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Editor: Gene V Glass,Glass@ASU.EDU. College of Education,
Arizona State University,Tempe AZ 85287-2411

Opening up Jewish Education to Inspection: the Impact of the OFSTED Inspection System in England

Judy Keiner
University of Reading

J.C.Keiner@reading.ac.uk

Abstract: Although Jewish schools in England are generally deemed successful, internal communal surveys have highlighted concerns about their teaching of Jewish studies and modern Hebrew. The UK government in 1993 established detailed national criteria for four-yearly published inspections of all schools. This imposed the need to develop criteria for the evaluation of these specifically Jewish subjects, and both schools and foundation bodies have begun to respond through training and development activities. Analysis of the first published reports, shows evidence of mismatch between Jewish schools' aims for Jewish Studies and their practice. Common findings on modern Hebrew teaching indicate concerns about planning, methodology and assessment. The response of Jewish communal bodies is explored, showing an increasing focus and some rivalry towards servicing the inspection and development needs of Jewish schools. Jewish communal press reporting and parental response to inspection is considered.

Historical background to the Jewish school system in England

England is always different. This statement is true for almost any aspect of education policy or provision you might care to analyse. The reason for that is largely to do with the particular history of English education, and the historical penchant of English policy and practice for combining evolutionary and incremental change. Not surprisingly, Jewish schools in England are different too. Since World War II, there has been a great rise in the number of Jewish primary schools established within the state

system, which now includes twenty five state-aided primary and secondary schools, of which one new primary and one secondary school were established in the last three years (Note 1).There is a further substantial number of independent Jewish schools which do not receive any state aid, but which have tax-free charitable status. Of these schools, a small minority offer the similar combinations of secular and religious studies as their state-aided equivalent. The remaining schools are maintained by the most strictly orthodox, mainly separatist communities, including Chassidic communities, which in the UK number less than five per cent of the total Jewish community of around 275,000. The medium of instruction in many of these schools is Yiddish, and the courses of study are almost entirely centered on traditional sacred texts, with only a small proportion of time given to the teaching in English of English, mathematics and other secular subjects.

Five further new Jewish schools are in the advanced stages of planning, and plans to incorporate three formerly independent existing schools into the state aided system are also in their final stages. Whilst in the wider world, England is often assumed to be synonymous with the UK as a whole, the school system in Scotland is again different and autonomous. In Wales and Ireland, although very closely tied to the English school system, the school systems are under the auspices of the respective regional administrations. All Jewish schools in the UK are under the English administration apart from one primary school in Scotland.

The status of Jewish schools in England differs from other diaspora countries. In most countries, Jewish schools are private, receiving little or no state aid. But the history of mass provision for schooling in England began largely through the initiatives of Christian church foundation bodies setting up schools piecemeal, with dramatic rises in the number of schools in the wake of early nineteenth century industrialization. There was effectively an unevenly distributed but still nationwide network of church schools before 1850. The state began giving aid to these voluntarily established schools in the mid nineteenth century. As early as 1853 (Alderman (1989) p.16), England first gave the then very small number of Jewish schools state support, and then gradually absorbed them into the English state funded system (Note 2). This was achieved without any significant controversy (Note 3) as far as Jewish schools were concerned, since the state funding has always been solely for the secular subjects taught at the school, as well as a half of the cost of buildings. Such controversy as there was in the early years of the twentieth century, when the current state system of aiding voluntary schools was established, centered almost entirely on state subsidies to Roman Catholic schools, under the inflammatory banner of protests against "Rome on the rates".

From the end of World War I until the early 1960s, there were fewer than ten state aided Jewish schools in total, the vast majority of Jewish children attending secular state schools. That system offered much prized opportunities to enter elite educational institutions via competitive selection for prestigious state-aided day schools. This was the major route of social mobility and assimilation for the daughters and sons of Jewish immigrants, who were disproportionately successful in gaining places and scholarships.

The rising popularity of Jewish schools since the 1960s

In the early 1960s, a combination of catalysts began to shift Jewish communal and parental priorities towards Jewish schools. There was an accelerating process of moving out from inner cities into outer suburbs, fueled by much wider availability of low-cost mortgages. Under the Labour administrations of that period, state selective schools were increasingly abolished or converted into fully comprehensive all-ability intake schools. There were the beginnings of media-fueled parental anxieties about ethnic conflicts and

underachievement in schools as substantial communities from the "New Commonwealth" countries of the Caribbean and Indian sub-continent settled in the UK, mainly in the inner cities and some of the outer London suburbs previously much favored by Jewish communities.

With the new growth in the popularity of Jewish schools at this time, the Zionist Federation Educational Trust (ZFET) emerged as the foundation body responsible for the largest number of Jewish schools (Note 4). By the early 1990s ZFET was the foundation body for four thousand children in their schools. The ZFET schools strongly promoted the teaching of Hebrew as a modern language, with a focus on Israel as great or even greater than that on the promotion of Judaism being their raison d'etre. The orthodox United Synagogue, the largest synagogal body in the UK, established a smaller number of schools in the London area, being responsible by the early 1990s for over two thousand four hundred pupils. Still other Jewish schools, particularly in the provinces, were independent organizations.

