictly orthodox community is included, population projections by the Board of Deputies Community Policy Research Group (CPRG) continue to indicate a decline in the Jewish school age population over the next decade. However, the proportion of this population attending Jewish schools is rising.
- 1.4** To meet or to anticipate this increased demand in the mainstream community, a significant expansion of places, particularly in the secondary sector, is taking place with the opening of Yavneh College in 2006 and the planned opening of JCoSS (Jewish Community Secondary School), a cross-community school, in 2010. The crucial questions are whether the recent increased enthusiasm for Jewish schooling among the different groups within the mainstream community can be sustained in order to fill these places and, if it cannot, what might be the consequences. We examine these issues in Section 2.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

- 1.5** Reports from Ofsted indicate that Jewish schools are generally good schools and many are considered outstanding. Analysis by the Institute for Jewish Policy Research (JPR) in 2002 showed that pupils in Jewish schools achieved at least ten per cent higher points scores than the national average in Key Stages 1 to 3. Around 80 per cent of pupils at Jewish comprehensive schools achieved five or more GCSE or GNVQ grades A\* to C at the end of the 1990s compared with the national average of around 50 per cent. Both percentages have risen in recent years but the difference is still substantial, exemplified by the prominence of Jewish schools at the top end of published league tables on examination performance. Indeed, it was put to us that many Jewish parents only realised how well Jewish schools were performing academically when school league tables began to appear in the press.
- 1.6** Ofsted does not inspect Jewish studies or the religious aspect of a school's environment and its reports do not cover this aspect of a school's work. By agreement, this is left to a community-led inspection service named Pikuach, which was established in 1996 under the auspices of the Board of Deputies with the support of the UJIA. Pikuach covers all maintained faith schools in both the strictly orthodox and mainstream sectors of the community. Unlike the general education in a school, which is based on a national curriculum and through which standards can be compared across schools, there is no national curriculum in Jewish studies. Each school sets its own objectives for its Jewish studies/Limmudei Kodesh work and these vary significantly, not just as

might have been expected, between strictly orthodox and mainstream schools, but also between schools in each of these groupings. Pikuach, therefore, assesses each school in relation to its own objectives but cannot provide a reliable comparison between schools on standards. We consider the future role of Pikuach in Section 3.

- 1.7** The key to successful Jewish studies is an adequate supply of appropriately qualified Jewish studies teachers. In strictly orthodox schools these are generally supplied by yeshivot and seminaries, both in this country and in Israel, and the main criterion for appointment is a deep understanding and knowledge of the intensive curriculum followed. More recently, there have been attempts to introduce schemes to formalise and accredit pedagogical studies for teachers in this group of schools. As well as supplying teachers for their own schools, the strictly orthodox community supply some teachers for mainstream schools.
- 1.8** In mainstream schools, the supply, qualifications and quality of Jewish studies and Ivrit (Modern Hebrew) teachers has been an area of concern for many years and has been considered in a number of reports. These include *Securing Our Future*, chaired by Fred Worms OBE for the Jewish Educational Developmental Trust in 1992 and *The Teachers' Report*, an internal report from the UJIA in 1999. Some of the recommendations in these reports have been implemented, most notably through the UJIA's UK programme division. The Jewish Teacher Training Partnership between the UJIA and the Agency for Jewish Education (AJE) utilises various government routes to Qualified Teacher Status. The UJIA also funds teacher development programmes at Leo Baeck College and delivers programmes supporting leadership development in schools.
- 1.9** One of the major UJIA commitments in recent years has been to support the Jewish Curriculum Partnership, which includes the AJE and the United Synagogue, and seeks to create a modern Jewish curriculum for centrist orthodox schools. This project is a partnership not just between the different agencies but also between the agencies and the schools, and its focus is as much on teacher development and pedagogic skills as on the details of the curriculum. The early focus has been on the primary curriculum, with a number of schools acting as major partners and piloting material. Other schools have indicated that they intend to use the material once it is published. This situation highlights a key issue on learning and teaching in relation to Jewish studies, which is that the decisions on the nature of the curriculum, pedagogy, materials, levels of attainment and standards are for each school to determine individually. This makes it more difficult to agree common curricula and standards. The three progressive and pluralist primary schools have developed their own joint curriculum for Jewish studies. We consider the important issues of the supply, training and development of Jewish studies teachers and curriculum development in Section 3.

## FUNDING AND FINANCE

- 1.10** The most important factor in the funding of Jewish schools is their status. Those that are maintained faith schools receive a grant from the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) to cover up to 90 per cent of their capital costs. They also receive full funding for their general educational provision on the same basis as other state schools. Their governing bodies

have to raise the finance to cover the remaining ten per cent of their capital costs, and their recurrent expenditure on Jewish studies and security. Independent schools have to raise the funds for all areas of expenditure, both capital and recurrent.

- 1.11** The vast majority of schools in the mainstream group are maintained faith schools while most of those in the strictly orthodox group are independent. Maintained faith status brings with it an obligation to abide by government regulations and policies in areas such as curriculum, admissions and raising additional funds. The debate within the strictly orthodox community about whether it is possible to remain true to the principles on which their Jewish schools are based, while abiding by the range of government policies, has been long-standing and remains ongoing. There are notable examples of strictly orthodox schools that have become maintained faith schools in recent years, such as the Yesodey Hatorah Senior Girls School and Lubavitch Girls Primary School in Stamford Hill, the Beis Yaakov High School in Salford and the Manchester Mesivta School. All these schools have received strong Ofsted assessments and are clear that they have not compromised their principles.
- 1.12** Independent schools rely on fees and fundraising to provide their funds, but enough parents believe that the education provided offers value for money to enable schools in this category to recruit successfully. Fundraising allows fees to be reduced or waived, through scholarships in appropriate cases, and this is becoming increasingly important in recruitment. In the strictly orthodox group of schools, the imperative for Jewish schooling is so great that parents accept the fees burden involved. However, fees are lower than in the mainstream group, both because costs are significantly lower and because fundraising beyond the parent group is more intensive. Here, too, fundraising enables fees to be waived or reduced for many of those in need.
- 1.13** While the financial challenge for maintained faith schools is less, it is still substantial. The contribution requested for Jewish studies and other costs, such as security, can only be voluntary. This was re-emphasised by the Secretary of State for Children Schools and Families, Ed Balls in spring 2008. The reality is that Jewish parents are all too aware that the level of suggested contribution is voluntary and there is great variation between schools in the percentage of parents making voluntary contributions. School governors allow for this take-up percentage in setting their voluntary contribution rates, which means that the level of the charge is higher than it would need to be if a larger proportion of parents paid.
- 1.14** This funding issue has a knock-on effect on learning and teaching of Jewish studies. The fragile, slightly hand-to-mouth basis on which this is funded constrains any proposals for improving Jewish studies that involve increased finance. We consider this and the other funding issues in Section 4.
- 1.15** As is clear from the section on 'Teaching and Learning', in addition to the funding needed to run schools, significant funds are provided by the community for longer-term educational development. The main financial support comes from the UJIA through a range of projects and programmes, including curriculum, leadership development, inspection and teacher training.

Financial support is also provided by the United Synagogue for its Agency for Jewish Education and by the Progressive communities for the Leo Baeck College Department for Education and Professional Development. In addition, the Board of Deputies works in partnership with the UJIA in the running of the inspection service, Pikuach, and is responsible for the vital role of external relationships between the Jewish community and other faith communities and with government.

## THE POLITICAL AND EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

- 1.16** Jewish schools have traditionally had a warm and positive relationship with government. They have appreciated and benefited from the support the State gives to maintained faith schools. The latest official government position on faith schools is contained in its document *Faith in the System*, published in October 2007. In its own words this document highlights *'the very positive contribution which schools with a religious character make as valuable, engaged partners in the school system and in their local communities and beyond.'* The document includes seven case studies of good practice in faith schools, including two from Jewish schools (Akiva School and the Independent Jewish Day School). No other faith has more than one case study.
- 1.17** The document, however, is not intended to be simply a paean of praise for faith schools. It is, in fact, a joint vision statement representing the shared views of the Government and the different faith organisations. The document commits faith schools to supporting government policies on, for example, promoting community cohesion and working in partnership with their local authority and other schools. It has a section on developing collaboration between different schools and communities, and another encouraging independent faith schools to enter the maintained sector. This refers to the 11000 Jewish children in this category. In part, the Government is seeking to reduce the poverty of many of these families by offering state-funded education, at the same time as seeking to reduce their perceived isolation.
- 1.18** The principled support for faith schools expressed in the document is confirmed by political leaders of both the main parties. However, support is more patchy in other parts of the political culture. Many MPs express hostility to faith schools, either in principle or as a result of perceived failings by these schools to deliver policies designed to reduce inequality. Teacher unions also occasionally call for changes in policies towards faith schools. In 2006, the Government abandoned plans to impose a 25 per cent 'other faith' quota on faith schools. All this creates a degree of uncertainty about the direction in which policy might move in the future. We consider the developments in government policy and how the community might respond to them in Section 5.
- 1.19** Jewish schools support the community cohesion agenda, which is now assessed as part of Ofsted's remit. However, there is still a degree of vagueness about what the term means and this allows schools a wide measure of interpretation. Most seem confident of being able to deliver it. It is also current government policy that, while no quota is imposed, faith schools that are under-subscribed from pupils of their own faith must accept applications from other or non-faith pupils. This has long been the reality in schools in smaller Jewish communities, such as at King David High School in Liverpool, and King David School in Birmingham. It will be a factor in considering

the balance of supply and demand in other areas in the future. A new School Admissions Code now requires some faith schools to change their current practice, such as interviewing or asking for certain information. It is clear from a survey undertaken in the first year of the Code that some faith schools, including Jewish schools, are still adapting to the new requirements.

**1.20** Independent schools do not have to comply with these regulations and policies but they are not free of government control. They have to be registered with the Department for Children Schools and Families (DCSF) and must reach certain standards of educational provision and accommodation, although they do not need to follow the national curriculum. They are regarded as charitable organisations for tax purposes. In order to retain this charitable status in future, independent schools will have to show how they meet the ‘public benefit’ clauses of the new Charities Act. This is likely to require them to show how they provide benefit to people other than those that pay their fees. Most Jewish schools are confident that they can meet this test through evidence of the scholarships they provide and their work in the wider community. We consider developments in government policy, their effect on both maintained faith and independent schools and the appropriate communal response in Section 5.



Photo courtesy of Howard Green

HRH The Duke of Edinburgh arriving to open Hertsmeare Jewish Primary School in July 2000

- 1.21** Government policy also influences the teaching and learning that goes on in schools through, inter alia, changes in the national curriculum and in examinations and assessment. For example, the new 14–19 Diplomas require collaboration between schools to be fully delivered. There is now also in place a government policy that by 2010 all schools will be extended schools. This is intended to make schools the hub of their community and to extend their use as a community resource. We consider the implications of these changes in Section 5.

## CONCLUSIONS

- 1.22** Jewish schooling has never been stronger and Jewish schools are the great success story of Anglo-Jewry in the past 30 years. It is a success that deserves public recognition and celebration. Within the strictly orthodox sector, as the number of children continues to grow so does its demand for Jewish schooling. More remarkably perhaps, within the mainstream sector, demand also continues to grow as the pool of children gently declines. Academic standards in Jewish schools remain high. However, Jewish schools face many challenges: attracting more pupils in the future; maintaining their academic standards; improving their Jewish studies teaching; increasing their funding and responding to changing government education policies. In what follows, we identify how we believe they can best meet these challenges.

### NURSERY EDUCATION

In our consultative document we commented that it was very difficult to obtain a clear picture of the overall supply and demand situation for nurseries and invited submissions on the issues involved. Very few responses were received. We recognise that in areas where the demand for school places is high, a nursery place either at a school or a synagogue can be an important factor in determining whether a child is accepted at a Jewish school. We are also aware that changes in the public funding of nursery education, which are currently in train, will affect provision. We regret that we have not had the time to examine these issues in any depth and nursery education, therefore, does not form part of our report.

## SECTION 2

# Numbers

## INTRODUCTION

**2.1** The recent strong growth in the demand for Jewish schooling, described in Section 1, is reflected in growing enrolment numbers at a time when the school age population is falling. The key question is whether this growing demand is likely to continue into the future. For one sector of the community, the strictly orthodox, there is no doubt about the answer to this question. With continuing high birth rates and a near 100 per cent requirement for Jewish schooling, the strictly orthodox community will continue to demand more school places. We consider their needs later in this section. For the mainstream community, consisting of centrist orthodox, Masorti, progressive and non-affiliated parents, the situation is somewhat more complex, and this is our main focus in the rest of this section. We begin first with the likely demographic changes, then take account of known future increases in supply, and then assess whether supply and demand are likely to be brought into balance. It is clear to us from our investigations that in making our judgements we must treat primary and secondary education, and London and the regions, separately. Indeed, distinctions must also be made between different parts of London.

## DEMOGRAPHY

**2.2** In our consultative document, we published the latest report by the Board of Deputies Community Policy Research Group (CPRG), *Supply and Demand for Jewish Day School Places in Britain*. This set out projections which, on the basis of past census, marriage and circumcision data, indicated the likely future pool of school age children in the mainstream majority of the community over the next ten years. The projections indicated that the pool of primary and secondary age children would decline over the period by between 15 and 20 per cent.

**2.3** To refine the figures, we asked the CPRG for projections of the pool of Year 1 and Year 7 pupils over the next ten years. These will be more indicative of population changes than the figures for the 4-17 age group as a whole. (We recognise that children enter school through the Nursery or Reception year, but the most reliable figures are for Year 1.) This data can also then be compared with the number of Year 1 and Year 7 school places anticipated to be available in the future. The numbers are shown in Tables 1 and 2. Comparing these two sets of data more accurately illuminates the nature of any demographic challenge, as the effect of any downturn on a school is seen first in the entry year figures. The total pupil numbers in a school will reflect entry over many years and this helps a school to moderate and plan for any decline over time. Declining entry year figures provide an early warning system and, if they continue, will impact with increasing severity on the total pupil numbers. The CPRG's projections indicate a slightly faster rate of population decline in the entry years' population than in the total school age population in the years ahead.

TABLE 1:

**London Mainstream Jewish Primary Schools 2005–2019**  
**Projections of Year 1 Places Compared with Pool of Jewish Children**

Year	Places	Pool	Required take-up
2005–06	684	1379	49.6%
2006–07	684	1351	50.6%
2007–08	708	1324	53.5%
2008–09	746	1298	57.5%
2009–10	776	1272	61.0%
2010–11	776	1247	62.3%
2011–12	776	1222	63.5%
2012–13	776	1197	64.8%
2013–14	776	1173	66.1%
2014–15	776	1150	67.5%
2015–16	776	1127	68.9%
2016–17	776	1104	70.3%
2017–18	776	1082	71.7%
2018–19	776	1060	73.2%

TABLE 2:

**London Mainstream Jewish Secondary Schools 2005–2019**  
**Projections of Year 7 Places Compared with Pool of Jewish Children**

Year	Places	Pool	Required take-up
2005–06	680	1476	46.1%
2006–07	770	1446	53.2%
2007–08	800	1418	56.4%
2008–09	830	1389	59.7%
2009–10	830	1361	61.0%
2010–11	1010	1334	75.7%
2011–12	1010	1308	77.2%
2012–13	1010	1281	78.8%
2013–14	1010	1256	80.4%
2014–15	1010	1231	82.1%
2015–16	1010	1206	83.7%
2016–17	1010	1182	85.5%
2017–18	1010	1158	87.2%
2018–19	1010	1135	89.0%

- 2.4** In our consultative document we asked for comments on the data and the methodology followed in the CPRG document. Those who responded to this question recognised that population projections inevitably contain elements of uncertainty, with scope for different assumptions to be made around these uncertainties. However, the general response was that the methodology was soundly based and that the assumptions were reasonable. Indeed, one respondent claimed that the assumptions were a little generous to the mainstream community in slightly underestimating the share of all circumcisions that were taking place in the strictly orthodox community.
- 2.5** Some argued that the CPRG data underestimated the pool of mainstream children available for Jewish schooling. They cited the growing number of foreign-born children, particularly from South Africa, France and Israel, now in the UK. Enquiries made of schools indicated that there were indeed a number of foreign-born children in schools but the percentage was quite small and usually in single figures. Moreover, their families would have been included in the 2001 census if they had lived here at that time, and their sons would have been included in the annual circumcision data if that had been carried out in a religious ceremony. In addition, one school pointed out that, while in recent years they had seen some increase in foreign-born pupils, they had also lost pupils through family aliyah to Israel. Migration is a two-way process. We also heard the argument that parents who did not circumcise their sons, or at least not in a religious ceremony, might in due course still want Jewish schooling for their children. We accept that this is a possibility, but do not regard the numbers as significant. Taking all these arguments into account we accept the projections of the CPRG as a sound basis for assessing future demand, while recognising that their numbers might be on the cautious end of the spectrum for the reasons just stated.

## **LONDON PRIMARY**

- 2.6** As indicated earlier, in assessing whether the supply of places is likely to be matched by future demand, we need to distinguish between levels of education and location. We begin with primary schooling in London. It soon became clear to us that, for certain purposes, even this distinction was not fine enough. The situation in North West London (including Hertfordshire), where the majority of primary schools are located, and in Redbridge is sufficiently distinctive for the two areas to be treated differently. We consider the situation in Redbridge separately.
- 2.7** Even North West London is too broad a geographical area for some purposes. Primary schooling is a localised market. Given that children are generally accompanied to school, parents do not wish to travel long distances twice a day if they can avoid it. Spare places, for instance, in Simon Marks Jewish Primary School in Stamford Hill may not be very attractive to a parent living in Bushey. The statistical evidence backs this up. While in North West London as a whole, supply and demand for Jewish schooling may be more or less in balance, in areas with a large Jewish population, such as Barnet and Hertfordshire, places are invariably filled and some schools have long waiting lists. There is strong anecdotal evidence of parents being extremely disappointed at their child being denied a place at a Jewish school and having to attend a non-Jewish school. There are plans to open a new independent primary school in Finchley in September 2008.

- 2.8 In North West London as a whole, the CPRG estimates that around an additional 90 places will become available between 2006–07 and 2009–10. This will take the number of Year 1 places to 656 compared to a pool of Year 1 children of 1039, requiring a 63 per cent take-up rate for all the places to be filled. Given that these additional places are all in areas of high Jewish population, where unmet demand exists, we are confident that they will be filled. At the same time, schools that are either less popular or in areas where the Jewish population is no longer growing may struggle to enrol to their full capacity. These numbers are shown in Table 1.
- 2.9 We have considered whether this situation can or should be managed or planned in any way, and have concluded that it would be inappropriate. Our abiding principle, as set out in our vision statement, is that every Jewish child who wishes to do so should be able to attend a Jewish school. Given the localised nature of the primary school market, schools need to be established in locations accessible to where people live, and such developments should not be frustrated by the fact that there may be spare places at a Jewish school ten miles away and in a different local authority.
- 2.10 However, there are still questions to be answered. Even if no additional places are added beyond 2009, as Table 1 shows, the CPRG projects a continuing decline in the pool of North West London Year 1 children in the years ahead. The take-up rate would need to increase each year from its current rate of around 50 per cent until it reached close to 75 per cent in ten years' time. Will demand increase sufficiently to enable this take-up rate to be achieved or will there be other consequences? We have received a considerable amount of advice on the future demand for Jewish schooling. Much of the analysis, however, applies to secondary as well as primary schooling, and before assessing it we need to consider the situation in secondary schooling in London.



Photo courtesy of John Rifkin

Children participating in a Seder at Simon Marks Jewish Primary School

## LONDON SECONDARY

**2.11** Jewish secondary education in London in the mainstream community is in the process of being transformed with the addition of two new schools. The existing schools, Hasmonean High School, Immanuel College, JFS and King Solomon High School, have been joined by Yavneh College, opened in 2006 and taking its first full Year 7 intake of 150 pupils in 2008, and will be joined by JCoSS, which is planned to open with its full Year 7 intake of 180 pupils in 2010. In many ways this will provide a configuration of Jewish secondary schools in London that could not be better if it had been planned. Parents and pupils will have access to schools that geographically range from Brent, through the different parts of Barnet and Hertfordshire, and on to Redbridge. They will have a choice of five maintained faith schools and one independent school, and religious diversity will range from the highly observant Hasmonean High School, through the centrist orthodoxy of Immanuel College, JFS, King Solomon High School and Yavneh College to the pluralist approach of JCoSS.

**2.12** The major cloud on this sunny horizon is the one of numbers. In 2005, before Yavneh College opened, there were 680 Year 7 places in the four existing secondary schools, and this included an extra 60 places added by JFS when it moved to its Kenton site in 2003. With Yavneh College taking its full intake in 2008, the number of Year 7 places will increase to 830, and when JCoSS opens in 2010, the number of places available will be 1010. This will be an increase of nearly 50 per cent on the number of places available in 2005, compared to a projected rate of decline of the Year 7 pool of children over the next decade of around 18 per cent. In 2005–06, when the 680 places were all filled, the take-up rate was 46 per cent of the pool. In 2010–11, when JCoSS takes its first intake, the take-up rate will need to be 75 per cent if all places are to be filled with Jewish children. In ten years' time, if the number of places remains constant, the take-up rate will need to be above 85 per cent.

### Year 7 places

2005: 680 places

2008: 830 places

2010: 1010 places

**2.13** This is a formidable challenge. We accept the argument of the representatives of the two new schools that they will expand the market, and there is evidence that Yavneh College has achieved this in its first two years. In 2007–08 Yavneh College met its recruitment target and enrolled 124 Year 7 pupils. However, of the other schools, only JFS maintained the same recruitment level in 2007 as it did in 2005. The numbers at Hasmonean High School, Immanuel College and King Solomon High School were all lower. As a result, total Year 7 numbers in 2007 rose by 74 compared with 2005, some 60 per cent of the Yavneh College figure. The apparent conclusion would be that Yavneh College has proved popular with parents and has had no difficulty in attracting applicants. However, it has attracted some pupils who would otherwise have enrolled in other Jewish schools.

**2.14** All the five existing schools, including those whose recruitment has declined, are confident, on the basis of applications received and offers made, that they will meet their target intakes in 2008–09. If they are correct, Year 7 enrolment will increase next year by over 10 per cent, from 751 to 830,

which would be a remarkable achievement and indicate a step–change in the demand for Jewish secondary education. Even a small shortfall to a figure above 800 would indicate a significant movement. It is clear from our discussions with the schools that each has thought carefully about the market challenges that it faces as a result of the increase in the number of places, and each has devised strategies to increase and widen its market reach. The confidence they express, therefore, has some foundation. Time will very shortly tell, and we hope their optimism proves correct.

- 2.15** Even if that is the case, there are further challenges beyond 2008. In 2010, JCoSS will open, offering a further 180 Year 7 places. This will seek to attract pupils from across the community, including the non-affiliated. It will accept as Jewish anyone who is acceptable for membership of any of the synagogal organisations. Those responsible for the development of JCoSS believe, on the basis of their market research, that their more pluralist approach will attract significant numbers who would not wish to attend the existing secondary schools. In this way they will, they argue, broaden the market for Jewish secondary education. However, they also accept that their school will be attractive to some who might otherwise have attended one of the existing schools.
- 2.16** Quite properly, the main concern of those responsible for each school, including JCoSS, is to ensure their school is full. Our concern, however, is for all schools. While welcoming the wider choice offered to parents and the possibility of appealing to those who may not be attracted to what is currently offered, we need to assess the overall effect of an almost 50 per cent increase in places in 2010 compared to 2005. We need to return, therefore, to the question we asked at the end of the previous section: Can the demand for Jewish schooling be increased sufficiently to enable the available places to be filled, or will there be other consequences?

### **FUTURE DEMAND FOR JEWISH SCHOOLING**

- 2.17** The central issue is whether or not the growth experienced most recently is the first stage in a step–change in demand that will continue over the next decade. We received a range of views on these matters and also reviewed the research undertaken in past years, principally by the Institute for Jewish Policy Research but also by the CPRG, on the factors affecting the demand for Jewish day schools. This research is summarised and reviewed in Appendix 5. In addition, those seeking to establish new schools, such as Yavneh College and JCoSS, have undertaken rigorous demand analysis and market research to which we have had access. We have drawn on all this material in what follows.
- 2.18** The case for a significant increase in parental demand for Jewish schools is based on the following:
- The view that, certainly as far as primary education is concerned, *'if you build it they will come'*. Benjamin Perl, a long standing leader, supporter, and fundraiser for new Jewish schools, articulates this view strongly, and his largely successful track record to date ensures that his views are given serious consideration.

- Research for the new secondary schools has identified significant numbers of parents currently not sending their children to Jewish schools who would be prepared to consider doing so. In particular, this refers to parents only moderately or loosely affiliated to the established community. Moreover, research has indicated that many of these parents, while always mindful of the quality of the secular education being offered, see the Jewish ethos of Jewish schools as an important factor in securing their child's Jewish identity.
- All secondary schools are marketing themselves extensively and, in terms of applications at least, reasonably successfully, to parents who have sent their children to non-Jewish primary schools. This suggests that a sustained marketing campaign might persuade more parents in the future to consider not only Jewish secondary but also Jewish primary schools for their children.
- The strong values and high academic standards of Jewish schools are an increasingly important factor in parental choice.
- The attitude to Jewish schooling within the community has been transformed over the past quarter of a century and continues to become more positive. Representatives of the Reform movement, in their responses, reflected on the ambivalent attitude of their members to the opening of Akiva School in 1982. Now there is a clamour for more places (they believe that doubling the forms of entry from one to two will be insufficient to meet demand) and estate agents advertise properties as being in the school's catchment area. Other Jewish schools feature similarly in estate agents' literature.
- The economic downturn will cause some Jewish parents to consider whether they should be paying high fees for expensive private non-Jewish schooling when relatively inexpensive high standard Jewish schooling is available.
- A 'demonstration effect' is beginning to take place among different social groups. If the people you meet socially are sending their children to Jewish schools and that is a regular topic of conversation, it becomes an option that you too may consider.
- With entry year take-up rates now reaching around 50 per cent, we may be reaching a 'tipping point' when Jewish schooling becomes the norm for most Jewish parents.

**2.19** However, it is possible to recognise arguments and evidence for a less optimistic view of parental demand, as follows:

- The data provides some antidotes to excessive optimism. In 2009 there will be 776 Year 1 places in all London Jewish primary schools. Unless there is further expansion beyond 2009, this will be the maximum number of potential transfers from Jewish primary to Jewish secondary schools well into the middle of the next decade. Secondary schools will have 1010 Year 7 places available from 2010 onwards. Moreover, an estimated 15 to 20 per cent of Jewish primary children currently do not transfer to Jewish secondary education. If the

secondary places are to be filled with Jewish pupils, it will require a major attitudinal change by parents currently sending their children to non-Jewish primary and secondary schools.

- While some loosely affiliated Jews might see Jewish schooling as a possible option, research indicates that most others do not. For many of this group the choice of a non-faith school is a matter of principle. For others it is a practical question because they live some distance from any Jewish school. Few, if any, of these parents are likely to send their children to Jewish schools.
- It is difficult to obtain an accurate estimate of the number of Jewish children from mainstream families currently attending non-Jewish independent schools. On the basis of the numbers with whom Jewish Activities in Mainstream Schools (JAMS) and Schools J-Link are in touch, it would appear that, allowing for a margin of error, there are around 2000 Jewish pupils in these schools out of a total pool of Jewish children in the region of 10000.
- Research indicates that, perhaps surprisingly, a significant proportion of this 15 to 20 per cent of Jewish secondary age children attending non-Jewish independent schools come from affluent, observant families. These parents are confident that their home life will provide the Jewish learning and ethos for their child's Jewish identity, and wish to provide them with the highest possible standard of secular education and the best possible chance of access to the most prestigious universities. The single sex nature of most independent schools is also seen as an advantage by these parents. Some schools have sizeable numbers of Jewish pupils, creating perhaps another tipping point, where the large numbers make pupils feel comfortable in their Jewish identity. Research also indicates that nearly half of Jewish parents send their children to a mix of state and independent schools depending on their judgement of the child's needs. There is little evidence that parents sending their children to independent schools would easily switch their preferences to Jewish schools.
- Economic factors may affect some parents' ability to fund private education in the short term. However, it is unlikely to shift long-held preferences and, when better times return, the usual patterns of demand are likely to return.

**2.20** We conclude that the evidence and the views put to us, while compelling, are not decisive in enabling us to come to a firm judgement about what the future holds. The key question, as we have indicated, is whether the recent increase in demand can be sustained and converted into a step-change in attitudes towards Jewish schooling. A provisional view is that demand for primary schooling is likely to continue to grow in areas of strong Jewish population but this may be accompanied by some less popular primary schools having to cope with falling numbers. Secondary schools face a serious demand challenge. A major investigation of attitudes to Jewish schooling is needed. We considered commissioning such research ourselves, but came to the conclusion that it could not be carried out in the time scale available, and any attempt to do so ran the risk of providing misleading conclusions. This piece of work needs careful design and piloting to ensure that it is methodologically sound so that its results can be used with confidence to inform future decisions.

**WE RECOMMEND** that 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.

- 2.21** If demand does not increase significantly, it will not be possible for all the mainstream secondary schools to fill their places with Jewish pupils. The option of reducing their size is not an easy one. It would be accompanied by reduced funding and, more importantly, maintained faith schools need the support of their local authority to reduce their size. This is unlikely to be forthcoming if non-faith pupils wish to attend which, given the high reputation of Jewish schools, is likely to be the case. The realistic options for those Jewish schools facing a shortfall of demand are to become more effective in their marketing and public relations and/or contemplate the implications of accepting non-Jewish pupils.

## **MARKETING AND PUBLIC RELATIONS**

- 2.22** Until very recently there was little marketing of Jewish schools, perhaps reflecting a situation in which demand outstripped supply. The main concern of Jewish schools was who to choose from the applications received, rather than how to stimulate the applications in the first place. It is understandable, when resources are constrained, that schools are reluctant to commit those resources to what they consider to be an unnecessary activity. The changing market situation has caused schools, particularly secondary schools, to reconsider this issue. Marketing in recent years has included extensive advertising of open evenings, increasingly detailed information about the school and closer relationships with what are perceived as feeder primary schools. Jewish secondary schools are increasingly forging links with non-Jewish primary schools that have a significant number of Jewish children. Even where there is no link and little contact, it is clear that schools are receiving increasing applications from pupils attending non-Jewish primary schools.
- 2.23** While this increased activity is to be welcomed, it is very limited. It is individually school-based and focused on achieving increased applications in the year ahead. We were surprised to find that there is no collective activity on behalf of schools as a whole, even by sector, such as secondary and primary, or religious grouping, and no longer-term strategy. The activity reflected a model of atomised individual units, competing rather than co-operating with each other. The way schools are funded, the different local authorities in which they are located and their different denominational affiliations, no doubt, all contribute to this underlying culture. However, it is not a model for the successful marketing of Jewish schools in the future.
- 2.24** We are encouraged by the fact that headteachers confirmed that our work had stimulated them to meet and discuss the issues we are addressing, and that they had found much common ground and similar approaches to these issues. We believe that a common marketing approach should be the responsibility of the schools acting collectively, rather than led by a top-down agency. Clearly, some recognition of denominational differences will be necessary but there should

be co-ordination and co-operation between the different schools. One example of how this collective marketing could work for the benefit of schools and parents would be for a website to be established that would provide relevant information on the range of Jewish schools available. There is a great deal of professional marketing expertise available in the community, which we are confident would be made available to the schools if it was effectively organised.

- 2.25** It is important that any collective marketing activity must be more than simply the sum of current individual activity and focus on more than the short-term. It must also be integrated with a collective public relations exercise on behalf of Jewish schools, which would emphasise their qualities, many of which have been set out in this report, their vital contribution to Jewish identity and individual and communal continuity, and the tremendous benefits they offer pupils and parents. We emphasised in the previous paragraph that any campaign should be led by the schools collectively but there is an important role for communal leaders in articulating their support for Jewish schools. This should be led by our different religious leaders. We leave open whether all this should be focused on a Jewish schools' week or month or be a continuous campaign throughout the year.
- 2.26** The achievements of Jewish schools could be celebrated in an annual Jewish schools festival, showcasing the best of what the schools offer across secular and Jewish subjects, arts, music and sports. Annual awards for achievements across schools as a whole could be introduced as a form of 'Jewish Schools Oscars' with prominent publicity in the Jewish and non-Jewish media, and with senior politicians in attendance.
- 2.27** None of this precludes schools from marketing themselves individually to their chosen markets, but such marketing will be more effective if it is part of a co-ordinated collective exercise. Schools will, of course, pay for their own individual marketing but they should also contribute, on a per capita basis, to an agreed level of collective marketing and public relations. The funds involved need not be large. The Jewish schools festival and awards, for example, could be funded through sponsorship, and we would hope that the UJIA could contribute to office and administrative expenses of any collective marketing agency.

**WE RECOMMEND** that 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.

**WE RECOMMEND** that a Jewish schools information website be established.

### ACCEPTING NON-JEWISH PUPILS

- 2.28** Current government policy requires any maintained faith school that has spare places to accept applications from pupils who are not of the faith. A pupil has to make an application and, if the school declines to offer a place, the applicant can appeal to the local authority adjudicator. If s/he

rules in favour of the applicant then a place must be offered. As far as we are aware, no Jewish school currently actively seeks to enrol non-Jewish children, but a number now do enrol such pupils as a result of having spare places. These include Simon Marks Jewish Primary School in Stamford Hill, primary schools in Birmingham, Liverpool and Glasgow, and King David High School in Liverpool where over three-quarters of the pupils are non-Jewish.

- 2.29** We reflect on the experience in Liverpool later on in this section and conclude that the schools there provide a more positive Jewish experience for their Jewish pupils than if those Jewish pupils attended non-Jewish schools, by strengthening their Jewish identity and commitment to Israel. They also contribute to better interfaith and inter-community relations. Some of the responses to our consultation echoed this view, stressing that if the only way to establish a Jewish school was to allow non-Jews to attend, then it was a price worth paying, particularly at primary level. It may also be the case that some parents would prefer a school that includes some non-Jewish pupils. Laurie Rosenberg, then Head of Simon Marks Jewish Primary School, contributed an article to the *Jewish Chronicle* as we began our work, pointing out the benefits that can result from having a proportion of non-Jewish children: *'It has helped shape a vision of education that promotes cohesion and eschews division – that seeks to be inclusive, and provides a moral basis from which young people can become eloquent, confident and competent British citizens.'*
- 2.30** Other respondents were less positive, most obviously those from strictly orthodox schools who could not contemplate such a situation, but also those from centrist orthodox backgrounds and schools, and particularly in relation to secondary education. Those from the Masorti, Reform and Liberal sections of the community and those planning JCoSS were more relaxed about the issue, saying that they would not actively seek non-Jewish enrolment but that if circumstances created it, they could see some benefits and felt that their schools could adapt.
- 2.31** The centrist orthodox perspective was that accepting non-Jewish pupils would have a negative impact on the school. Some parents, it was argued, would withdraw their children or not apply to the school and would send them to other schools where there were only Jewish children. There could, therefore, be a negative spiral effect in which, having accepted non-Jewish children, a school experiences a continuing fall in Jewish pupil demand and consequently finds itself taking an increasing number of non-Jewish pupils, leading to even fewer Jewish children and so on. An additional factor for centrist orthodox schools is the likely attitude of their Jewish studies teachers. This was confirmed by the secondary school heads of Jewish studies that we met, who generally had a negative attitude to enrolling non-Jewish pupils.
- 2.32** The Liverpool King David High School experience is of only partial relevance here. In Liverpool, the need to accept non-Jewish pupils as a condition for having a Jewish school at all was recognised early in its existence. That is not the situation in London yet, and it is the conceptual change in people's perception of what a Jewish school is for, that is possibly the most difficult challenge such schools face. Simon Marks Jewish Primary School has made that conceptual change recently, but again their experience may not be replicable. With vision and energy the school has attracted a broad cross-section of the community both from inside and outside the area. Some

two-thirds of its parents are not currently synagogue members and seem comfortable with the attendance of non-Jewish children.