Jewish schools in the UK never followed any single agreed common religious education syllabus. The main Jewish voluntary organization responsible for religious education in the early post-war years was the London Board of Jewish Religious Education, founded in 1946, whose main responsibility was for organizing after-school and Sunday religious classes, at a time when there were relatively few Jewish state schools (Alderman (1989) p.105). The Board, which was closely connected with the United Synagogue, and was redesignated the United Synagogue Board of Religious Education in 1987 (Note 5), also formerly provided a syllabus for the teaching of religious education for Jewish children in local authority state schools in London, where the numbers were large enough to warrant the provision of classes by peripatetic teachers (Note 6). The influence of the Board syllabus was still detectable in the curricula of some Jewish primary schools when the National Curriculum (NC) was introduced in England and Wales at the end of the 1980s.

The introduction of the National Curriculum

The National Curriculum has been one of the most far-reaching policy initiatives to affect education in England in the twentieth century. Prior to its introduction through the 1988 Education Act, the only legal curriculum requirements of schools were that they taught physical education and religious instruction. It also for the first time enshrined the principle of pupil entitlement, rather than opportunity, as the basis on which curriculum access was to be offered.

By the time of the National Curriculum, it is probably true to say that for secondary schools, the syllabuses for Jewish studies and Hebrew were effectively defined by the requirements of external school examinations. Few primary schools had religious education syllabuses which were other than a statement of the topics and reading skills set out in the old Board syllabus. In some primary schools, no written syllabus existed, and the curriculum was organized by reference to the Jewish calendar, with its associated agenda of weekly readings and festivals, and by whatever primers were used to teach reading of Hebrew for religious purposes. The National Curriculum is compulsory only in state and state aided schools, and so does not impinge directly on the independent schools. Nevertheless those Jewish independent schools which seek to combine secular and religious studies cannot avoid incorporating some of its requirements into their own curricula because of the requirements of entry to presitigious state schools and because public examinations assume a basic coverage of NC requirements.

Recent dilemmas facing Jewish schools in England

Jewish state and state-aided schools in England have recently been in the headlines for very positive reasons. Jewish secondary schools in London and Liverpool have featured very prominently in the highest positions of the unofficial league tables, showing comparative results of examinations taken at 16 and 18, which the UK press has published over the last five years or so (Note 7). The schools are in very great demand by parents, with all but one or two schools, in areas of declining Jewish population, being substantially oversubscribed.In recent years, this apparently rosy picture has concealed a degree of communal and professional concern about the quality of Jewish religious and cultural education in the schools. In 1991 and 1993 respectively, the two major foundation bodies involved in state Jewish education, the United Synagogue and the Zionist Federation Educational Trust (ZFET) independently undertook reviews of Jewish education under their auspices (JEDT(1992); Hyman & Ohrenstein (1993) (Note 8). Both bodies came to similar conclusions about the problems, acknowledging a degree of lack of success in teaching both Jewish RE and both biblical and modern Hebrew, which are deemed essential for participation in prayer, and, in the case of the latter, for a relationship with the only Jewish state in the world, Israel. Both bodies acknowledged the need to remedy these shortcomings by developing major in-service programmes. The United Synagogue review additionally urged the setting up of a single educational agency for the entire Jewish community, which would in corporate the ZFET.

These initiatives marked the first effective move by Jewish foundation bodies into in-depth long-term strategy and policy making. It is interesting that their frames of reference were primarily those of corporate management; cost effectiveness and efficiency. There does exist within talmudic and other traditional religious sources a range of starting points which might be used for generating a policy analysis framework for Jewish education; these include references to the maximum size of classes, to what makes for educational success and failure, and to issues like competition and motivation.

Nowhere in either of the reviews was any reference made to these sources. It was not surprising that issues of teaching effectiveness were, along with those of curriculum management and resourcing, at the center of the short comings identified. Historically, the staffing of the teaching of Jewish religious education and Hebrew has been on a different basis from that of the staffing of the secular subjects in Jewish schools. Frequently, these two subjects have been taught by supernumerary specialist staff, whose sole role has been in either religious studies or Hebrew teaching. Their salaries have been paid by voluntary parental contributions, supplemented by subventions from the foundation bodies, which fund raise and, in the case of the United Synagogue, use a proportion of the substantial income gained from membership and burial ground fees. The staff often had no professional teaching qualifications recognised by the Department for Education and Employment (DEE). The religious studies staff in many cases obtained qualifications through private Jewish religious academies in Britain or in the USA or Israel, and the Hebrew staff often had Israeli teaching qualifications, albeit not qualifications for the teaching of Hebrew as a foreign language. The Hebrew staff have also frequently been short term placements sent from Israel, sometimes owing their placement to the fact that their spouses have been posted in England as representatives of Israeli government organizations. The organization and management of the schools has tended to reflect the different status of these staff. They have not usually held senior management responsibilities, and or taken responsibilities for pastoral work. Until

relatively recently, they would frequently not have been involved in staff meetings or school based in service training days for the whole school.

The implications of National Curriculum for Jewish education

With the passing of the 1988 Education Reform Act by the Conservative administration of Margaret Thatcher, the emergence of the National Curriculum came to pose particular challenges to Jewish schools. The 1988 Act maintained the careful delineation established in England and Wales of religious education, and particularly religious education in state-maintained schools run by voluntary religious organizations. The Act did not include religious education amongst its list of legally compulsory core and foundation subjects (Note 9), but recognised the continuing status of religious education as a pre-existing compulsory subject under the legislation of the 1944 Education Act. Thus, while legally binding specifications for what was to be taught at each stage of the curriculum were issued, in the form of printed folders, for each of the nine secular core and foundation subjects, the specification of the religious education curriculum remained as an evolutionary continuation of the pre-existing forms of local authority and voluntary foundation body control.

Day-to-day discourse in English schools and in the press about National Curriculum has almost invariably seen it as referring to the nine secular subjects, and not to religious education, which by reason of not having its own common national folder, has come to be seen as having less prestige and priority in the allocation of scarce resources for school development. Yet religious purposes were nevertheless central to the aims of the 1988 Education Reform Act, which in its opening clause refers to the requirement for "a balanced and broadly based curriculum which promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and of society" (Great Britain (1988)).

While the Act itself explicitly excluded the specification of precise subject hourages, it did assign to each core or foundation subject notional pro portions of the curriculum time available in the school. The time thus allocated added up to some ninety percent of the curriculum, and a common complaint of head teachers and their staffs was that one hundred percent of curriculum time was not sufficient to deliver the legally required demands of the National Curriculum. Such pressures were the stronger on Jewish primary schools, where the time devoted to religious studies and to the teaching of modern Hebrew has usually been of the order of twenty to thirty percent of the school timetable.

Dilemmas facing Jewish schools as a result of the National Curriculum

The response to this particular challenge of National Curriculum innovation varied amongst the Jewish schools, with the greatest pressures being on the primary schools, which had not previously experienced the demands of externally defined curricular criteria. The inclusion of modern foreign languages amongst the foundation subjects of the curriculum potentially posed a major challenge to the teaching of Hebrew. The National Curriculum specification was based on current modern language teaching principles, requiring a substantial focus on developing pupils' ability to speak spontaneously in the target language. Hebrew teaching in Jewish schools has tended to focus strongly on reading and to some degree translation, since the reading of prayer books and the Hebrew bible are a central requirement of both Jewish religious education and Jewish practice. Moreover, the reading skills needed must encompass the classical

Hebrew in which the bible and liturgy are written.

In practice, therefore, Hebrew teaching in Jewish schools has tended to be somewhat formal in nature, almost invariably based on highly structured graded readers and written exercises with controlled vocabulary. Because the Introduction of the National Curriculum was phased over several years, the specifications for modern languages were published only in 1991 and came into force in 1992. Modern languages were specified only for Key Stages 3 and 4 (ages 11-14) of the National Curriculum, and therefore the specifications appeared only to cover teaching in secondary schools. As previously stated, the impact on secondary schools was limited because their curricula have always been closely related to the demands of external examinations.

The Jewish schools responded to the pressures in a variety of ways, with the responses in the primary schools ranging from a substantial extension of the length of the school day to, in the case of at least one primary school, a recognition that meeting the entire National Curriculum legal requirements was not compatible with its commitment to devoting twenty five percent of teaching time to Jewish studies and Hebrew, and that the legal requirement would not be fully met. The National Curriculum thus introduced the first stage of a modern national quality control system to English schools, in its precise specifications of curriculum requirements and assessment criteria, together with requirements to publish nationally moderated assessment results at specified points.

Because the NC was introduced over a phased period of five years, starting in 1989, the years 1989-94 saw almost all the development energies of schools focused on implementing one core or foundation subject after another. Each new subject implementation brought pressures on schools to review curricular provision and resources, with a legal requirement to produce a development plan setting out action programmes to bring any gaps in resources and provision into line. Finally, as a result of nationwide evidence of excessive workload resulting from the pressures described above, together with the growing organized teacher resistance to the implementation of the assessment system, the government instituted a major review which resulted in the slimming down of the NC to take up eighty rather than ninety percent of schools' curriculum time, to take effect from the 1995-96 academic year.

Already marginalized from the center of whole school initiatives for the reasons indicated above, the advent of the National Curriculum era served to widen the difference between the requirements and expectations of secular and of Jewish studies and Hebrew teachers in Jewish schools. The latter could see themselves as unencumbered by the straitjacket of National Curriculum legislation and its accompanying administrative work of assessment and record keeping. It might have been thought that Head Teachers and Governors, frequently feeling under great pressure with the volume of NC implementation, would feel it to be a positive benefit that two areas of the curriculum central to the raison d'etre of Jewish schools were not to be subjected to the same pressure of intensive review and adjustment which accompanied the coming into force of the secular subject regulations. However, as the NC process became embedded in the primary schools, Heads of Jewish schools could also see the opportunities given by the publication of national criteria and benchmarks for exercising a closer degree of quality control over Jewish studies and Hebrew than they had previously been able to do.