- 2.33** One option that should be considered is the possibility of schools, particularly primary schools, with a shortage of Jewish pupils sharing a site with a different faith school. This might attract government and local authority support in contributing very overtly to the community cohesion agenda. It would enable a strong Jewish ethos to remain in the school, while broadening the experiences of its pupils, and would allow the most efficient use of resources through the sharing of premises and some administrative costs.
- 2.34** We are a very diverse community, even focusing on the mainstream community alone. We are diverse in our religious practices and affiliations and in our attitudes to our children mixing closely and regularly with non-Jewish children. Some parents will be strongly opposed to a Jewish school enrolling non-Jewish children, while others will face the prospect with equanimity or even welcome it. Many current Jewish studies teachers oppose any such change, but if the change occurs it may spur the schools involved to find teachers with a broader background and outlook. We do not see it as our responsibility to judge the attitude of parents and teachers on this issue.
- 2.35** It is clear, however, that unless demand is boosted significantly beyond recent rates of growth, or the relevant local authorities can be persuaded to accept a reduction in capacity, it is likely that more than one secondary school in London will be enrolling non-Jewish pupils in the next few years. It is essential that all schools that anticipate this happening prepare very carefully for the change and its likely effects.

**WE RECOMMEND** that 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.

## REDBRIDGE

- 2.36** According to the 2001 census, Redbridge had, at that time, the second largest Jewish population in the Greater London area. However, even then, there was net Jewish migration out of the area, and this has continued in recent years reflected, for example, in declining synagogue membership and the closure of some kosher food facilities. Schooling has long been an important feature of the community with two Jewish primary schools and a Jewish secondary school. Ilford Jewish Primary School (IJPS) and King Solomon High School are centrist orthodox schools and Clore Tikva Primary School is a pluralist primary school. As the data in Table 3 indicates, in recent years enrolment in each school has been a little below capacity, although the situation is more serious at IJPS.

TABLE 3:  
**Redbridge Data – Recent Enrolments**

	Total Capacity	Total Enrolment	Year 1 Capacity	Year 1 Enrolment
<b>IJPS</b>				
2005–06	426	289	60	33
2006–07	415	262	60	28
<b>Clore Tikva</b>				
2005–06	420	372	60	56
2006–07	420	372	60	55
	Total Capacity	Total Enrolment	Year 7 Capacity	Year 7 Enrolment
<b>King Solomon</b>				
2005–06	981	935	150	157
2006–07	981	909	150	136
2007–08	981	n/a	150	122

TABLE 4:  
**Demographic Projections of Year 1 and Year 7 Jewish Children in Redbridge**

<b>YEAR 1 PLACES - 120</b>		<b>YEAR 7 PLACES - 150</b>	
Year	Pool of Year 1 Children	Year	Pool of Year 7 Children
2005–06	160	2005–06	196
2006–07	157	2006–07	192
2007–08	154	2007–08	188
2008–09	151	2008–09	184
2009–10	148	2009–10	181
2010–11	145	2010–11	177
2011–12	142	2011–12	174
2012–13	139	2012–13	170

**2.37** To summarise the current position, IJPS is currently only able to fill about half its Year 1 places. Clore Tikva while in a much healthier position, is still recruiting slightly below its capacity. King Solomon in 2006 and 2007 recruited below its Year 7 capacity of 150, although it is confident of meeting its target in 2008. King Solomon, until recently, recruited some 20 to 30 children each year from North West and North London. This has declined as a result of the JFS move to Kenton and the school’s expansion by two forms of entry, and the more recent opening of Yavneh College.

- 2.38** The projections by the CPRG of the pool of Jewish children in Year 1 and Year 7 in Redbridge are shown in Table 4 and do not make happy reading. They show that by 2011, just three years away, the take-up rate will need to be around 85 per cent for supply and demand to be in balance. Beyond 2011, the take-up rate needs to continue increasing if the schools are to be filled entirely by Jewish pupils. Within ten years, unless birth rates change or there is net migration into the area, the number of places at both the primary schools and the secondary schools will more or less match the number of Jewish children in the appropriate age group. Every Jewish child would have to go to the Jewish schools if the schools were to be filled exclusively with Jewish children.
- 2.39** There is always a degree of uncertainty in population projections. Population growth is a possibility, as is some increased demand coming from the wider area of Essex beyond Redbridge, but we believe the first to be unlikely, and the second to be marginal at best, given the order of magnitude. Nor do we believe that there is much possibility of re-energising demand from other more populous areas of London. Indeed, King Solomon faces a new challenge in 2010, when JCoSS enrolls its first pupils. Currently, a large proportion of Clore Tikva's two forms of entry progresses to King Solomon. JCoSS will provide an alternative for these pupils, many of whose parents belong to Masorti, Reform or Liberal congregations. There is no doubt that JCoSS will be marketing itself energetically to these parents. Currently both Clore Tikva and King Solomon are confident that most pupils will continue to progress to King Solomon. However, it would require only a relatively small number of pupils to choose JCoSS over King Solomon for there to be a significant effect on King Solomon's take-up.
- 2.40** We have discussed these issues with the headteachers of all three schools and also with the headteachers and chairs of their governing bodies in a joint meeting. We are impressed by the degree of realism demonstrated by those responsible for the Redbridge schools and the good relations that exist between all the schools, and we are encouraged by their willingness to consider positively the various options for improving the situation their schools face.
- 2.41** We have come to the view that the schools in Redbridge cannot sustain four forms of entry of Jewish children to Jewish primary schools and five forms of entry to the Jewish secondary school. If no further action is taken and government policy remains the same, it seems to us inevitable that, sooner rather than later, at least two of the schools, and eventually all three, will have to accept enrolment from non-Jewish children. As in our more general discussion of this issue there is a diversity of views within the community on the benefits or otherwise of such a development. If those responsible for the schools in Redbridge anticipate the enrolment of non-Jewish children with equanimity, then they should plan for this eventuality and embrace it.
- 2.42** If, however, there is a wish to retain all-Jewish-pupil schools, then action needs to be taken with a degree of urgency. If it were feasible, there should be a reduction of places to create three forms of entry to the primary schools and four forms of entry to King Solomon High School. However, such a change is not without difficulty. It requires the approval of Redbridge Local Authority; we understand that an application by IJPS to reduce to one form of entry was turned down by the Local Authority and is now before the adjudicator. In any event, even if a reduction in size is agreed,

it will be accompanied by a reduction in funding and staffing, which, without re-structuring or additional funds being made available by the community, will make it difficult to sustain smaller schools.

- 2.43** Re-structuring would not only lead to more cost-effective provision, it could also be a means of persuading Redbridge Local Authority to reduce the scale of the schools. One option that is already under consideration is IJPS moving to the King Solomon site, creating a new one-form entry primary and a four-form entry secondary school. The IJPS site is owned by the United Synagogue, and the proceeds of the sale of the site could pay for new building works at King Solomon. The sharing of overheads would compensate, in part, for the reduced income arising from a smaller school. We also understand that discussions are taking place about the possibility of Sinclair House, a Jewish Care youth and community centre, moving to the King Solomon site. We would welcome this development, which would facilitate the creation of a community campus for Redbridge.
- 2.44** This move has some very positive features. It would bring schools of the same denominational outlook together, thus minimising issues of religious difference; it would release capital funds to facilitate the changes needed; it would give the community in Redbridge the possibility of creating a viable campus; and it would provide the potential for the development of a community campus serving the needs of the whole community. Out of adversity would come hope and the creation of a model for others to follow. It would require a commitment by the United Synagogue that the funds released from the sale of the IJPS site would be used to create the new campus at King Solomon.
- 2.45** However, it would raise questions about the relationship between the two schools and Clore Tikva. All three schools currently have good and close relationships and, inevitably, these may be loosened if two are on the same campus. We believe Clore Tikva is a strong school that can remain viable for the time being with two-form entry. However, more parents of Clore Tikva pupils may be attracted to JCoSS for their children's secondary schooling if they feel their children will not be treated in the same way at King Solomon as those who will have been on the same campus from the age of five. Therefore, if the move takes place it is important that King Solomon makes clear that the same admissions criteria apply to Clore Tikva's pupils as to those on its own campus. Given that King Solomon faces the challenge, even after an IJPS move and a reduction to four forms of entry, of attracting three forms of entry from other schools, this should not be a practical problem. Clore Tikva will remain essential to King Solomon's viability.
- 2.46** It might be sensible as part of the move to a single campus for IJPS and King Solomon to consider the value of a federation or a merger to create one school. This would maximise the educational and resource benefits of being on a single campus. Whatever the final outcome, it is clear to us that doing nothing in Redbridge is only an option if people are sanguine about the Jewish schools enrolling a significant proportion of non-Jewish children in the near future. If that is not the case, action needs to be taken with a degree of urgency. The onus is on the Redbridge community and its schools but it will need the full support of the United Synagogue and the wider community.

**WE RECOMMEND** that 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.

## REGIONS OUTSIDE LONDON

**2.47** Outside London, the main area with Jewish schools is Greater Manchester, which has a number of both strictly orthodox and mainstream primary and secondary schools. Liverpool has a mainstream primary and secondary school, although because of the small and declining size of the community, the majority of pupils are not Jewish. Birmingham has a mainstream primary school, again with a majority of non-Jewish pupils. Leeds has a mainstream primary school that currently only takes Jewish children. Glasgow has a mainstream Jewish primary school now enrolling some non-Jewish children. The schools in Liverpool, Leeds, Birmingham and Glasgow are all maintained faith schools. Leeds and Gateshead also have independent strictly orthodox schools, and the issues that they and the strictly orthodox schools in Manchester face are similar to strictly orthodox schools in London.

**2.48** All the mainstream schools outside London are facing declining Jewish populations and, with the possible exception of Manchester, in due course they will have to either accept non-Jewish pupils if they apply or face closure. This has long been the case in Liverpool and Birmingham and their experience may be of help to other schools facing this possibility. However, all these schools face an uncertain future.

### Manchester

**2.49** While we recognise that there are issues facing the mainstream primary schools in the Greater Manchester area, we regret that we have not had the time to study these in any depth. The sole mainstream secondary school in Manchester is King David High School whose story of renewal and renaissance under its chairman of governors, Joshua Rowe, is well-known. The school was seriously failing in the early 1990s when he took over as chairman and it was turned around in six years through a focus on academic excellence. This required bold and courageous decision-making and a generous commitment of resources. King David High School is now a school of first choice for parents, and regularly appears at the top end of the league tables for academic performance. Apart from the contribution of its chairman, another distinguishing feature of the school is the establishment of a special unit, Yavneh, for more religious pupils. Yavneh pupils are based in separate accommodation from the main school, with different buildings for boys and girls. The Jewish studies work is more intense and takes up more time in a longer school day. Pupils join the main school for some secular subjects and for meals. The same staff teach at both Yavneh and the main school and Yavneh makes up just under 20 per cent of the total pupil population.

- 2.50** King David High School is a strongly Zionist-oriented school and this applies also to Yavneh, whose head is always a qualified teacher from Israel. This Zionist orientation is what distinguishes Yavneh King David from maintained strictly orthodox schools in Manchester and makes it attractive to a significant group of highly observant parents. The Yavneh model is one that some mainstream schools in London might wish to consider as a means of attracting children from more observant homes whose parents want a school with a positive attitude to the State of Israel. For King David High School in Manchester, the pupils attracted through Yavneh are essential in maintaining its overall numbers near to capacity.
- 2.51** Another factor in maintaining its numbers is that in recent years King David High School has become attractive to pupils outside Manchester. There are small numbers from Liverpool, mainly those whose parents are unhappy with the large non-Jewish majority at King David High School in Liverpool. In consideration of King David High School Liverpool, King David High School Manchester has not actively marketed itself there. In Leeds, however, where no Jewish secondary school exists, King David High School Manchester is becoming increasingly attractive to parents. Some 60 children now make the 45-mile, 90-minute journey each day across the Pennines in two coaches, a testimony to their families' dedication to Jewish schooling. With numbers increasing each year, King David High School Manchester is forecast to become the most popular state-funded secondary school for Jewish children in Leeds.
- 2.52** Recently, there has been a call in Leeds to consider again the possibility of establishing a mainstream Jewish high school. The last such attempt more than ten years ago failed to generate sufficient Jewish numbers to make it viable, and the position has not improved since then. The only faint possibility would be to create a Jewish school that accepted non-Jewish pupils. The attitude to such a situation is no doubt as varied in Leeds as in London. However, we expect that some of the parents whose support would be needed would only contemplate sending their children to a fully Jewish school. We applaud the desire of the leadership in Leeds for Jewish schooling, but we believe that in reality this can best be provided through a closer link with King David High School in Manchester. We are impressed that so many parents and pupils have made the commitment, which involves significant travel time and costs. At present, Leeds parents do not receive any financial help for this. A closer and more formal relationship between the school and the Leeds Jewish community might offer a range of opportunities for providing support and further development.

**WE RECOMMEND** that King David High School in Manchester and the Leeds Jewish Community consider favourably the establishment of a formal relationship that recognises King David High School 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.

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**Liverpool**

- 2.53** The King David Schools in Liverpool have a long and proud history. Almost from its inception, the secondary school accepted non-Jewish pupils, and so the matter has never been an issue of principle. The admission of non-Jewish pupils came later to the primary school but again a pragmatic approach was taken. Now, some two-thirds of the pupils at the primary school and more than three-quarters at the secondary school are non-Jewish. Some faith commitment is an important criterion for other pupils to gain admission to the schools and the secondary school, in particular, is over-subscribed because of its high academic standards.
- 2.54** In visiting King David High School Liverpool, members of the Commission noted that, although the Jewish pupils are clearly in a minority, there is no doubt that the school is a Jewish school. The whole school is closed on Jewish holidays and closes early on Fridays in winter. The school does not participate in school sporting or other events on Saturdays. While the Jewish children study Judaism separately, the whole school participates in acknowledging Jewish festivals and other significant days in the calendar, such as Yom Ha'atzmut and Holocaust Remembrance Day. The canteen is kosher and, although currently students can bring in their own food, this will cease when a rebuilt school opens in 2010.
- 2.55** The Liverpool community is bringing together its primary school, rebuilt secondary school, community centre and rebuilt Childwall Synagogue on one site, together with its residential home and hospital. This, in part, reflects a decline in numbers but also offers a model of how a shrinking community should recognise reality and use its limited but valuable resources to best effect. The school and the community believe that this facility will be viable for the foreseeable future. However, while the percentage of Jewish children in the secondary school as a whole is currently around 23 per cent, those in the entry Year 7 constitute only 17 per cent. There will come a time when the number of new Jewish children each year will be less than ten per cent and, without any change, this will eventually feed through to the total pupil number. The question that the community and the local authority will need to ask eventually is: At what point, if any, will the percentage of Jewish children become so small that it is no longer sensible to run the school as a Jewish school?
- 2.56** This situation is, we hope, some way off. Meanwhile the wider Jewish community should recognise and celebrate what is being achieved at King David High School Liverpool in terms of Jewish knowledge, identity and commitment. The comparison cannot be with what a school with only Jewish pupils would achieve, for that is not an option in Liverpool. Rather, the comparison is with a situation where King David High School does not exist, and the pupils attend non-Jewish schools. Jewish studies is provided for Jewish pupils only and has a limited timetable. However, the Jewish knowledge, commitment and identity, and the positive approach to Israel that is developed by both Jewish studies and the wider Jewish ethos of the school are likely to be greater than if the pupils were in non-Jewish schools and attending supplementary religion classes on a voluntary basis. Finally, there is the positive impact on interfaith and inter-community relations of a large number of non-Jewish pupils learning about Judaism, Jews and Israel in a sympathetic environment.

## STRICTLY ORTHODOX SCHOOLS

- 2.57** To conclude, we consider the numbers position in the strictly orthodox community. It is difficult to give an accurate picture of the number of schools and even the number of pupils in the strictly orthodox sector because they change so quickly. They differ from the mainstream community in two important respects that affect the demand for schooling: their birth rate is much higher, around three times, and their take-up rate for Jewish schooling is 100 per cent. It is estimated that the strictly orthodox numbers in Jewish schooling double every 20 years and some claim it is faster than that. In the last ten years, the number of strictly orthodox children in Jewish schools has risen by around 50 per cent. A similar rate of increase over the next ten years will mean in excess of 20000 children in strictly orthodox schools, more than the total pool of mainstream children. A strictly orthodox majority of children in Jewish schooling is inevitable in a few years' time.
- 2.58** The problem facing strictly orthodox schools is the converse of that of the mainstream community. Instead of being concerned about the implications of spare capacity, they worry about the problems of insufficient capacity. Instead of proudly opening new schools paid for primarily out of public funds, they, with some notable exceptions, rely on private funding to keep their schools afloat. There is a possible way forward for strictly orthodox schools, which is to accept government funds and become maintained faith schools. However, most are wary of the obligations that may come with such funds and that might threaten their autonomy over the curriculum and admissions. This is the major issue for strictly orthodox schools and we consider it in Section 5.