The emerging incorporation of Jewish studies and Hebrew into national quality control initiatives

Two factors unforeseen at the time of the passing of the Education Reform Act came to shift the focus of curriculum priority in Jewish schools much more centrally onto Jewish studies and Hebrew. An initiative started from an internal Conservative administrative decision to review the role of Her Majesty's Inspectorate (HMI), which has always had a degree of autonomy from direct government control, in much the same way as the judiciary. It was seen at the time as possibly not sufficiently attuned to the educational vision of the Conservatives, and to some degree viewed with suspicion within the administration as being tainted with pro-teacher, pro-progressivist and anti-government perspectives, a bulwark of what the administration viewed as an entrenched educational establishment.

The review culminated in the replacement of HMI as the main agency of direct quality control inspection of schools with a new system of inspection by external teams of private contractors who would operate according to criteria set down by a new government agency for standards in education. A new Education Act, passed in 1992, established the new system of inspection, to take effect from 1993.

Secondly, the Secretary of State for Education who was in office at the time of this new legislation and until 1994, Mr John Patten, was not only a man of strong personal religious convictions but one who also advocated strengthening traditionalist religious education and Christian religious worship in schools as a bulwark against a supposed disintegration of societal values in Britain. During his period of office, religious education, previously all but neglected by his predecessors, and virtually ignored as part of the vast programme of National Curriculum training, became the subject of major new initiatives, including a requirement in the 1992 Education Act that religious education and worship in state schools other than those controlled by voluntary religious bodies, be in the main Christian.

Such initiatives can hardly have been implemented as the outcome of one politician's preoccupations, yet the initiatives were potentially explosive. For although religious education and religious worship had been compulsory under the terms of the 1944 Education Act, for many years very substantial numbers of schools had not carried out the obligation to hold a daily act of collective worship for all pupils. Indeed, the design of many modern secondary schools built over the last thirty years was such as to make it impossible to hold collective worship for the whole school; the largest assembly spaces in many of such schools are too small to seat the whole school simultaneously. Significant numbers of schools, particularly LEA schools in inner city areas, have not offered religious education on a regular timetabled basis, or where they have, it has frequently not followed the legally required Agreed Syllabus which each LEA had been required to establish for its schools under the terms of the 1944 Act.

How the establishment of the new inspection system incorporated two historical traditions

The legislation implementing the new inspection system set out separate procedures for secular and religious education in schools controlled by religious foundations. Section 9 of the 1992 Education Act laid down procedures for the inspection of those aspects of any school covered by National Curriculum and other legislation, such as the Equal Opportunities Act and the Health and Safety Act. Section 13 of the 1992 Education Act laid down inspection procedures for the religious education which is wholly under the control of the governors and the foundation bodies of voluntary aided schools. This apparently strange separation of inspection procedures was the consequence of historical traditions of English state and religious schooling

referred to above. The whole history of the status of voluntary aided schools has been rooted in an exclusion of state competence from any involvement in the specification or quality control of religious education in these schools. While such a distinction did not at first sight present any difficulties, there were profound contradictions built from the start into the 1992 legislation. For the 1988 Education Act itself carried in its first clause referred to above an obligation on all schools to provide for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils.

These aspects of each school, broadly referred to as its ethos, were to be part of the Section 9 inspection. Yet for voluntary aided schools, the spiritual and moral, if not also the moral ethos of the school was surely derived substantially from its programme of religious education. The regulations allowed for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects of the school to be inspected as part of the Section 13 inspection, if desired by the governors (Note 10). Nevertheless a further contradiction remained, for even in such cases, it was still to be the responsibility of the secular Section 9 inspection to report on whether the requirement for a daily act of worship for all pupils was being carried out, because of daily collective worship being part of the national statutory requirement for all schools. There was yet a further level of potential confusion and contradiction arising from the ambiguities of responsibility. Although the governors were given the option referred to above, confusion could arise because the arrangements for the two inspections could be made quite separately. It would not necessarily be clear to a Section 9 team whether arrangements for the Section 13 inspection to report on spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects were being made, since there was no obligation to arrange the inspections to dovetail responsibilities.

The implications of the new inspection system, together with the new policy interest in promoting religious education only became fully clear from the academic year 1993-94 as the new government agency responsible for the organizations, the Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED), took shape under a Circular issued by DfEE defining its mode of operation (Great Britain-DfE (1993)) . One of the concerns expressed about the replacement of the former Her Majesty's Inspectorate, appointed by officially trained but independent contractors, was that schools would be able to choose contractors they deemed might be likely to write more favorable reports.

The emerging inspection system and the choices open to governors of Jewish schools

Circular 7/93 made clear that the system of contracted inspections would be handled by the OFSTED office itself, with OFSTED putting out tenders and a warding contracts for inspections of individual schools. Inspections were to be conducted by inspectors who had to follow a very detailed handbook (O FSTED (1993)), laying out criteria for the evaluation of every aspect of a school's performance. Each inspector would to have pass a rigorous training course designed to ensure their competence to apply the criteria and report according to procedures laid down in the handbook. However, this system was to apply only to Section 9 inspections. For the section 13 inspections of voluntary aided schools, it would be for the governors of each school to nominate the inspector or inspectors, and no criteria were specified for the selection and competence of the inspectors, or of the inspection of the subjects.

It was thus to be open, for example, to the Governors of a Jewish school to choose to appoint, if they were minded to, the Prince of Wales, Ms Madonna Ciccione, a Governor's relative or a Jesuit priest to inspect their school's religious provision, and for that inspector to follow either the criteria laid down for the inspection of religious

education in state schools or any supplied by the Governors, or none at all.

It was also left for the Governors of voluntary aided schools to choose whether or not they wanted the inspection of the religious side of the school's life to be inspected at the same time as the Section 9 inspection or not. Simultaneous inspection would be open to them only if they chose an inspector who had successfully completed the OFSTED training course. In this case it could happen only if the approved inspector contracted by OFSTED to lead the Section 9 inspection agreed that the Section 13 inspector could be part of the team. In such a case, the Section 13 inspector would also be able to have access to the full curriculum documentation which schools are required to provide as part of the Section 9 inspection. He or she could also take part in the team meetings which are an essential part of the inspection process in enabling inspectors to come to a consensus in judgements on the school.

There was another major and unforeseen implication of the OFSTED system for Jewish schools. This was the procedure adopted by OFSTED for inspecting subjects of the National Curriculum being taught for age groups other than those for which they were specified. It was that such subjects would be assessed in terms of the National Curriculum framework as published. Thus it emerged through processes of informal consultation with OFSTED that Hebrew taught in the Jewish primary schools for any amount of time longer than an hour a week would be assessed according to the specifications set out in NC Modern Languages. In the event, all modern Hebrew teaching in Jewish schools so far inspected has been reported on by OFSTED reports on this basis.

The impact of the changes on Jewish education

How then have these changes impacted on Jewish education? There are two main sources of impact; firstly in the foundation bodies responsible for the schools, and in communal bodies closely involved in Jewish education. Secondly, there is the impact on the schools themselves, and on the wider Jewish community which they serve.

From dilemmas to turf wars: the emerging response of the foundation bodies and communal organizations

As has already been noted above, the two major foundation bodies, the United Synagogue and the Zionist Federation Educational Trust(ZFET), had already mounted major reviews of Jewish education. In each case the impetus for the major reviews came from sources, particularly cash crises, other than either the National Curriculum or the OFSTED inspection system.

In the case of the United Synagogue Board of Religious Education, a major impetus came from the financial crisis in which the parent body the United Synagogue found itself in 1989, where it became clear that the cost of supporting the schools for which it is the foundation body was adding considerably to the financial crisis. The report however took on the issue of Jewish education as one not simply of financial exigency but as a central dilemma for the future of Jewish life in the UK. The foreword to the report was written by the newly installed Chief Rabbi, Dr Jonathan Sacks, who argued eloquently that at key moments when Jewish survival was at stake, it had always been initiatives related to education which had proved the turning point in Jewish survival (Note 11). This theme was to be amplified and promoted even more dramatically as the central issue for the very future of the present Jewish community in

the UK.

In 1994, the Chief Rabbi published "Will Our Grandchildren be Jewish?" (Sacks, J (1994)), developing the arguments used in the foreword to the United Synagogue's report. (Note 12) It argued in particularly vivid terms that the current substantial continuing demographic decline of the Jewish community could be halted only by initiatives centered on Jewish education. This book was in turn the starting point for the launch of a very high profile and ambitious communal funding and development organization, Jewish Continuity. Jewish Continuity's initiatives began with full page advertisements in the "Jewish Chronicle" depicting the decline through intermarriage of the Jewish comm unity in an image of ranks of young Jewish people relentlessly marching over the edge of a precipice. It announced commitments to major initiatives to improve Jewish education, both formal and informal, and Jewish communal life (Note 13). A substantial component of these was a start-up establishment of a unit for research and quality development in Jewish education at a cost of over 31,000,000 Pounds Sterling. Further substantial funding for education development was to be made available through an open competitive scheme for grant awards to be allocated twice yearly to Jewish schools and educational bodies.

Alongside this, Jewish Continuity contributed substantially to the establishment of an ambitious new foundation body, designed to replace the United Synagogue Board, as recommended in the United Synagogue's report. The new body, the Agency for Jewish Education was set up with the goal of becoming a self-funding agency. Amongst the goals set out in its first strategic development plan was the development of an inspection service, including the preparation of Jewish schools for Section 13 inspection (Agency for Jewish Education (1994). Additionally a more long term target was the establishment of a new agreed syllabus for religious education.

The ZFET's review had identified additional problems relating to the system of having a series of two-year secondments from Israel for its Director of Education. A central theme for ZFET's report was issues related to the quality of Hebrew teaching and the lack of a common national curriculum frame work. Nevertheless, no mention was made of the existence of the National Curriculum framework for modern languages and the fact that it was legally compulsory for the secondary years. A conference held for ZFET Head teachers, heads of Hebrew and Jewish Studies and governors in May 1992 included a keynote speech on the implications of NC modern languages for the teaching of Hebrew. It was received with interest but no further initiatives were taken at that time either by ZFET or individual schools.