## CONCLUSIONS

- 2.59** There is no doubt that the demand for Jewish schooling has picked up in recent years, particularly in areas of strong Jewish population, and that an increasing proportion of parents are demanding Jewish schooling for their children. We are confident, therefore, that the additional places provided in the primary sector in 2009 will be filled. We are cautiously optimistic about increased demand in the primary sector beyond 2009. Demand is likely to continue to grow in areas of strong Jewish population, but this may be accompanied by some less popular primary schools in other areas having to cope with falling numbers. Relocation and merger may be a way of adapting to these contrasting trends.
- 2.60** The increased places in secondary schooling provide a much greater challenge. We accept that both existing and new schools will widen the market by continuing to attract parents previously less interested in Jewish schooling for their children. The crucial question is whether the recent increase in demand heralds a step-change in parental attitudes to Jewish schools and in-depth research is needed on this. Better information needs to be provided for parents about the range of Jewish schools. More sophisticated, systematic and sustained marketing as we have advocated will be essential to stimulate further growth. Even then, it is likely that more than one secondary school will be enrolling non-Jewish children in the near future. It is important that any school finding itself in this position prepares itself, and its parents and pupils, for this eventuality to ensure that the positive experiences from such a situation are maximised. The experience in Liverpool in particular is one that schools might wish to understand better.

**2.61** Finally, we believe urgent action is required to ensure the schools in Redbridge remain viable, and that both the Manchester and Leeds Jewish communities will benefit from an increased number of Leeds children attending King David High School in Manchester, supported by a more formal relationship between the two.

## SECTION 3

# Teaching and Learning

## INTRODUCTION

**3.1** The learning experience of children is at the heart of the educational process. That experience takes place, not only in the classroom, but also through informal education and in the wider environment of the school as a whole. It is clear that for many parents whose children are in mainstream schools, it is primarily this wider environment that attracts them to Jewish schools. This includes academic and behavioural standards, a wider choice of Jewish friends and a school year in which Jewish and Israeli special days are seamlessly woven into the school calendar. Schools are well aware of these factors and stress in their different ways the particular ethos their school seeks to create. We welcome the approach of schools in identifying and clarifying their ethos, which, particularly in the increasingly competitive secondary school market, could become an important factor in choice of school.

**3.2** In this section of our report, while we focus primarily on what occurs in the classroom as far as Jewish studies teaching is concerned, we will also refer to the informal education experiences of pupils. Central to the classroom experience is the quality, professionalism and dedication of Jewish studies teachers, and the greater part of this section is concerned with their recruitment, training and development. We will also look at what is taught in terms of the curriculum and consider how its quality is assured.

## CURRICULUM

**3.3** As indicated in Section 1, there is no national curriculum for Jewish studies and each school decides for itself the time it devotes, what is covered and the standards pupils are expected to reach at different stages. While this makes it difficult to compare standards across schools, it also provides schools with great opportunities to be distinctive and innovative. We have not seen much evidence that these opportunities are being used to the fullest extent. In the market environment that has prevailed so far in which schools choose their pupils rather than vice versa, this is perhaps understandable. In a future environment in which, certainly at secondary level, the market will become more competitive, the distinctiveness of a school's Jewish studies provision and ethos may well become an important factor in choice. In any event, parents will be demanding much more information about schools before making their choice and this will include information on Jewish studies.

**3.4** However, heads of Jewish studies and their staff also need help and we welcome the major investment by the UJIA in the Jewish Curriculum Partnership, with the United Synagogue. We urge more schools to become involved in the developmental stage of this important work and we hope all schools will examine the materials that are emerging, with a view to using them. We are aware of a degree of impatience in some quarters with the time the work is taking. However, root and

branch reform of this nature is often a painstaking process. The best curriculum will be worthless if teachers are not developed to use it to its full potential. The Partnership is an excellent example of reflective practice, with teachers learning from each other under the guidance of outside expertise and with a clear emphasis on improving classroom practice. The three progressive and pluralist primary schools have already developed a joint curriculum for Jewish studies and have a more integrated model of teaching. JCoSS (Jewish Community Secondary School) will also be developing its own Jewish studies curriculum. We hope that, despite denominational differences, schools will share on a professional basis their experiences in constructing their different curricula.

- 3.5** The teaching of Ivrit (Modern Hebrew) has always been patchy and this is one area where schools would benefit from sharing their experiences and views. From 2010, all maintained primary schools will be required to teach a foreign language, presenting an exciting opportunity for concerted planning to strengthen Ivrit teaching. It is disappointing, therefore, that some primary schools have already indicated that they will be introducing French as their foreign language. We urge the schools to give further consideration to this matter and the Jewish Curriculum Partnership to allocate resources to help schools in their Ivrit teaching.

**WE RECOMMEND** 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.



Photo courtesy of Mike Poloway

Assembly at King David Junior School, Manchester

## SUPPLY AND TRAINING OF JEWISH STUDIES TEACHERS

- 3.6** An adequate supply of high quality Jewish studies teachers and heads of department is the key to improving the Jewish knowledge and experience of pupils. The lack of adequately trained and professionally qualified Jewish studies teachers is a long-standing issue. In the strictly orthodox sector, teachers are generally chosen for their subject knowledge rather than any pedagogical qualification. However, schemes have been introduced to provide pedagogical training and qualification as part of girls' seminary programmes. MST College in London has developed teacher training programmes and more recently there has been an attempt by schools in Manchester to introduce a strictly orthodox teacher training programme. We welcome these developments and would encourage strictly orthodox schools to continue their efforts to improve the educational professionalism of their Kodesh teaching.
- 3.7** In the mainstream sector, while vacancies are sometimes hard to fill, it has to be remembered that the number of vacancies in any one year can be quite small. Predicting the likely demand for teachers is not an exact science due to the difficulty of anticipating teacher movement. It is important, also, to distinguish between longer-term supply issues and shorter-term issues, such as covering for maternity leave. Currently, however, no information is collected centrally on these matters.

**WE RECOMMEND** that 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.

- 3.8** A regular survey of future demand will become increasingly important as new schools such as Yavneh College and JCoSS develop, and if primary school numbers also grow. There needs to be a closer link between teacher training programmes and teacher demand from schools. Many teachers in mainstream schools are now trained via the well-regarded programmes of the Agency for Jewish Education, either through their primary school-centred initial teacher training scheme (SCITT) or through the graduate teacher programme. Since beginning in 2000, SCITT has produced over 120 qualified primary school teachers. Some train as Jewish studies teachers, but they are qualified as general class teachers as well. We have received evidence that these graduates often prefer to take jobs as class teachers rather than Jewish studies teachers, and the reason most often given is the perceived lack of status of Jewish studies specialist teachers in primary schools. The progressive and pluralist schools address the issue by expecting their class teachers to teach Jewish studies as well.
- 3.9** A key issue that cannot be ignored is the significant number of Jewish studies teachers who are not professionally qualified. We understand the recruitment difficulties that have created this situation, but it is also the case that some schools, particularly those that are strictly orthodox,

value subject knowledge more highly than a professional teaching qualification. This is not a tenable situation in the long run. Parents have the right to expect that Jewish studies teachers have achieved the same professional teaching standards as any other staff. At the heart of this issue is a poverty of expectations. Any serious system of education should not tolerate an unqualified workforce, and every Jewish studies teacher should be able to demonstrate that they have reached the minimum professional standards required of all staff.

- 3.10** We recognise that some schools and many current staff will need help in achieving the goal of Qualified Teacher Status and in a later section we propose a system of continuing professional development to help them do so. It is important for new staff to be offered training for qualification early in their career and not, as one major secondary school told us, be made to wait for two or three years. For prospective teachers coming through the yeshiva route, concerted efforts should be made to have semichah programmes accredited as contributing towards a degree qualification. Seminary programmes should also be accredited. For others, the foundation degree route may be an appropriate way forward. All Pikuach inspections could provide an analysis of staff, showing how many are qualified and giving an indication of the school's plans for those who are not yet qualified.

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

- 3.11** Ensuring that all teachers are qualified will partly address the issue of a perceived lack of status. While better pay and other forms of financial enhancement might also improve the situation and are considered in Section 4, so would more flexibility within the schools themselves. For example, Jewish studies staff might be developed to become school leaders on some cross-curricular issues, such as citizenship or enterprise. More primary headteachers might also follow the practice of some of their colleagues in developing their staff to become class teachers as well as, rather than instead of, Jewish studies specialists. This might be linked to a greater ease of movement between Jewish studies and class teaching, so that a teacher might change roles between the two as a natural part of their career progression.
- 3.12** The issues in secondary schools are different. Jewish studies teachers have the same departmental structures as other staff and are able to progress through the managerial and pastoral ladders. Most new secondary Jewish studies teachers come through the graduate teacher route where they are trained within the school in a similar way to other subject teachers. However, we believe there is a need to consider additional schemes of teacher recruitment and to learn from the way in which the national shortages of teachers in key secular subjects have been tackled.

**3.13** One good example is the Teach First scheme. This asks graduates to commit two years to teaching before embarking on their long-term career. It promotes teaching as a social commitment, asking graduates to put something back into the community, while at the same time honing their leadership, creative and communication skills. Although Teach First explicitly asks for no more than a two-year commitment, retention rates beyond the first two years are high. Teach First is sponsored by a number of major public companies who recognise the skills gained in learning to become a successful teacher. Their support gives graduates the confidence that they will find a career-developing post at the end of the two years.

**3.14** We believe that the Teach First scheme offers a model that, suitably adapted, could be a way of attracting talented graduates into Jewish studies teaching. Marketing teaching as social and community action may well attract Jewish graduates. There is already a similar model in our youth and student organisations, where the most able graduates work for a year before embarking on their long-term careers. Emphasising the generic skills of leadership that teachers acquire is an important message for graduates and potential employers. Changing patterns of employment and the uncertainty experienced by many graduates about future careers, make a short-term commitment to teaching more attractive and possible. The key in the national scheme is that it is 'recognised' by companies and other employing organisations of significance and repute, so that graduates feel that, although there is no guarantee of a job with these firms afterwards, their time spent in teaching will generally be approved by prospective employers. A 'Teach Jewish First' scheme could find a way of being linked to the national scheme or could seek its own employer recognition. The short time involved has not proved a problem for schools in the national scheme because the career advice to newly qualified teachers is to stay no more than three years in their first post. One disadvantage for schools is that they receive no training grant, but for Jewish studies teachers the community could provide a financial incentive to the school.

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

**3.15** Another potential source of supply is people seeking a mid-career change into teaching. The numbers may be small but, as we pointed out earlier, the overall numbers needed are not large. If schools collectively believe that this is a potentially fruitful source of teacher supply, they need to market it positively. Finally, there needs to be easier access to information on training and vacancies for those seeking entry to teaching or wishing to change jobs. A Jewish Schools Training and Jobs website could provide clear up-to-date information on the various routes into training to be a Jewish studies teacher, as well as carrying details of current posts available. This could save schools funds that are currently spent on press advertisements.

**WE RECOMMEND** that 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.

- 3.16** There is more that headteachers and governors can do, together with training providers, to address some of these supply issues. For example, a more collaborative approach might alleviate the current difficulty in filling heads of Jewish studies posts in some primary schools. By sharing resources it would be possible to appoint an executive head of Jewish studies across more than one school. Greater collaboration could encourage schools to create career pathways between schools and to avoid the problem, when there is a limited supply of teachers, of one school ‘poaching’ another school’s staff. This increased co-operation would also benefit the professional development of staff. For example, a promising young teacher in one school might be developed over time for a more senior post in another school. It would also involve a different role for the central supporting agencies.

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

### TEACHER RETENTION AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- 3.17** We now move from training and entry to Jewish studies teaching to the issues of retention and professional development. There is only anecdotal evidence on why Jewish studies teachers leave the profession. Some of the reasons, such as finance, are also cited as reasons why many choose not to enter in the first place. However, it is argued that even those who do enter when they are single, and without family responsibilities, find the financial pressures too great when faced with these responsibilities. Various proposals have been made to address this situation, from higher salaries to reduction of synagogue fees or school voluntary contributions. These are examined in Section 4.
- 3.18** However, funding is not the only issue in the retention of teachers, neither is it the main issue, according to many school leaders we met. In their view and in the experience of other Jewish communities around the world, a crucial element in retention is creating a greater sense of professionalism, self-esteem and public esteem. We place them in that order, because self-esteem develops from pride in professional expertise and competence, and public esteem can only come when there is self-esteem. The key, therefore, is the creation of a systematic and sustained programme of continuing professional development (CPD). It is essential that every Jewish studies teacher receives an entitlement to a personal development plan that is reviewed annually as part of their appraisal process. Such plans would set out, for example, pathways to achieving qualified

teacher status or access to pedagogical skills or routes to developing middle and senior management skills with the appropriate qualifications.

- 3.19** Such a programme needs an organisational framework and the UJIA together with the central education agencies should be charged with creating it. There needs to be a review of what is currently offered, assessing its effectiveness and identifying the gaps in provision that exist. To drive the project forward, the UJIA should appoint a director of continuing professional development who would work with schools to ensure training is relevant and adequately resourced. Pikuach could be asked to include in its reports an evaluation of the quality of each school's provision for its teachers' CPD.

**WE RECOMMEND** that 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.

- 3.20** All this will require significantly enhanced funding for CPD. In the immediate future these funds should continue to be centrally held and allocated to facilitate the introduction of CPD across the system. However, we believe a more radical approach to funding teachers' professional development also needs to be considered. Currently, training courses are provided and largely funded by the central agencies and are based on their understanding of what teachers require. Although there is some consultation, it is essentially supply-driven. We believe that there is merit in considering a school-led approach, as now occurs in the general teaching field. Such an approach would provide ring-fenced funds to each school, based on their numbers, for the professional development of its Jewish studies teachers. Each school would have to account annually for how the money was spent but we do not suggest too rigid a micro-management system, preferring instead to rely on schools' understanding of their needs. Collaboration between schools would be encouraged, as they pool resources to look for the best training providers.

- 3.21** A school-led approach would require major cultural change within the central agencies because they would need to allow schools to decide how to spend their funds. The agencies might still offer many of the professional development programmes, but other providers could also offer programmes and the decision would rest with the schools. This would transform the culture in both schools and the funding agencies, but it needs careful thought and preparation.

**WE RECOMMEND** that plans be developed to move towards a schools-based system of allocating funds for the professional development of Jewish studies teachers.

## INFORMAL EDUCATION

**3.22** The bridge between the formal Jewish studies teaching and the ethos of a school is its informal education work. All the secondary schools emphasised the importance of this component part of the Jewish experience. One of our overseas respondents, with many years of professional experience, made the distinction between formal classroom learning, which was about acquiring skills, and informal learning, which was about experiencing Judaism. Both were essential and had to be integrated to be most effective. The enormous impact of residential experiences, especially Israel and Poland trips, was highlighted by a number of headteachers. A number of secondary schools have their own informal educators and we note with approval the recent decision of the UJIA to help more schools develop this activity. However, there appears to be no concerted training or professional development for informal educators and we urge that this be given serious consideration. Many informal education organisations offer services to schools and they often seem to be better resourced than the schools themselves. Their programmes are, therefore, attractive to schools in offering additional learning and activity at minimal extra cost. We also note that, although primary and secondary schools value highly the Shabbatonim and other residential events that they organise in this country, they constantly have to search for suitable venues and waste a great deal of time and energy on this.

**WE RECOMMEND** that, given the very high impact of informal education, a feasibility study be undertaken of the viability of securing a suitable centre for the residential use of schools.

## QUALITY

**3.23** The system of quality assurance of Jewish studies through the Pikuach inspection service was described in Section 1. The limitations of the service were also explained in that, in the absence of an agreed curriculum for Jewish studies, Pikuach can only assess each school's work against its own objectives rather than a national template of objectives. Although we received some criticism of Pikuach in terms of its relatively uncritical approach, the evidence from Pikuach itself was that its grading of a school's Jewish studies work was close to Ofsted's grading of the rest of a school's work. However, as the gradings measure different things, it is difficult to be certain what this correlation implies.

**3.24** Accepting these limitations, one way that the Pikuach assessments might be strengthened is if it felt able to comment more strongly on the appropriateness of the objectives and standards a school is trying to achieve at different stages. For example, a school might receive a high Pikuach grade even though it achieves what are, compared with other schools, relatively unambitious standards. Given the knowledge and expertise on the curriculum of many of its inspectors, it should be possible for Pikuach to comment on the standards and objectives of the schools it inspects. Pikuach has argued that its ability to provide a more comprehensive approach is limited by the resources it has available, as well as by the wide diversity of the aims and objectives of Jewish education that schools seek to achieve.