The emergence of the new Jewish Continuity funding structure together with personnel changes proved to be a decisive catalyst for refocusing the organization's energies on tackling the development of Hebrew teaching to take account of both National Curriculum and OFSTED criteria. A funding proposal was submitted to Jewish Continuity in April 1994 (Serra and Keiner (1994), proposing the development of a specific curriculum and assessment framework for Hebrew to be based on the model of National Curriculum modern languages, explicitly in order to enable schools to meet the challenge of having their achievements in Hebrew teaching assessed by OFSTED.

In the event, Jewish Continuity rejected the proposal as marking too radical a departure from traditions of Hebrew teaching, but ZFET proceeded with a modified version of the proposal by committing substantial funding from its own resources. With the prospect of OFSTED inspection imminent for its schools, the Head Teachers expressed enthusiastic support for the initiative. Pilot work in developing the curriculum approach was carried out in two schools, one of which underwent an OFSTED inspection in the Autumn of 1994. By the summer of 1995, following six months'

drafting and consultation, the organization, now renamed the Scopus Jewish Educational Trust (Scopus) published curriculum frameworks for both Hebrew and Jewish Studies, both based very closely on the revised National Curriculum frameworks, including the specification of attainment targets, level descriptions and specific programs of study for each of the Key stages from 5-16 (Keiner, Korn, Serra and Frankel (1995a, 1995b). The consultation process revealed continuing strong support and commitment to adoption of the frameworks by the schools.

A third major Jewish communal body came to take an increasingly proactive role with Jewish schools in response to the emergence of the OFSTED system. This was the Education Committee of the Board of Deputies of British Jews (BD). The BD is a long-established representative body for the British Jewish community, its membership representing mainstream orthodox and reform synagogues and other communal bodies. Because it does include representation of non-orthodox religious groupings, it differs from both the major education foundations which are orthodox foundations, and it has therefore claimed and been given legitimacy in consultations with national bodies by reason of this wider degree of representation.

Over the years its education function has been primarily that of representing Judaism and Jewish educational concerns to the non-Jewish educational world, for example developing training and curricular materials about Judaism for non-Jewish schools. It has also had an important role in negotiating with examination bodies and local authorities about providing for the observance of Jewish holy days for Jewish examination candidates and teachers. In practice, all its materials and pronouncements can be seen to contain no element which represents interpretations of Judaism and Jewish practice other than the orthodox.

With the advent of the National Curriculum, with its extensive programme of consultation at the stage of the development of the proposed curricula, the BD came into increasing prominence on the national educational scene, as the DfEE's first port of call for consultation of the Jewish community. As the religious education initiatives referred to above came into prominence, the BD came to play a major role as the effective sole representative of Judaism on the national curriculum development body responsible for outlining model religious education syllabuses. The Director of Education of the BD was one of a new breed of Jewish community professionals, proactive and ready to play a high-profile role in promoting Jewish education and Jewish educational interests. Previously, Jewish community professionals involved in education have tended to be highly successful in promoting Jewish education through an unrivalled command of official procedures and informal consultative processes with central and local government education administrations.

The emergence of a major initiative on the inspection of Jewish education

Once the OFSTED system of training inspectors had been established, the BD set out a initiative to influence and co-ordinate the selection of inspectors for the inspection of Jewish schools in general and of Section 13 inspections in particular. It began with the more traditional method of forming an invited working group drawn exclusively from educationists who were members of the orthodox community and within the United Synagogue's sphere of influence (Note 14). It also advertised in the major communal newspaper, the "Jewish Chronicle" asking any Jews who had qualified in OFSTED training to contact the BD in order to register as qualified inspectors with Jewish status. The BD as the result of its group meetings evolved an ambitious programme which ch could be seen as amounting to a major if inexplicit challenge to the

two Jewish foundation bodies in seeking to become the most influential body in relation to quality control of Jewish schools.

It subsequently emerged that a more subtle process of religious vetting would be involved in the BD's proposal to establish a register of qualified inspectors with Jewish status. At a meeting of the Association of Governors of Orthodox Jewish Schools in April 1994, the Director of Education commented that "OFSTED inspection will be able to do for schools what heads and governors have wanted for years" (Note 15). He outlined the BD's intention to establish a training programme for inspectors of Jewish schools which he hoped would be the sole validated route recognised by OFSTED such schools. He envisaged that the religious credentials of inspectors to be involved in Jewish school inspections would be subject as part of this process to approval by the senior judge of the United Synagogue's ecclesiastical court.

The newly established OFSTED bureaucracy appeared to be as eager to embrace the BD's initiative as the Board itself was to establish it. Faced with the prospect of including inspections of up to a quarter of the existing Jewish voluntary aided schools in the first year of its operations, OFSTED's then Chief Executive established contacts with the office of the Chief Rabbi and the BD and was prepared to offer accelerated access to OFSTED training, for which there was a substantial waiting list to candidates approved by the BD.