**WE RECOMMEND** that 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.

- 3.25** The government's quality assurance system is increasingly focusing on helping schools to improve, as well as grading their existing work, particularly through the use of school improvement partners. A pilot scheme has been established to develop SKIPS (School Kodesh Improvement Partners), which if successful, could lead to the creation of a team of advisors working with schools to help them articulate, develop and improve their particular approach to Jewish education. Such a team might also work on developing models for measuring impact and effectiveness. It is important that the advisory teams are not organised within the Pikuach framework. In this way, assessment and improvement can be kept separate and schools can be encouraged to be open and bold about their need for improvement, without fearing that it may rebound on their assessment.
- 3.26** Another potentially important role for advisory teams is to develop Jewish studies teachers to become more skilled at self-evaluation. This could provide an important set of skills for teachers, not only in making a contribution to quality improvement but also in allowing them to progress more easily to broader management roles. In time, a system might be created in which there are a significant number of advisors and where each school acts as a 'critical friend' to another. The advisors would not be exclusively 'outsiders' but would also include suitably trained Jewish studies teachers who would see advisory work as part of their career development, without necessarily having to stop teaching entirely.

## **LEADERSHIP**

- 3.27** As in most other spheres of human activity, leadership matters, and the changes we have outlined in this section and in the report will not happen without strong and dynamic leadership, both in schools and in the community more generally. As far as the schools are concerned, the leadership crisis that was feared in the past has, fortunately, not materialised. On the contrary, over the last 18 months, three secondary and four primary schools in London have recruited high calibre heads, all of whom are Jewish, yet not all of whom were previously employed in Jewish schools. This seems to suggest that the headship of a Jewish school is an attractive career move and it also opens opportunities for Jewish schools engaging more widely with the broader educational world. The professional leadership of our schools needs to be supported to enable it to achieve its highest potential and is also a valuable resource to guide our community's educational development. Further investment may be needed to help headteachers develop their role as managers of change. Headships in the regions seem more difficult to fill with Jewish candidates, possibly reflecting the declining Jewish populations in these areas. One piece of good news on the leadership front is that, from the responses to our consultation document, Jewish schools generally continue to attract high calibre members of the community to become governors.

### SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

- 3.28** Our consultation document made little mention of special educational needs (SEN). Responses to the consultation made clear that we need to consider seriously how schools are currently responding to children with special educational needs and how they are affected by wider issues. We have not had sufficient time to consider the issues as fully as we would have wished, but set down here what we have learned. A fuller review of this important element of our provision is needed.
- 3.29** SEN is a broad term and it is often thought of as referring to the levels of learning disability that require special schooling. There are indeed special schools, such as Kisharon, but all mainstream schools cater for a wide range of educational needs. In fact, the long established policy of inclusion has meant that SEN is in many ways more of an issue for mainstream schools than for special schools. It is worth recalling that *Every Child Matters* is still the underlying government policy – and clear statement of intent – for all maintained schools. As a further development of our current work, it would be useful to examine what the implications would be for a similar commitment from our community that Every Jewish Child Matters.
- 3.30** As the recent discussion over the School Admissions Code demonstrated, sadly there still seem to be some Jewish schools that find admitting children with special needs problematic. Moreover, the heavy emphasis on academic success can make it difficult for some children, and we have heard of instances where Jewish schools have been reluctant to let pupils continue into the sixth form because they have not met the very high entry grades some schools now set. On the other hand, the development of a specific Norwood-sponsored unit at JCoSS to cater for children with autistic spectrum disorders is to be heartily welcomed. We also received evidence that resources for the more severe end of the spectrum are currently duplicated because religious ethos prevents combining otherwise similar services. This is an issue that also needs addressing.
- 3.31** In mainstream Jewish schools, resources are again a key issue. SEN funding is dictated largely by socio-economic factors, in other words the percentage of pupils on free school meals. Jewish schools by and large do not score high on this system, partly because some parents whose children are eligible for free school meals do not apply. Yet schools obviously have many children who at some time or another will need additional help and support. Norwood provides a number of valuable special needs services in schools across the community, but generally parents have to pay for these. In short, there is an urgent need to review the levels of funding for special educational needs in all Jewish schools.
- 3.32** Other issues that have been raised with us include the need for more specialised provision for Jewish children with social and emotional difficulties, and better training for Jewish studies teachers in meeting additional needs in the classroom.

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

## CONCLUSIONS

- 3.33** The Jewish environment of a Jewish school is its *raison d'être*. The Jewish Curriculum Partnership could have a major impact on the quality of Jewish studies provision in the future and should be shared as widely as possible. Ivrit teaching has been patchy, but the requirement from 2010 that all maintained primary schools teach a foreign language provides an exciting opportunity to strengthen Ivrit provision.
- 3.34** At the heart of our recommendations is the need to raise the professional standing, self-esteem and public esteem of Jewish studies teachers. The first step towards achieving this is an acceptance that new teachers, at least, should be professionally qualified, achieving the same status as other teachers in the school. For all teachers, there should be an entitlement to a personal development plan linked to appraisal and access to a sustained and systematic programme of professional development. The scheme should be driven centrally by a director of continuing professional development. In due course, CPD should be managed by schools through ring-fenced budgets.
- 3.35** New schemes such as 'Teach Jewish First' should be established to attract the best and brightest of our young people into Jewish studies teaching, and information on what posts and training routes are available should be made more accessible through a new website. The inspection of Jewish studies provision should be extended to include a review of the objectives and standards schools are seeking to achieve.

## SECTION 4

# Funding and Finance

## INTRODUCTION

**4.1** Without adequate funding, little can be achieved and in this section we review financing and expenditure issues facing Jewish schools. This covers both the funds that individual schools need to raise and the significant amounts of central communal funding that are allocated to support their work, particularly in teaching and learning. Finally, we look at how additional funding might be secured in the longer term.

## CURRENT FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS OF MAINTAINED FAITH SCHOOLS

**4.2** The financial arrangements for maintained faith schools are explained in Section 1. Essentially, a grant from central government covers up to 90 per cent of a school's capital costs, subject to government budgetary considerations, as well as providing annual funding for general education provision on the same basis as other state schools. However, Jewish schools have to raise their own funds to cover most of the cost of Jewish studies and of security, and they do this largely through voluntary parental contributions. Evidence we have collected supports the consultative document's suggestion that a significant proportion of parents are either unwilling or unable to offer the level of voluntary contributions suggested by the school. Although the percentage of those paying parental contributions is highly variable, in a number of cases it is particularly low and there is, therefore, an ongoing level of uncertainty or deficit in some school budgets.

**4.3** The reasons why parents choose not to pay voluntary contributions are likely to be varied. Sometimes this relates to their motivation for selecting Jewish schools in the first place, which may have relatively little to do with the formal lessons of Jewish studies offered. It has been suggested that if parents are ambivalent about the importance of Jewish studies in the curriculum, they may be less willing to contribute to the cost of it.

**4.4** As well as those parents able but reluctant to contribute, there are of course other parents who do not have the financial means to make a full or, in some cases, any contribution. Changes in family patterns, particularly an increase in single parent families, may make this situation more acute as single parents tend to find themselves in a less secure financial position. Inevitably, a time of slower economic growth will also affect the payment of voluntary contributions, with more families struggling to make ends meet.

**4.5** Recent publicity over admissions criteria has put the payment of voluntary contributions clearly in the public domain. Schools have been made fully aware that contributions cannot be, or be implied to be, a condition of admission to the school and that they must clearly emphasise the voluntary nature of the contribution. Schools will no doubt ensure that these rules are followed, but

they also need to find effective mechanisms for attracting more contributions. Jewish studies teaching is dependent on voluntary contributions and funds are crucial for the departments to survive. As far as we are aware, no recent research has been undertaken on parental attitudes to voluntary contributions and what influences their decision on their level of contribution.

**WE RECOMMEND** that research be carried out on parental attitudes to voluntary contributions, and ways of increasing the numbers contributing should be identified.

- 4.6 At present, governing bodies and trustees spend considerable time encouraging parents to support a school's Jewish studies budget, and are engaged in significant fundraising to meet any shortfall. It might be worth exploring whether there would be administrative cost savings in schools grouping together to collect voluntary contributions. There could be a separate appeal to each school's parents but these would come from a common administrative base, not the school itself. An additional benefit of such a system would be that collection of the voluntary contribution would be clearly separated from admissions.
- 4.7 When the basic rate of tax was recently reduced from 22 per cent to 20 per cent, the potential impact on charities from the loss of gift aid claimed was so severe that the Government agreed to leave the rate that can be reclaimed by charities, including schools, at 22 per cent for the next three years. If the rate is reduced to 20 per cent after that time, it will affect this income.

## SECURITY COSTS

- 4.8 Security costs are sometimes collected separately from Jewish studies contributions but generally the two are collected together and, therefore, non-payment of voluntary contributions affects school budgeting for security as well. Assistance with the capital costs of protecting schools has been given by the Community Security Trust (CST), which has helped to enhance security in school buildings and has initiated a protective windows and security enhancement project for all communal buildings. The Government has indicated that funding would be available for capital costs of school security through local authorities and discussions about this are continuing. However, ongoing security costs are the responsibility of individual schools. Many have used parental rotas for policing security in the past, but this seems to have proved harder to organise recently and most schools now use professional staff from security firms, which is an increased cost. One of the consequences of the security issues that Jewish schools face is that it is more difficult or expensive to hire the premises out for other functions, thus limiting their ability to raise additional income.

## INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS

- 4.9 Independent schools receive no general capital or recurrent funding from the government. There are four independent primary schools in the mainstream sector and one independent secondary school. In the strictly orthodox sector, the overwhelming majority of schools are independent. Obviously, income from fees is crucial to the financial viability of all such schools, mainstream or

strictly orthodox. In the mainstream sector, independent schools offer scholarships for which they raise funds, but ultimately they will thrive or fail depending on whether they can recruit sufficient fee-paying pupils. In the strictly orthodox sector, there is a greater reliance on fund raising to reduce the level of fees overall and levels of expenditure, particularly on buildings, are much lower.

- 4.10** A new challenge is that changes in charitable law now mean that all independent schools must demonstrate 'public benefit' to retain their charitable status. As yet, the definition of this term is not clear. Most Jewish independent schools offer large numbers of scholarships and so are likely to meet the criteria. However, schools will need to follow carefully the developing policy in this area to ensure that their charitable status is not put at risk.
- 4.11** Some Jewish independent schools wish to remain private and provide this option for parents. However, there has also been a pattern of new schools establishing themselves as independent schools as a start-up route, with the intention of applying for state aid in the future. This has been a highly successful strategy in the past for a number of schools.
- 4.12** In the strictly orthodox sector, most schools remaining independent do so for ideological reasons, in that they wish to have greater control over their curriculum and ethos than they believe would be possible if they became maintained faith schools. On the other hand, the high proportion of large, low income families in the strictly orthodox sector and the consequent poor resourcing of their schools make it attractive to switch to maintained faith status and a few strictly orthodox schools have followed this route in recent years. As indicated in the document *Faith in the System*, government support for further transfers is partly based on the wish to reduce the isolation of such schools, but it is also influenced by a more general wish to reduce child poverty and to meet the aims of its *Every Child Matters* policy. It is unfortunate that recent ministerial statements about faith schools, which are discussed more fully in Section 5, have created a degree of ambivalence about the Government's support for this policy and may have caused some strictly orthodox schools, that were contemplating applying for state aid, to have second thoughts. We recognise the importance of the contribution of the Board of Deputies Community Issues Department in facilitating the relationship between the Department for Children, Schools and Families and strictly orthodox schools, and urge those schools to consider carefully the benefits of maintained faith status.

### **CAPITAL COSTS**

- 4.13** Another funding issue for both maintained and independent schools is raising funds for new capital projects and refurbishment. Strictly orthodox schools, the majority of which are independent, face serious capital funding issues and, in some cases, their premises are clearly inadequate. They often cope, as they have done for some years, through a hand-to-mouth existence and it is difficult to see any easy solution to this problem while they remain independent. It has been put to us that for all schools it is easier to raise funds for new buildings than for refurbishment, so the maintenance and improvement of buildings can be a major financial problem. As new schools are built, the contrast with the shabby nature of some of the older Jewish school buildings should be clearly apparent. There is no communal building or endowment fund to help with this, nor do we

think that this should be the highest priority for any central communal funding effort. The Government has indicated that all maintained schools will be refurbished by 2020. This is some way off and, in any event, is subject to the vagaries of the health of the public finances. Some schools are already involved in energetic fundraising campaigns, and we suggest all schools looking to repair and upgrade their buildings should follow this route, engaging alumni, former parents and well-wishers, as well as current parents. Given the strong record of our schools, many of them will have a well of affection and gratitude from former pupils and parents to draw upon.

## TEACHERS' SALARIES

- 4.14** Much has been written about the difficulties of recruiting good Jewish studies teachers and it has been suggested that schools need to raise significantly more funding to recruit and retain the best Jewish studies staff. One proposition put to the Commission was that doubling salaries might be a way of attracting talented young people into the profession. However, headteachers and heads of Jewish studies argued strongly against this idea. They thought parity with other staff was very important and that double or much higher salaries for Jewish studies teachers would be a divisive policy, potentially harming staff relations in the school. There is also the sensitive point that such a policy would have to apply not only to new members of staff but also to existing ones, and without any judgement of merit. Finally, it was argued that there is no evidence that doubling salaries is effective in the long term. We conclude that, while some premium to reflect the market situation might be appropriate, doubling or providing a substantial salary differential for Jewish studies teachers would not be a wise policy.
- 4.15** Nevertheless, the financial burdens of orthodox Jewish family life are evident and a number of suggestions for attracting staff by reducing these burdens have been made. These include synagogues agreeing to reduce membership costs for Jewish studies teachers and schools suggesting a reduced contribution for the children of Jewish studies teachers, irrespective of the school in which the parents teach. A way to implement such a policy, if adopted, would need to be found without infringing any applicable law about discrimination. Another suggestion was the provision of an all-day crèche for children of teachers, which would be very welcome now there are more couples with both partners in full-time employment. A further possibility is arranging discounts for Jewish studies teachers at certain kosher food shops. These options need to be examined carefully on a school-wide basis. We recognise that similar arguments of need could apply to all who work in communal organisations. However, we caution against seeking to make any scheme as comprehensive as possible in the first instance as the likely outcome is that it will never get off the ground. Our remit is schools but, if successful, the implications of such a scheme for other communal professionals might be considered in the future.

**WE RECOMMEND** that 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 developed further.

**4.16** Housing is another issue that has been discussed over many years that affects all young professionals in London, and not just Jewish studies teachers. There have been government-backed shared equity schemes for key workers, but the funds made available by banks and building societies have not generally been large enough to make any real difference. There are housing associations that offer such schemes but they tend to be hugely oversubscribed. It is unlikely that funds would be forthcoming to support housing for Jewish teachers in preference to other groups of communal workers.

### RECRUITMENT, TRAINING AND CURRICULUM

**4.17** In addition to voluntary contributions or fees that schools raise for their own needs, a substantial amount of communal funding is provided for central support activities. This is highlighted in Section 3 and is crucial to the success of schools. It includes provision of initial and in-service training of staff, leadership training, quality assurance and curriculum development. For many of these initiatives over the past years, funds have been collected and invested by central communal organisations involved in establishing and funding innovative programmes. A broad estimate of the funding being provided across the mainstream community for the various support programmes to improve the quality of teaching and learning of Jewish studies is over £1m a year, with a significant proportion of this being invested by UJIA. Virtually all the programmes have been introduced since the Jewish Educational Development Trust published the report *Securing Our Future* in 1992 and they testify to the increasing commitment of our communal institutions to supporting formal Jewish education.

**4.18** In Section 3 we make a number of important proposals for developing this work that we believe to be necessary for building on the success of our schools and taking them to the next stage. It is difficult to give an estimate of the funds required, primarily because this will depend on the detail and volume of each scheme. Nevertheless, we are certain that considerably more funding is required than currently is available and new mechanisms for raising funds should be considered.

### FUNDING OPTIONS

**4.19** In view of the challenges that schools and the community in general face in generating the funds necessary to support Jewish schools, we have looked at possible longer-term approaches. In the first instance, we pay tribute to all those who have raised such substantial funds for our schools in the past and are continuing to do so. The fact that in the course of the first decade of this century the community will have built, in effect, three new secondary schools, even allowing for the fact that the majority of the capital funds have come from the public purse, should be a source of great pride. Given the great success of our schools, we are confident that the generosity of those with the capacity to give will continue in the future.

**4.20** Two issues, however, require further examination. The difficulty of securing an adequate level of voluntary contributions from parents at maintained schools has been highlighted and we have considered whether there are any arrangements, consistent with government regulations that might improve the situation. One possibility is to dispense with voluntary contributions and adopt the policy that Jewish education in state schools is free at the point of delivery. The funds would

instead be collected communally and distributed on a per capita basis. Schools would know their budget with a degree of certainty, and a great deal of time and administrative expenditure would be saved. However, the funds would still need to be raised and a broad estimate is that they would need to be in the region of at least £10m annually. This is a formidable sum, and it might be difficult to engage the support of people who do not have children or grandchildren in Jewish schools. Many would argue not that Jewish education should be free, but that parents ought to contribute to their children's Jewish education as a sign of their commitment. Moreover, such a scheme would disadvantage the independent schools by widening the cost differential between sending a child to a maintained school and an independent school. If significant funds could be raised for Jewish education, we believe they would be better spent on supporting the infrastructure that we have outlined rather than absolving parents from financially supporting their child's Jewish education.

- 4.21** One variant of this proposal is for the community to provide some matched funding to the voluntary contributions that parents make. This might encourage some parents who do not contribute now to do so. On further examination, this proposal also faces difficulties. If communal funds actually matched a school's voluntary contributions, it would lead to major disparities between those that are able to collect a high level of fees and those that cannot. It would also make the actual funding needed each year extremely volatile. An alternative would be for communal funding to be fixed at a per capita rate, either for every child or for every child for which a voluntary contribution at a certain level is made. The difficulty with all such schemes is the law of unintended consequences. The experience of governments teaches us that, while behavioural responses to a subsidy or tax can sometimes be predicted correctly, in many cases they cannot. Often the outcome is perverse and the opposite of what was intended. While we believe that there may be some merit in offering an incentive to parents to make their voluntary contribution, any scheme needs to be very carefully considered before it is introduced. We have been unable to devise such a scheme ourselves in the time available.
- 4.22** It is, however, evident that serious thought needs to be given to how schools might secure additional funding. One suggestion is for communal organisations that are selling assets to invest a proportion of those funds in an endowment for Jewish schools. Indeed, this could be the basis for the establishment of a Jewish Schools Endowment Fund. This should not be for future capital funding, which experience teaches is best raised for specific, identified projects. Instead, the endowment might be used to generate revenues to provide additional support for the day-to-day funding of Jewish studies and other Jewish activities. We were made aware of a scheme established by the Chicago Jewish Community Federation, but this needs much further and wider discussion. Another scheme brought to our attention was that of the American Jewish Funders Network, which encouraged one donor to pledge a large sum into a central pot. The pledge was only redeemable as match funding. A number of smaller donors who had never given to Jewish schools in the past were then encouraged to put smaller first time donations into the pot, obtaining huge leverage for a small donation. They often continued to include Jewish schools in their future charitable giving. Our community is fortunate to have many people with the expertise to evaluate how an endowment fund might successfully be organised, and we propose that they be set to

work. We are clear that the success that Jewish schools have achieved so far must not be put under threat because of lack of funds.

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

## CONCLUSIONS

- 4.23** Parental voluntary contributions will remain the main source of funding for Jewish studies and security costs in maintained faith schools. It is important that research is carried out on parental attitudes to these contributions and to identify ways in which the numbers contributing can be increased. Finance is a key issue for the majority of strictly orthodox schools, which are independent. It is important that these schools consider carefully the benefits of becoming maintained faith schools. While a substantial increase in the salaries of Jewish studies teachers is not supported, synagogues and schools should help to reduce the costs of orthodox Jewish living by lowering the fees and contributions payable by Jewish studies teachers.
- 4.24** Funding to support improvements in the teaching and learning of Jewish studies needs to be substantially increased. The feasibility of establishing an endowment fund that could contribute to the recurrent funding of Jewish schools should be examined by an expert group. Part of the proceeds of any communal asset that is sold could be contributed to this endowment fund.

## SECTION 5

# The Political and Educational Environment

## INTRODUCTION

**5.1** Schools do not operate in a vacuum, and the political and educational environment provides the legal and policy framework within which they work. This is particularly the case for faith schools, and especially those that are maintained through public funds. As we indicated in Section 1, the relationship between Jewish schools and the Government has traditionally and generally been a warm and positive one. However, some recent events related to admissions policy have caused a degree of concern in the community.

## ADMISSIONS QUOTAS

**5.2** The core purpose of a Jewish school is to provide a safe environment to teach pupils about their faith and to strengthen their Jewish identity. It is natural, therefore, that priority in admissions should be given to Jewish pupils. This was challenged in autumn 2006 by a government proposal to introduce immediate legislation for the imposition of 'quotas' on new maintained faith schools, requiring them to accept 25 per cent of their pupils from outside their faith group. This followed the introduction of a voluntary quota system by Church of England schools.

**5.3** The proposal was successfully challenged by the minority faith communities and a coalition was formed between the Catholic Education Service, the Board of Deputies of British Jews, the Association of Muslim Schools, the Hindu Forum and the Sikh community. The communities and the Government worked together to formulate a statement about the role of faith schools, which eventually became the publication *Faith in the System*, published in September 2007. As we highlighted in Section 1, this includes a statement of principled support for faith schools and seeks to encourage those that remain independent to enter the maintained sector.

**5.4** We were pleased to receive government input to our work through the attendance at one of our meetings of a senior civil servant from the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF). Our understanding from this meeting is that while *Faith in the System* should be viewed positively, the issue of quotas has not been removed entirely from the political agenda. Those opposed to faith schools have an organised campaign and willing spokespeople within Parliament. For example, the British Humanist Association has appointed an anti-faith schools officer. The faith coalition needs to continue its work, not just in a reactive mode, but on an ongoing basis. It should more positively advocate the need for and benefit of faith schools and defend parental choice. The Jewish community's efforts in this respect need to be enhanced.

**WE RECOMMEND** that 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.

### ADMISSIONS CODE

- 5.5** Maintained faith schools must conform to a statutory School Admissions Code, which is adjusted by the Government regularly. The purpose of the Code is to ensure fair and transparent admissions processes. The two sections of the Code that have caused most concern within schools are the oversupply criteria and issues arising from the information requested on the admissions forms. The oversupply criteria have resulted in Jewish schools having to take in non-Jewish children if they do not fill all their places, as has occurred for some years in a number of schools in the regions. This problem is faced particularly by new schools, which may take a few years to reach their full capacity. We support the campaign by the Board of Deputies for new schools and those transferring from the independent sector to be given five years' exemption from the application of the oversupply criteria. This might encourage some strictly orthodox schools to view transfer to the maintained faith sector more favourably.
- 5.6** The wide publicity given to ministerial statements about inappropriate information being sought on admissions forms in a sample of faith schools has caused further anxiety about the Government's underlying attitude to Jewish schools. This is despite ministerial assurances on this point, and a resolution of the immediate issues by agreement between the DCSF and the Board of Deputies. There is now, we believe, greater understanding in the DCSF of the need for Jewish schools to obtain certain information, for example, to ascertain the Jewish status of applicants, and to find ways of making this compatible with the School Admissions Code. We are pleased that the DCSF has offered the Jewish community an ongoing bilateral process of discussion to resolve these issues, if necessary by making amendments to the Code.
- 5.7** At the same time, some Jewish schools need help in understanding what the Code requires of them in clearer language than is currently provided in the technical and legal documents. In May 2008, the Board of Deputies launched *Schools Brief*, a Westminster briefing for school governors and headteachers. We hope this will become a regular publication, providing better information for those leading our schools about political developments that may affect them and, at the same time, explaining Jewish schools and their needs to Whitehall and Westminster.

### COMMUNITY COHESION

- 5.8** In *Faith in the System*, faith schools committed themselves to supporting the Government's policies on community cohesion. In fact, the Jewish community had already done so nearly a year earlier. In December 2006, the Board of Deputies, in consultation with the Agency for Jewish Education, Leo Baeck College, the Jewish Secondary Schools Movement, Menorah Foundation, Manchester Mesivta School and other communal bodies, issued a position statement, *Jewish*

*Schools and Cohesion*, which emphasised that *'the community contends that Jewish Schools are already agents of cohesion and promoters of active citizenship as these are classic Jewish values.'*

- 5.9 The statement is significant, both because it was made on behalf of schools across the religious spectrum and because it emphasised the success of Jewish schools in terms of promoting citizenship and inculcating strong values. The new duty on all maintained schools to promote community cohesion introduced by the Education and Inspections Act 2006 came into force in September 2007 and will be inspected by Ofsted from September 2008. What is becoming clear is that there are many different interpretations of community cohesion. Indeed, we agree with those with expertise in this area who have suggested that the term 'community engagement' is a more appropriate description of what is needed. Given the record of our schools, they should approach the new agenda with confidence and see it as an opportunity to demonstrate their achievements.



Photo courtesy of Dov Gefen

**Prime Minister Tony Blair at the opening of Yesodey Hatorah Senior Girls School, October 2006**

- 5.10 Pikuach is currently working in consultation with schools on a community cohesion framework. The draft guidelines from Ofsted emphasise that one of the issues inspectors will be looking at is evidence of school-linking between single faith schools. To prepare schools for this, the Shared Futures project has been established by the Board of Deputies in partnership with the Pears Foundation and with the endorsement of the Jewish Leadership Council. This will actively link schools of different faiths. It has a multi-faith staff and advisory board and provides an interesting model for the Jewish community developing best practice to support government policy.

### DISTINCTIVE PURPOSE OF JEWISH SCHOOLING

**5.11** The concerns over government policy towards admissions should not be allowed to divert attention from the fact that both the Government's and the Opposition's attitude to faith schools is generally highly positive. However, politicians of all parties need to be aware that different communities have different rationales for establishing faith schools. For some, it is a mission to spread their values to the wider community. Others, such as the Jewish community, establish schools to meet the needs of people in their own faith community. This distinction is of great importance because it implies that different policies, for example on admissions, may be appropriate to different communities, rather than applying a uniform approach to all. It is hoped that these implications are fully understood by the DCSF because they are essential to building trust between Jewish schools and the Government, particularly when schools are thinking about entering the state system.

### TRANSFERRING TO THE MAINTAINED SECTOR

**5.12** There are around 87 independent Jewish schools according to current Board of Deputies records, the vast majority being strictly orthodox. Most of these schools operate in inner city areas where children come from large and low-income families. In Section 2 we noted that with a continuing high birth rate and an expectation that all their children will attend a Jewish school, demand from the strictly orthodox community will continue to grow at a rapid rate. Some estimates are that its school numbers will double in the next 20 years. This clearly creates significant additional demands on resources both for capital and ongoing funding.

**5.13** In its statement *Jewish Schools and Cohesion*, published at the end of 2006, the broad umbrella group, which included representatives of strictly orthodox schools, sought to address this issue by arguing: *'In order for real social and community cohesion there need to be measures that help every child improve. This could be achieved by bringing the 60 to 70 private schools from the strictly orthodox community into the state sector. Children at these schools often come from large families with low income. However, these schools will need reassurance and these schools must be dealt with sensitively.'*

**5.14** This reassurance is a central issue. We recognise that becoming part of the maintained sector has implications that may be difficult for some strictly orthodox schools. However, in recent years a number of these schools have transferred to the maintained sector, including Yesodey Hatorah Senior Girls School and Lubavitch Girls Primary School in Stamford Hill, Beis Yaakov High School in Salford and Manchester Mesivta School. The evidence to date is that they have maintained their ethos and have been academically successful. Their experience is being watched closely by other strictly orthodox schools contemplating transfer, and there continues to be a lively debate within the community on this issue. It is understandable if recent publicity about admissions have deterred some strictly orthodox schools from pursuing transfer. We believe that the DCSF needs to take on board formally the proposal for a five-year exemption from the application of the oversupply criteria for such schools. At the same time, better lines of communication and dialogue between these schools and the DCSF would be helpful.

**WE RECOMMEND** that 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.

## EXTENDED SCHOOLS

- 5.15** As well as creating the political environment within which Jewish schools operate, the Government also creates the educational environment through a myriad of policy statements. Whereas the political environment creates policies that usually apply specifically to faith schools, the educational environment tends to consist of policies that apply to all schools. However, occasionally policy changes offer particular opportunities to Jewish schools.
- 5.16** Such is the case, we believe, around the Government's policy that by 2010 all schools will become 'extended schools'. This will involve schools providing a core offer of services that children should be able to access through their schools by 2010. This core offer includes study support and after school clubs, parenting and family support, community access to facilities, and swift and easy access to targeted and specialist services. Many Jewish schools already offer some of these services, and in extending them the issue may not be as much about raising achievement – which they already do successfully – as about building on an argument we have heard advanced a number of times that schools are the new shuls. There are many more children in Jewish schools every day than the number of parents in synagogues every week.
- 5.17** The Chief Rabbi emphasised to us this emerging relationship between schools and their communities, quoting Daniel Elazar that *'Jewish life is a series of communities built around schools.'* Often, this is seen as a way of engaging families in more intensive Jewish studies through adult education programmes. Alternative models, such as King Solomon High School in Redbridge, where the local Norwood Family Services are on site, point the way to the kind of multi-agency work envisaged by the extended schools programme. If the re-organisation we recommend in Redbridge results in Sinclair House transferring to the King Solomon site, this will be another move in this direction. It is important that schools work closely with their local authorities to gain access to the funds now becoming available to support this work. This is again happening in Redbridge, where all three Jewish schools are working together on the extended services agenda. We would also encourage schools to work more closely with the welfare organisations, and to build on the very real expertise they already have in working with emotional and social issues, and with families.

## FEDERATION AND COLLABORATION

- 5.18** The scale of partnership working between schools is growing nationally. Schools across the country are being encouraged to share and collaborate in differing ways. Of particular interest to Jewish schools are new models of school federations and trusts. These could provide economies of scale with purchasing, human resources and legal advice. They might also help Jewish schools with new developments such as the 14-19 agenda. At a local level, they could make a great deal

of sense for communities with shrinking populations. This is an emerging picture nationally, but there is already some considerable expertise and we would urge the central organisations to explore fully the current situation and to start engaging Jewish schools in discussions around these new possibilities.

## CONCLUSIONS

**5.19** The political and educational environment is very important to the development of Jewish schools. Until recently, this environment has been viewed positively in the community. Over the past decade, it has enabled the number of Jewish schools to increase significantly and others to expand. The debate over the admissions quota and the School Admissions Code emphasised the need for the relationship between the community and the Government to be strengthened. It is understandable if, in the light of this debate, some strictly orthodox schools contemplating a change to maintained faith status have had second thoughts. Many of these schools are under-resourced and need better facilities, but they also hold steadfastly to their principles. We hope that the experience of those strictly orthodox schools that have transferred to maintained faith status will give encouragement to others, and that the DCSF can provide the assurances they need. Notwithstanding recent events, we believe that the external environment provides far more opportunities than threats for all our schools, and we encourage them to take full advantage of the opportunities available.

## SECTION 6

# Looking to the Future

## A STRATEGIC AGENCY?

- 6.1** In our consultative document, we asked whether a community-wide strategic agency needed to be established. Some important voices argued strongly that a strategic agency was needed with an intervention capacity. It would act as a co-ordinating body, which would keep under review issues such as the supply of places, the marketing of schools, the preparation and development of Jewish studies teachers and the curriculum.
- 6.2** However, other voices counselled caution. The ‘agency’ field in Jewish schooling is already somewhat crowded. The Agency for Jewish Education and Leo Baeck College already provide services valued by the schools within their denominational remit. The UJIA effectively acts as a de facto strategic agency to mainstream schools in the areas of curriculum and teacher training and development. The Board of Deputies operates similarly in the external relations between schools and the government, and also undertakes demographic and other research studies. The Board of Deputies and the UJIA work together to assure the quality of Jewish studies through Pikuach. Any new agency, it is argued, will have to find a role and space between the existing bodies or will require some amalgamation of the roles of the existing bodies. The first option is difficult because the space available is extremely limited, while the second option is likely to consume a great deal of energy and time in construction, without any assurance of a successful outcome.
- 6.3** A more fundamental difficulty with any strategic agency is that its powers would inevitably be extremely limited. Schools are either independent or, if they are maintained faith, are subject to the policies of national and local government rather than those of the Jewish community. Funding is usually the lever that the community can and often does use to influence schools to support change, but even here, as the experience of the Jewish Curriculum Partnership indicates, it can only persuade, not control.

## STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION GROUP

- 6.4** We see difficulties, therefore, in seeking to create a new agency whether ab initio or through bringing together and adapting existing agencies. We believe, however, there is a different way forward. In the course of this report we have made a number of recommendations that will require consideration by a range of different agencies and organisations. We hope that, in due course, these will be implemented by the relevant bodies. Some of these recommendations build on and support proposals made in previous reports, such as *Securing the Future*. There are a number of reasons why these proposals were not fully implemented previously, but one factor is that there was no single body responsible for accepting ownership, taking action and monitoring progress. We are anxious that this does not happen on this occasion, and therefore believe that responsibility for overseeing the implementation of our recommendations and taking ownership of

the report needs to be clearly identified. The Jewish Leadership Council (JLC), which commissioned this report, is the most obvious candidate. However, the JLC is configured to work at a strategic rather than an operational level.

- 6.5** We propose, therefore, that the JLC establishes a Schools Strategy Implementation Group (SSIG). Its functions would be to work with all the agencies and organisations involved, as well as the schools, to ensure that the issues set out in this report are kept under review and the recommendations are fully considered by the appropriate organisations and, if agreed, are implemented. We recommend that the strategy group has a three-year life. It should be constituted under the auspices of the JLC, with possibly an individual member of the JLC as its chairman. The President of the Board of Deputies and the Chairman of the UJIA should be appointed joint Presidents. The membership should consist of lay persons, in part appointed by nominating organisations, and in part appointed as independent members jointly by the Presidents and the Chairman. We envisage the membership including those nominated by the UJIA (two members to reflect its key funding role), the Board of Deputies and the central education agencies, together with a number of individually appointed members.
- 6.6** We expect that the group will need to meet about four times a year, and will be serviced by a part-time administrator. It would operate primarily through the various agencies, all of whom would have nominated members to the group, and it would report to the JLC every six months. It is important that the SSIG is supported by a professional support team, consisting of senior professionals from the main central agencies who would work with the administrator to ensure that implementation is taking place. To give two examples: in carrying out the important research we recommend, SSIG, through its professional support team, would work with the agencies to find the funding, set up a steering group, appoint researchers and monitor progress. If the Redbridge proposals are agreed, SSIG would work with the Redbridge schools and community to appoint someone to manage the changes agreed. It is important, therefore, if the momentum is not to be lost, that the SSIG be appointed as soon as possible to enable it to begin its work by September 2008.
- 6.7** In being tasked with implementing and keeping under review the policies recommended in this report, the group will be, in effect, a prototype strategic agency. Its work over the three-year life, which we recommend, will provide an opportunity for a judgement to be made at the end of the period on whether such an agency continues to be needed, and if so what form it should take.