In February 1995, the present Chief Executive of OFSTED gave the keynote ad dress at a conference of teachers called by the BD to promote awareness of the implications for Jewish schools of OFSTED inspection (Note 16). He stated that OFSTED looked forward to Jewish schools defining statements of religious values as a contribution to OFSTED's work on seeking to define what constitutes spiritual, moral, social and cultural values, suggesting that in mainstream schools there were insufficient initiatives of this kind. Much of the discussion at the Conference centered on the desirability of establishing an approved list of inspectors for Section 13 inspectors of Jewish schools. The Director of Education of the BD argued enthusiastically for inspections of Jewish schools not to be carried out by inspectors who were merely Jewish but by inspectors who were Jewish by practice and conviction, a view which was not universally endorsed by the meeting.

The BD subsequently obtained substantial funding, from Jewish Continuity, of over 310,000 Pounds Sterling to develop a framework for Section 13 inspections of Jewish schools, designed to parallel the published framework for OFSTED's Section 9 inspections. In doing so, it was emulating initiatives taken by the two major Christian voluntary school foundation bodies, the Church of England and Roman Catholic Diocesan authorities. The BD's initiative was as ambitious as that of the Scopus organization in formulating its curriculum proposals. In July 1995, BD issued the first draft of a very detailed framework (Note 17). Entitled "Pikuach" (Hebrew -- inspection), it adopted a novel approach to the interpretation of the legal responsibilities for Jewish religious education. The proposals were sent in confidential draft form to the Head Teachers of all Jewish schools, with a covering letter stating that Head Teachers were to have ownership of the proposals, although a wider process of consultation would be involved. The responsibility for religious education matters in voluntary aided schools in fact rests with the governors of each school, and to some degree with the foundation bodies which appoint them. The BD's stance was analogous to according ownership of quality control procedures for enterprises such as public utility companies to the chief executives of those companies.

The proposals assigned responsibility for reporting on whether the assemblies conformed to the legal requirements to the Section 13 inspection, although the law

assigns them to Section 9. The proposals suggestions for the evaluation of pupils' spiritual and moral development went far beyond the scope of the equivalent criteria for the review of religious education in secular schools, as outlined in the OFSTED handbook. Additionally the proposals required Inspectors to take into account the "levels of Jewish commitment amongst the communal groups served by the school" and "any other relevant influences on pupils' behavior and Jewish values which are at play in the wider community and the school environment". These specifications constituted a significant departure from the generally firmly evidence-based approach of OFSTED criteria, because there is no readily available way in which such judgements could be made on other than a common sense speculative basis.

Additionally the requirement, made in the first drafts and subsequently removed, to consider the levels of Jewish commitment amongst all the school's Jewish teachers, not specifically those involved in Jewish religious education, brought to the proposals an approach to inspection not otherwise encountered in English educational practice. The final edition (BD (1996)) requires inspectors to take into account the degree to which teachers are in sympathy with the Jewish ethos of the school. Nevertheless, for the most part the BD proposal was very closely modelled on OFSTED's handbooks, and as such added up to by far the most searching and rigorous framework for quality control ever applied to Jewish education in England.

As these proposals came to fruition, they were challenged by new developments which had threatened the credibility and even the existence both of OFSTED and the new Jewish Continuity organization. There was a continuing and rising outcry from school staffs about the impact of OFSTED inspections, based on allegations that the documentation required by the inspections produced unacceptable overload. This came at a time when the Conservative administration, faced with an increasingly dismal public standing, was ready to make concessions to teacher unions which it had previously been determined to face down. The OFSTED process was subjected to a review, and a considerably slimmed down new Handbook produced, to apply to all inspections from April 1996. Subject specific inspection guidelines were replaced by generic curriculum criteria. However, new subject criteria (Note 18) were published and issued to OFSTED team inspectors, thus making the supposed slimming down appear perhaps more of presentation than substance. But the pre-existing separation between the Section 9 and Section 13 regulations was left untouched, even though consultations with OFSTED inspectors had indicated their wish to have the anomalies clarified and at least some more decisive guidance on the boundaries between the two types of inspection.

Jewish Continuity itself became a subject of intense controversy inside and outside the Jewish community. A major television documentary made by the BBC as part of its prestigious prime-time "Everyman" series portrayed it as a almost sinister body bent on promoting Jewish separatism, inspired by advertising which had sought to sensationalize Jewish outmarriage. More sustained and damaging controversy bubbled up repeatedly within the Jewish community, focussing on the incompatibility of its claims to be a cross-community body, whilst quietly ensuring that all its major decisions and recipients were within the United Synagogue or other orthodox orbit.

It is not clear whether senior policy makers at OFSTED were aware of the fact that BD initiatives concerned with education were effectively becoming enmeshed within the "turf wars" amongst the various Jewish communal and professional organizations concerned with education. Senior OFSTED officials continued to appear at BD-organized events related to the development of "Pikuach", notably a consultative conference held to discuss its third draft, in November 1995 (Note 19), at which the President of BD referred to its claims to " work across cummunal boundaries and reach

across the divisions" and to its "vibrant and proactive role in enhancing Jewish education". Thus from having previously been an organization largely confined to advocacy of Judaism and Jewish educational roles to the wider world, BD was now claiming a central, perhaps the central role in promoting Jewish education in the UK.