**WE RECOMMEND** that 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.



Photo courtesy of John Rifkin

**A meeting of the Commission on Jewish Schools**

## **CONCLUSIONS**

**6.8** Our work over the last 12 months has generated a high level of interest and enthusiasm within Jewish schools and the central agencies that support them. Some momentum has been established and we expect this to be accelerated by the publication of our report. It is important that this enthusiasm is not dissipated or the momentum lost. It will take time for our conclusions and recommendations to be digested, but it is essential that consideration of the report and decisions about its implementation proceed with a degree of urgency, and with an agreed mechanism in place for so doing.

# Conclusions and Recommendations

## SECTION 1

### JEWISH SCHOOLS TODAY

Jewish schooling has never been stronger and Jewish schools are the great success story of Anglo-Jewry in the past 30 years. It is a success that deserves public recognition and celebration. Within the strictly orthodox sector, as the number of children continues to grow so does its demand for Jewish schooling. More remarkably perhaps, within the mainstream sector, demand also continues to grow as the pool of children gently declines. Academic standards in Jewish schools remain high. However, Jewish schools face many challenges: attracting more pupils in the future; maintaining their academic standards; improving their Jewish studies teaching; increasing their funding and responding to changing government education policies. In what follows, we identify how we believe they can best meet these challenges.

## SECTION 2

### NUMBERS

There is no doubt that the demand for Jewish schooling has picked up in recent years, particularly in areas of strong Jewish population, and that an increasing proportion of parents are demanding Jewish schooling for their children. We are confident, therefore, that the additional places provided in the primary sector in 2009 will be filled. We are cautiously optimistic about increased demand in the primary sector beyond 2009. Demand is likely to continue to grow in areas of strong Jewish population, but this may be accompanied by some less popular primary schools in other areas having to cope with falling numbers. Relocation and merger may be a way of adapting to these contrasting trends.

The increased places in secondary schooling provide a much greater challenge. We accept that both existing and new schools will widen the market by continuing to attract parents previously less interested in Jewish schooling for their children. The crucial question is whether the recent increase in demand heralds a step-change in parental attitudes to Jewish schools and in-depth research is needed on this. Better information needs to be provided for parents about the range of Jewish schools. More sophisticated, systematic and sustained marketing as we have advocated will be essential to stimulate further growth. Even then, it is likely that more than one secondary school will be enrolling non-Jewish children in the near future. It is important that any school finding itself in this position prepares itself, and its parents and pupils, for this eventuality to ensure that the positive experiences from such a situation are maximised. The experience in Liverpool in particular is one that schools might wish to understand better.

Finally, we believe urgent action is required to ensure the schools in Redbridge remain viable, and that both the Manchester and Leeds Jewish communities will benefit from an increased number of Leeds children attending King David High School in Manchester, supported by a more formal relationship between the two.

**WE RECOMMEND THAT:**

- 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. (Para 2.20)
- 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. (Para 2.27)
- a Jewish schools information website be established. (Para 2.27)
- 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. (Para 2.35)
- 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. (Para 2.46)
- King David High School in Manchester and the Leeds Jewish Community consider favourably the establishment of a formal relationship that recognises King David High School 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. (Para 2.52)

**SECTION 3****TEACHING AND LEARNING**

The Jewish environment of a Jewish school is its *raison d'être*. The Jewish Curriculum Partnership could have a major impact on the quality of Jewish studies provision in the future and should be shared as widely as possible. Ivrit teaching has been patchy, but the requirement from 2010 that all maintained primary schools teach a foreign language provides an exciting opportunity to strengthen Ivrit provision.

At the heart of our recommendations is the need to raise the professional standing, self-esteem and public esteem of Jewish studies teachers. The first step towards achieving this is an acceptance that new teachers, at least, should be professionally qualified, achieving the same status as other teachers in the school. For all teachers, there should be an entitlement to a personal development plan linked to appraisal and access to a sustained and systematic programme of professional development. The scheme should be driven centrally by a director of continuing professional development. In due course, CPD should be managed by schools through ring-fenced budgets.

New schemes such as 'Teach Jewish First' should be established to attract the best and brightest of our young people into Jewish studies teaching, and information on what posts and training routes are available should be made more accessible through a new website. The inspection of Jewish studies provision should be extended to include a review of the objectives and standards schools are seeking to achieve.

**WE RECOMMEND THAT:**

- 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. (Para 3.5)
- 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. (Para 3.7)
- all new Jewish studies staff have a professional teacher training qualification, and that schools take responsibility for ensuring that unqualified teachers have the opportunity to gain Qualified Teacher Status. (Para 3.10)
- a 'Teach Jewish First' scheme be established, modelled on the national Teach First scheme and be marketed to students before they graduate. (Para 3.14)
- 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. (Para 3.15)
- the relevant central agencies help schools consider whether a more collaborative approach might address some of the teacher supply and development issues they face. (Para 3.16)
- 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. (Para 3.19)
- plans be developed to move towards a schools-based system of allocating funds for the professional development of Jewish studies teachers. (Para 3.21)
- given the very high impact of informal education, a feasibility study be undertaken of the viability of securing a suitable centre for the residential use of schools. (Para 3.22)

- 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. (Para 3.24)
- a full review of special educational needs provision be carried out, involving full consultation with parents, schools and current SEN providers. (Para 3.32)

## **SECTION 4**

### **FUNDING AND FINANCE**

Parental voluntary contributions will remain the main source of funding for Jewish studies and security costs in maintained faith schools. It is important that research is carried out on parental attitudes to these contributions and to identify ways in which the numbers contributing can be increased. Finance is a key issue for the majority of strictly orthodox schools, which are independent. It is important that these schools consider carefully the benefits of becoming maintained faith schools. While a substantial increase in the salaries of Jewish studies teachers is not supported, synagogues and schools should help to reduce the costs of orthodox Jewish living by lowering the fees and contributions payable by Jewish studies teachers.

Funding to support improvements in the teaching and learning of Jewish studies needs to be substantially increased. The feasibility of establishing an endowment fund that could contribute to the recurrent funding of Jewish schools should be examined by an expert group. Part of the proceeds of any communal asset that is sold could be contributed to this endowment fund.

#### **WE RECOMMEND THAT:**

- research be carried out on parental attitudes to voluntary contributions, and ways of increasing the numbers contributing should be identified. (Para 4.5)
- 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 developed further. (Para 4.15)
- an expert group examine the feasibility of establishing an endowment scheme, the income from which would contribute to the recurrent funding of Jewish schools. (Para 4.22)

## **SECTION 5**

### **THE POLITICAL AND EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT**

The political and educational environment is very important to the development of Jewish schools. Until recently, this environment has been viewed positively in the community. Over the past decade, it has enabled the number of Jewish schools to increase significantly and others to expand. The debate over the admissions quota and the School Admissions Code emphasised the need for the relationship between the community and the Government to be strengthened. It is understandable if, in the light of this debate, some strictly orthodox schools contemplating a change to maintained faith status have had second thoughts. Many of these schools are under-resourced and need better facilities, but they also hold steadfastly to their principles. We hope that the experience of those strictly orthodox schools that

have transferred to maintained faith status will give encouragement to others, and that the DCSF can provide the assurances they need. Notwithstanding recent events, we believe that the external environment provides far more opportunities than threats for all our schools, and we encourage them to take full advantage of the opportunities available.

**WE RECOMMEND THAT:**

- 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. (Para 5.4)
- 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. (Para 5.14)

**SECTION 6**

**LOOKING TO THE FUTURE**

Our work over the last 12 months has generated a high level of interest and enthusiasm within Jewish schools and the central agencies that support them. Some momentum has been established and we expect this to be accelerated by the publication of our report. It is important that this enthusiasm is not dissipated or the momentum lost. It will take time for our conclusions and recommendations to be digested, but it is essential that consideration of the report and decisions about its implementation proceed with a degree of urgency, and with an agreed mechanism in place for so doing.

**WE RECOMMEND THAT:**

- 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. (Para 6.7)

## APPENDIX 1

## Members of the Commission

**Professor Leslie Wagner CBE, Chairman**

Professor Leslie Wagner is the Chancellor of the University of Derby and was Vice Chancellor of Leeds Metropolitan University from 1994 to 2003. He is a member of the Chief Rabbinate Trust and of the Jewish Chronicle Trust, and some years ago undertook the review of Jewish Continuity that led to the formation of UJIA.

**Sarah Anticoni**

Sarah Anticoni 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 is also on the Board of Shomrei Hadath Federation Synagogue. She is married to Jonathan Seitler QC and has close family links to the Sephardic community. Her two children attended North West London Jewish Day School.

**Bill Benjamin**

William Benjamin is Managing Director of Apollo Real Estate Advisors (UK) Ltd, 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 and is married with three children, all of whom attend Naima Jewish Preparatory School.

**Tony Danker**

Tony Danker is a management consultant with a focus on government and the wider public sector. He was previously on the UJIA Renewal Executive, chairing the research and development group. He began his career working in the Jewish community as UJS Chairperson and then in the Office of the Chief Rabbi. He is married with two children.

**Tamara Finkelstein**

Tamara Finkelstein is an active member of New North London Synagogue and has been involved in a range of Jewish communal organisations, including most recently being a member of the Steering Group of the London Jewish Forum. In her professional life she is a Director at the Treasury. She lives in North London with her husband and three children.

**Aviva Kaufmann**

Aviva Kaufmann is an active member of Hampstead Garden Suburb Synagogue and a former board member, with particular interest in facilities for families and children. A mother of three, she is a governor of her children's school. She has been involved in both formal and informal Jewish education for many years.

**Jonathan Kestenbaum**

Jonathan Kestenbaum is the Chief Executive of NESTA, the National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts. Prior to this he has been Chief Executive of The Portland Trust, Chief Executive of UJIA and Executive Director of the Office of the Chief Rabbi. He is on the Board of the Design Council, the Technology Strategy Board and the Royal Shakespeare Company.

**Ivan Lewis MP**

Ivan Lewis is MP for Bury South and a Minister in the Department for Health. Prior to being elected as MP, Ivan worked in the local voluntary sector and was latterly Chief Executive of the Manchester Jewish Federation. He is a Trustee of the Holocaust Educational Trust, Vice Chairman of Labour Friends of Israel and an Executive Committee Member of the Commonwealth Jewish Council.

**Professor Kate Loewenthal**

Professor Kate Loewenthal is an academic psychologist with research interests in religion and well-being, and has published many articles on aspects of well-being in the Jewish community, including several studies involving Jewish schools. She is a school governor.

**Leo Noé**

Leo Noé is an active participant in education strategy and planning projects. He has a particular and keen interest in special needs education with involvements at communal and government level in both the UK and Israel, where, through the Rachel Charitable Trust, he is a major benefactor across all levels of the education field.

**Gerald Rothman**

Gerald Rothman 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, was the chairman of the Leo Baeck College, and is married to Elaina, who is a Reform Rabbi.

## APPENDIX 2

# Staff team

### **Professional Support**

**Alastair Falk**, Secretary to the Commission, Director of Educational Leadership, UJIA

**Alex Goldberg**, Community Issues Director, the Board of Deputies of British Jews

**Jeremy Newmark**, Chief Executive, the Jewish Leadership Council

### **Administrative Support**

**Lira Winston**, Project Manager

**Zippy Myers**, Administrator

## APPENDIX 3

## Submissions, Meetings and Visits

The Commission would like to record its appreciation to the following organisations and individuals who submitted responses to the Consultation Document, met with commissioners or hosted a visit by them.

### Submissions

- Akiva School – Mrs Sue de Botton (Headteacher)
- Akiva School – Mr Philip Simmons (Chair of Governors)
- Belsize Square Synagogue – Jeanie Horowitz (Head of Cheder) and Alison Melzak (Head of Nursery)
- The Board of Deputies of British Jews
- Central Orthodox Communities Commission Advisory Group
- Mr Mick L. Davis
- Delamere Forest School – Mr Harvey Burman (Headteacher)
- Mr Murray Freedman
- Mr Michael Gillis – Head of Jewish Studies, King David High School, Liverpool
- Head Teachers Commission Advisory Group
- Ilford Jewish Primary School, Mrs Roz Levin (Headteacher)
- Immanuel College – Mr Philip Skelker (Headteacher)
- JCoSS (Jewish Community Secondary School)
- Jewish Aids Trust
- Jewish Care
- JFS - Mr Russell Kett (Chair of Governors)
- JFS - Mr Jonathan Miller (Headteacher)
- Kerem School – Mrs Ros Goulden (Headteacher)
- King Solomon High School – Mr Spencer Lewis (Headteacher)
- Leo Baeck College – Rabbi Michael Shire (Vice Principal)
- Leo Baeck College – Ms Golda Zafer-Smith (Interim Director of Education and Professional Development)
- Mr David Lerner
- Lubavitch Girls Senior School – Rabbi Shmuel Lew (Headteacher)
- Menorah Foundation School – Mr Adrian Jacobs (Chair of Governors)
- Menorah Primary School – Mr J Wolinsky (Chair of Governors)
- Naima Jewish Preparatory School – Mr Michael Cohen (Headteacher)
- Norwood – Mrs Norma Brier (Chief Executive)
- Pikuach – Dr Helena Miller (Director)
- Reform Liberal and Masorti Commission Advisory Group
- Reform, Liberal and Masorti Movements
- Redbridge Schools – Mr Daniel Carmel Brown, Dr Richard Burack, Mrs Hilary Segall, Mrs Pat Stanton (Governors)
- Mrs Jemima Samuels – Parent, Calderwood Lodge Jewish Primary School

- Simon Marks Jewish Primary School – Mr Laurie Rosenberg (Headteacher)
- Mrs Yael Simon – Parent, Menorah Girls School
- Mrs Pat Stanton
- Torah Temimah Primary School – Rabbi E Klyne (Headteacher)
- UJIA - Mr Doug Krikler (Chief Executive)
- Mr Arnold Wagner OBE – Jewish Curriculum Partnership (Chair)
- Yavneh College – Dr Dena Coleman (Headteacher)
- Yesodey Hatorah Schools – Rabbi Avrohom Pinter (Principal)

#### **Expert Witnesses at Commission meetings**

- Mr Gabriel Goldstein
- Mrs Naomi Greenwood, Chair, Jewish Teacher Training Partnership
- Ms Sinead O’Sullivan, Deputy Director, Department for Children, Schools and Families
- Mr David Triggs, CEO of Greensward College
- Mr Daniel Vulkan and Mr David Graham, Board of Deputies of British Jews Community Policy Research Group (CPRG)

#### **Meetings**

- Rabbi Dr Tony Bayfield, Chief Executive, Reform Synagogues of Great Britain
- Mr Ron Beller, ARK (Absolute Return for Kids)
- Ms Norma Brier, Chief Executive, Norwood
- Central Orthodox Communities Commission Advisory Group
- Mr Mark Cohen, formerly head of Board of Jewish Education, Johannesburg
- Mr Mick Davis, Chair, UJIA
- Mr Jonathan Faith, Chair, Aish Hatorah
- Mr Henry Grunwald, President, Board of Deputies of British Jews
- Rabbi Guttentag, Rabbi, Whitefield Synagogue
- Heads of Jewish Studies in Orthodox Primary Schools
- Heads of Jewish Studies in London Secondary Schools
- Head Teachers Commission Advisory Group
- JCoSS, Jewish Community Secondary Schools
- Mr Clive Lawton
- Rabbi Dr. Abraham Levy, Spanish & Portuguese Synagogue and Principal, Naima JPS
- Dr Nasatir, Mr Peter Freedman, Mr Jeff King, Members JUF Chicago (by Video Conference)
- Mr Benjamin Perl, Huntingdon Foundation
- Rabbi Avrohom Pinter, Principal, Yesodey Hatorah Schools
- Redbridge Schools, Heads and Chairs of Governors
- Chief Rabbi Sir Jonathan Sacks
- Reform, Liberal and Masorti Commission Advisory Group
- UJIA
- Mr Arnold Wagner OBE, Chair, Jewish Curriculum Partnership

**Visits**

- Clore Tikva Primary School
- Hasmonean High School
- Immanuel College
- JFS
- King David High School, Liverpool
- King David High School, Manchester
- King Solomon High School
- Simon Marks Jewish Primary School
- Yavneh College
- Yesodey Hatorah Senior Girls School

## APPENDIX 4

## Mainstream Primary School Enrolments

Region	Name of School	LA	Funding	Gender	Enrolment	
					2005-06	2006-07
London NW	Akiva School	Barnet	Ind	Mixed	154	183
London NW	Clore Shalom School	Hertfordshire	VA	Mixed	209	210
London NW	Edgware Jewish Primary School	Barnet	Ind	Mixed	n/a	31
London NW	Hasmonean Primary School	Barnet	VA	Mixed	216	211
London NW	Hertsmeare Primary School	Hertfordshire	VA	Mixed	421	420
London NW	Independent Jewish Day School	Barnet	VA	Mixed	184	185
London NW	Kerem School	Barnet	Ind	Mixed	168	168
London NW	Mathilda Marks-Kennedy Jewish Primary School	Barnet	VA	Mixed	181	193
London NW	Michael Sobell Sinai School	Brent	VA	Mixed	597	589
London NW	Moriah Jewish Day School	Harrow	VA	Mixed	185	193
London NW	Naima Jewish Preparatory School	Westminster	Ind	Mixed	144	148
London NW	Noam Primary School	Brent	Ind	Mixed	108	109
London NW	North West London Jewish Day School	Brent	VA	Mixed	248	238
London NW	Rosh Pinah Primary School	Barnet	VA	Mixed	418	407
London NW	Simon Marks Jewish Primary School	Hackney	VA	Mixed	133	143
London NW	Wolfson Hillel Primary School	Enfield	VA	Mixed	418	412
London NE	Clore Tikva Primary School	Redbridge	VA	Mixed	372	394
London NE	Ilford Jewish Primary School	Redbridge	VA	Mixed	289	262
Manchester	Bury and Whitefield Jewish Primary School	Bury	VA	Mixed	157	155
Manchester	King David Infant School	Manchester	VA	Mixed	165	167
Manchester	King David Junior School	Manchester	VA	Mixed	310	288
Manchester	North Cheshire Jewish Primary School	Stockport	VA	Mixed	248	265
Birmingham	King David Primary School	Birmingham	VA	Mixed	201	206
Brighton	Torah Academy (Closed in 2007)	Brighton and Hove	Ind	Mixed	33	16
Glasgow	Calderwood Lodge Jewish Primary School	East Renfrewshire	LA	Mixed	207	147
Leeds	Brodetsky Primary School	Leeds	VA	Mixed	276	244
Liverpool	King David Primary School	Liverpool	VA	Mixed	412	409

## Mainstream Secondary School Enrolments

Region	Name of School	LA	Funding	Gender	Enrolment	
					2005-06	2006-07
London NW	Hasmonean High School	Barnet	VA	Mixed	1084	1044
London NW	Immanuel College	Hertfordshire	Ind	Mixed	555	520
London NW	JFS	Brent	VA	Mixed	1864	1931
London NW	Yavneh College	Hertfordshire	VA	Mixed	–	93
London NE	King Solomon High School	Redbridge	VA	Mixed	935	909
Manchester	King David High School	Manchester	VA	Mixed	834	860
Liverpool	King David High School	Liverpool	VA	Mixed	606	625

## Strictly Orthodox Primary and Secondary School Enrolments

Region	Name of School	LA	Funding	Age Group	Gender	Enrolment 2005-06
London	Avigdor Hirsch Torah Temimah Primary School	Brent	VA	Primary	Boys	166
London	Beis Aharon School	Hackney	Ind	Prim/Sec	Boys	205
London	Beis Chinuch Lebonos Girls School	Hackney	Ind	Prim/Sec	Girls	383
London	Beis Hamedrash Elyon	Barnet	Ind	Secondary	Boys	45
London	Beis Malka Girls School	Hackney	Ind	Prim/Sec	Girls	302
London	Beis Rochel d'Satmar Girls' School	Hackney	Ind	Prim/Sec	Girls	726
London	Beis Soroh Schneirer	Barnet	Ind	Primary	Girls	175
London	Beis Trana Girls' School	Hackney	Ind	Prim/Sec	Girls	125
London	Beis Yaakov Primary School	Barnet	VA	Primary	Girls	381
London	Beth Jacob Grammar School for Girls	Barnet	Ind	Secondary	Girls	264
London	Bnois Jerusalem School	Hackney	Ind	Prim/Sec	Girls	380
London	Getters Talmud Torah	Hackney	Ind	Prim/Sec	Boys	150
London	London Jewish Girls' High School	Barnet	Ind	Secondary	Girls	91
London	Lubavitch Boys Primary School	Hackney	Ind	Prim/Sec	Boys	131
London	Lubavitch (Ruth Lunzer) Girls Primary School	Hackney	VA	Primary	Girls	122
London	Lubavitch Senior Girls School	Hackney	Ind	Secondary	Girls	107
London	Menorah Foundation School	Barnet	VA	Primary	Mixed	207
London	Menorah Grammar School	Barnet	Ind	Secondary	Boys	203
London	Menorah High School for Girls	Brent	Ind	Secondary	Girls	126

Region	Name of School	LA	Funding	Age Group	Gender	Enrolment 2005–06
London	Menorah Primary School	Barnet	VA	Primary	Mixed	378
London	Nancy Reuben (OYH) School	Barnet	Ind	Primary	Mixed	122
London	Pardes House Grammar School	Barnet	Ind	Secondary	Boys	222
London	Pardes House Primary School	Barnet	VA	Primary	Boys	207
London	Talmud Torah Bobov Primary School	Hackney	Ind	Prim/Sec	Boys	270
London	Talmud Torah Chaim Meirim School	Hackney	Ind	Prim/Sec	Boys	208
London	Talmud Torah Machzikei Hadass School	Hackney	Ind	Prim/Sec	Boys	235
London	Talmud Torah Tiferes Shlomoh	Barnet	Ind	Primary	Boys	93
London	Talmud Torah Toldos Yaakov Yosef School	Hackney	Ind	Prim/Sec	Boys	161
London	Talmud Torah Torat Emet	Barnet	Ind	Primary	Boys	19
London	Talmud Torah Yetev Lev D'Satmar	Hackney	Ind	Prim/Sec	Boys	480
London	Tashbar of Edgware	Barnet	Ind	Primary	Mixed	7
London	Torah Vodaas	Barnet	Ind	Primary	Boys	106
London	Yesodey Hatorah School	Hackney	Ind	Prim/Sec	Mixed	509
London	Yesodey Hatorah Senior Girls School	Hackney	VA	Secondary	Girls	231
Manchester	Beis Rochel Girls' School	Manchester	Ind	Prim/Sec	Girls	201
Manchester	Beis Yaakov High School	Salford	VA	Secondary	Girls	193
Manchester	Bnos Yisroel Schools	Salford	Ind	Prim/Sec	Girls	418
Manchester	Broughton Jewish Cassel Fox Primary School	Salford	VA	Primary	Mixed	311
Manchester	Etz Chaim School	Manchester	Ind	Secondary	Boys	98
Manchester	Jewish Senior Boys' School	Salford	Ind	Secondary	Boys	37
Manchester	Manchester Junior Girls' School	Salford	Ind	Primary	Girls	172
Manchester	Manchester Mesivta School	Bury	VA	Secondary	Boys	166
Manchester	Mechinoh School	Salford	Ind	Secondary	Boys	64
Manchester	OYY Lubavitch Girls' School	Salford	Ind	Prim/Sec	Mixed	68
Manchester	Talmud Torah Chinuch Norim School	Salford	Ind	Prim/Sec	Boys	185
Manchester	Talmud Torah Yetev Lev	Salford	Ind	Prim/Sec	Boys	123
Manchester	Tashbar School	Salford	Ind	Primary	Boys	285
Manchester	Yeshivah Ohr Torah School	Salford	Ind	Secondary	Boys	40
Manchester	Yesoiday Hatorah School	Bury	VA	Primary	Mixed	455
Gateshead	Gateshead Jewish Boys Day School	Gateshead	Ind	Secondary	Boys	105
Gateshead	Gateshead Jewish High School for Girls	Gateshead	Ind	Secondary	Girls	144
Gateshead	Gateshead Jewish Nursery School	Gateshead	Ind	Primary	Mixed	79
Gateshead	Gateshead Jewish Primary School	Gateshead	Ind	Primary	Mixed	427
Leeds	Leeds Menorah School	Leeds	Ind	Prim/Sec	Mixed	48

## APPENDIX 5

## Summary of recent research on parental choice of Jewish schools

- 1 The main sociological research into attitudes to Jewish schooling in the last decade has been carried out by the Institute for Jewish Policy Research (JPR) with contributions also from the Board of Deputies Community Research Group.

### THE FUTURE OF JEWISH SCHOOLING

- 2 As part of its *Long Term Planning for British Jewry* project completed in 2003, the JPR published a comprehensive report on *The Future of Jewish Schooling* in 2001. Using mainly secondary sources, but also in-depth interviews with professionals and parents, the report provides an insight into the position of Jewish schooling at the beginning of this millennium. Chapter 9, 'The Educational Marketplace: How Jewish Parents Choose Between Different Schools' is particularly relevant to our concerns here.
- 3 Based on qualitative interviews, the researchers identified four themes as central to parental choice. In order of importance, the first was **academic standards**, particularly at secondary level, although many parents, particularly those intending to send their child to a selective (independent) secondary school, were also concerned about primary school standards. The researchers found this overriding concern with standards was reflected in some strictly orthodox schools as well as mainstream schools. *'One head teacher believed that the rapid growth in Jewish day schools, at least for mainstream schools, is due in part to recent publicity about high academic standards.'*
- 4 The second theme was **school ethos**. However, this meant different things to different groups of parents. For some, it was the social and cultural rather than the specifically religious aspect of Jewish schools that was the most important aspect of ethos. This included having Jewish friends, a greater sense of Jewish identity, a warm family feeling and a school calendar geared to a Jewish way of life and thinking. For others, mainly the more observant, it was the religious knowledge, skills and commitment that the school would provide that were most important. These parents were sometimes dissatisfied with the levels of learning that mainstream schools provided, and also complained that there were insufficient other children of the same standard of observance to enable their children to make friends, visit each other's homes and so on. The final interpretation of ethos was isolation from non-Jewish children, although here the views were more varied. Those in mainstream schools who supported the idea argued that their children still lived, outside school, in the wider world absorbing the culture and mixing with non-Jews. Others were worried about the possible effects.

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- 5 The third theme was **geographical location** and in particular, travelling time to school. This prevents many children outside the main areas of Jewish population having access to Jewish schools, particularly at the primary level. Parents also preferred schools close by to enable their children to make friends more easily, for extra-curricular activities, to ensure the school day is not too long and to minimise travel time. However, while most parents regarded this as the ideal, they were willing to travel for a good school. Academic standards remained the dominant factor.
- 6 The final theme was **added values**, which covered a range of activities, such as sporting and IT facilities, music teaching and extra-curricular activities. These factors will have a greater influence on which Jewish school a child attends rather than be the determining factor of a Jewish versus a non-Jewish school.
- 7 The researchers point out that, while academic standards and school ethos are, in that order, the two most important factors in parental choice of a Jewish school, *‘there is no simple hierarchy of parental wants and requirements. Parents have differing requirements depending on factors such as their religious observance, whether their child has special needs or their geographical distance from a preferred school.’* They also point out that this range of factors limits the practical choice parents may have when deciding on a school. *‘For those preferring Jewish day schools, there are choices about the particular religious, cultural or Zionist affiliations of institutions, with schools ranging from Progressive to central Orthodox, to strictly Orthodox....The reality is that many schools are unavailable to parents because of a variety of factors such as halachic or religious practice criteria, geographical distance, a lack of places and cost.’*

## THE JEWISH DAY SCHOOL MARKET PLACE

- 8 As a follow up to *The Future of Jewish Schooling* and also as part of its long term planning project, the JPR conducted a more in-depth survey in 2002 of Jews living in London and the South East, focusing on parents with children aged 16 and under. The report was published in 2003 with the title, *The Jewish Day School Market Place: The attitudes of Jewish parents in Greater London and the South-East towards formal education*. The total number of respondents was 840 households, of whom 356 (42 per cent) had chosen to educate at least one child in a Jewish school and 484 who had not. Some of the latter group had children under five and had not yet made a choice of school. The survey did not include Stamford Hill, because it was the subject of a separate report and under-represented unaffiliated Jews, who are harder to find and tend to have a lower response rate. However, the report claims that it *‘provides an extremely comprehensive picture of the remainder of London Jewry, from those who describe themselves as non-practising, through Progressive Jews, to those who consider themselves (modern) Orthodox.’*
- 9 The large sample and the detailed nature of the questionnaire produced a rich and comprehensive range of insights into parental choice of and attitudes towards Jewish schooling. The main general findings are summarised as follows:
- 31 per cent of parents of primary school children and 27 per cent of parents of secondary school children sent their children only to non-Jewish independent schools. In addition, 16 per

cent of primary school parents and 48 per cent of secondary school parents sent their children to a combination of Jewish and non-Jewish schools. This would seem to indicate that, at secondary level particularly, many families split their choice of school depending on their judgement of their children's needs.

- Parents who send their children to Jewish schools are generally likely to have larger families, lower household income and lower levels of higher education qualification than those who do not.
- There were small differences in choice of school related to religious upbringing, with those having had a more observant upbringing being slightly more likely to send their children to Jewish schools. In terms of current religious practice, the differences were more marked, with mainstream orthodox parents more likely to send their children to Jewish schools, and progressive and Masorti parents more likely to send their children to non-Jewish schools.
- Parents who sent their children to Jewish day schools were generally more observant than those who did not. For example 33 per cent compared to 5 per cent never travelled on Shabbat; 42 per cent compared to 16 per cent attended synagogue most Shabbatot or more often; and 55 per cent compared to 22 per cent were not willing to eat non-kosher food outside the home.
- Among those parents who chose to send at least one of their children to a Jewish primary school, the most important factors influencing their decision were, first, that there was insufficient Jewish education at general schools; second, that these schools were a logical follow-on from Jewish nurseries and third, that Jewish day schools provided a protective environment. Interestingly, the fact that general education standards were higher than in neighbouring non-Jewish schools was cited as a factor by less than half the respondents.
- On secondary education, parents were asked to agree or disagree with a number of statements. The most support among parents who sent their children to Jewish day schools was for the statement '*Jewish children should attend a Jewish secondary school irrespective of cost*', while the most support among parents who sent their children to non-Jewish schools was the statement that '*a non-Jewish secondary school is fine if it has sufficient Jewish pupils*'. Interestingly, this elicited significant support among Jewish school parents too, and both sets of parents also supported the statement that '*a Jewish secondary school would be fine if it had a secular cultural outlook*'.
- In choosing which particular school their children should attend, parents who sent their children to Jewish secondary schools cited ethos, number of other Jewish children at the school, and quality of teaching and academic standards. Parents who sent their children to non-Jewish secondary schools put quality of teaching and academic standards first, followed by school ethos and the views of friends.

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- 10 To obtain greater insight into the responses, the researchers differentiated them by geographical area, distinguishing between outer and inner North West London (broadly divided by the North Circular Road) and North East London. The response rate from South London was too small for meaningful conclusions to be drawn. The responses from North East London were large enough for indicative rather than definitive conclusions to be made. Nevertheless, some interesting differences appear.
- 11 Parents in inner North West London were, by some way, the most likely to send their children to general (non-Jewish) independent schools, and this also correlates with their higher income levels. Around half of Jewish parents in outer North West and North East London sent their children to Jewish primary schools compared with only a quarter in the inner North West London sector. At secondary level, the percentage in North East London remained at 50 per cent but in outer North West it fell to 40 per cent and in inner North West it fell to 17 per cent. In terms of religious practice and beliefs, these were stronger among outer North West London parents than those in inner North West London who were, in turn, stronger than those in North East London. In terms of fasting on Yom Kippur, for example, the respective figures were 78, 74 and 48 per cent. In terms of never travelling on Shabbat, the figures were 21, 16 and 9 per cent.

#### WHO CHOOSES? WHO LOSES?

- 12 Rona Hart, then head of the Board of Deputies Community Research Group reported in *The Jewish Educator* in 2006 on a study of the choice of secondary schools among families living in North West London and Hertfordshire. The methodology was a qualitative study through in-depth interviews of 25 parents. The group covered those who had chosen Jewish schools and those who had not, across the religious spectrum, apart from strictly orthodox. All families were middle class although there was a range inside this broad definition.
- 13 The group was differentiated primarily in terms of their status and standing within their religious community. 'Central choosers' were defined as centrally positioned within their communities, with close, consistent, devoted and longstanding ties. Synagogue attendance was regular and they undertook leadership roles. They were upper middle class and many were self-employed. This group included the most highly observant families in the sample, and they were knowledgeable about Judaism and highly involved with Jewish youth organisations in their teens. These families customarily enrolled their children in non-Jewish, selective, high-achieving secondary schools, most of which were fee-paying. However, they chose schools that customarily took a significant number of Jews, and stressed that they would not send their children to these schools if they were the only Jewish child at the school. The children were all members of Jewish youth clubs or movements and most were engaged in supplementary Jewish education. The report on this group concludes as follows: *'Perhaps the most subtle but distinct character of this group was the sense of confidence that they displayed both in their Jewish knowledge and in their capacity to socialise their children to adhere to their chosen Jewish way of life. The sense of confidence was unique to this group and uncommon among other groups of choosers... and was reflected in their argument that their children's Jewish education and identities will not be hampered by attending a non-Jewish secondary school.'*

- 14 'Midway choosers' were less well-educated and less affluent than their central peers. They were involved in their communities, but held marginal or minor roles, and were involved in few other Jewish organisations. They were on average less observant and had less Jewish knowledge than the central group. This group showed a marked tendency to enrol their children in Jewish secondary schools, and most had enrolled their children in Jewish schools from the nursery stage onwards. Most of the children were members of Jewish youth organisations. Most parents expected the school to be their children's primary socialisation agent for Jewish life, and saw this being delivered by the school's intake more than the formal Jewish education.
- 15 The third group were designated 'marginal choosers', half of whom did not live in close proximity to a local Jewish community and had limited access to their synagogue congregations. The group as a whole had lower and irregular contact with their synagogues, with a limited sense of belonging and attachment. They were less observant and had less Jewish knowledge, and few attended a Jewish youth club. They typically enrolled their children in non-Jewish secondary schools, some fee-paying and some the local comprehensive. The children generally attended Cheder up to bar mitzvah but not subsequently, and few were members of Jewish youth clubs. Most parents never seriously considered Jewish schools as a viable option.
- 16 The research concludes that the central group, while prominent in their communities, are not likely to promote the establishment of new Jewish secondary schools. The best target group are *'those who may be able but less confident about their capacity to socialise their children into Jewish life.'* It also argues that the Jewish educational needs of the 'marginal choosers' seem to be unidentified and unmet, and asks whether these families are included in the school's 'awareness zones'.

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## APPENDIX 6

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