In March 1996, Jewish Continuity published a self-review (Note 20), based on substantial consultation across the Jewish professional and lay communities, which reflected the profound disquiets and conflicts raised by its ambiguous position, including its position in seeking to promote educational developments. It reported views that its interventions in education had been seen as aggressive, ignoring existing communal expertise, and that its decisions were thought by many to be taken privately by its Chairman and Chief Executive. The report proposed to remedy this by reconstituting the organization as a genuinely cross-communal initiative. It remained at the time of writing to be seen whether this could be achieved in a situation where Orthodox participants will accept only the legitimacy of their own authorities within any cross-communal initiative.

OFSTED's first inspection findings on Jewish schools

The OFSTED system had by the start of the 1995-96 academic year been in full operation for two years, although the programme of primary inspections only began in 1994-95. Under the legislation, inspections of schools are required to take place once every four years. In practice, the full quota of a quarter of all primary schools which should have been completed has not been achieved for two reasons. Firstly, the number of inspectors so far successfully trained for primary schools and for special educational needs has not been sufficient to carry out the inspections. In addition, the independent free market system for awarding inspection contracts has resulted in OFSTED receiving no bids or only one bid for substantial numbers of schools.

By February 1996, three inspections had taken place of Jewish voluntary aided schools, two of secondary schools and one of a primary school. Of those schools, two of the secondary schools are grant maintained, one of them having a link to the United Synagogue, and the other two being independent Orthodox foundations. The primary school is part of the Scopus (formerly ZFET) network. All the Section 9 teams inspection included at least one Jewish inspector. In the case of the two London secondary schools, the Registered, or lead, inspector was Jewish, and there were additional team members who were Jewish. In the case of the primary school, there was more than one member of the inspection team who was Jewish. However, as the Director of Education of BD had pointed out, membership of Jewish ethnic credentials did not necessarily indicate knowledgeability about Jewish religious education and values.

Of all the schools, only the primary school had its Section 13 inspection take place at the same time as the Section 9 inspection. The governors appointed a single inspector who is an OFSTED-trained deputy head teacher, with specialist training in Jewish religious studies, whose school is a member of the same foundation body as the inspected school. In the case of one secondary school, the inspection took place separately from the Section 9 inspection, and was conducted by two inspectors, both members of the orthodox Jewish community, one of whom is an OFSTED accredited inspector who also serves as a local authority inspector, and one of whom is an OFSTED accredited lay inspector.

In the case of another secondary school, the Section 13 inspection took place eight months after the completion and publication of the Section 9 inspection, and in the next academic year. This inspection was thus in breach of the DfEE regulations which state

that the Section 13 inspection must be conducted in the same academic year. The general DfEE regulations also state that in the case of a Section 9 inspection, inspectors must not have had any significant prior connection with the school in either a personal or a professional capacity. In the case of this school, the school's governors awarded its Section 13 contract to a gentile inspector who was formerly the religious education adviser for the local authority of which the school was a part before the school obtained grant maintained status. This would appear to raise further issues about the procedures governing the two types of inspection, since it would not appear that there have been any consequences a rising from the apparent breaches of the regulations.

The inspection teams of the schools which have completed a Section 13 inspection have thus been different both in terms of composition and mode of inspection. No Section 13 inspection to date has used a set of published criteria to work to which was specific to Jewish education. Indeed, in no case has any set of criteria used been explicitly identified. In no case was the Section 13 inspector solely responsible for reporting on the spiritual, moral, social and cultural dimension of the school, or for the school's achievements in Hebrew teaching. In fact, in the case of all the Jewish schools inspected so far, there are paragraphs on pupils' personal development and behavior in the Section 9 report covering the social, moral, spiritual and cultural dimension, based on the criteria specified in the 1993 OFSTED handbook. The equivalent Section 13 reports, with one exception, have paragraphs which are largely confined to statements about the extent to which spiritual, moral, cultural and social issues are encountered in the school's assemblies and religious studies programmes. Thus these inspections already demonstrate that, in practice, judgments about the school in general and about its Jewish ethos in particular appear to be being made in a different way from what was intended by the legislation.

The Board of Deputies' initiative "Pikuach" (BD 1995(a), 1995(b), (1996)), referred to above, is making enthusiastic claims to meet the need for clear criteria. It certainly offers a comprehensive descriptive framework, but its criteria for evaluation could be said to beg the question, since it leaves it to each school to specify which criteria are to be used for the purposes of inspecting the content of Jewish Studies courses. Thus, the situation, referred to above, in which one school does not offer preparation for any external Advanced Level syllabus examination cannot be judged a failure or a serious weakness, because the school itself makes a judgement that the existing examinations do not match its self-chosen criteria for teaching Jewish Studies. A basic principle of OFSTED is to make judgements against criteria which are either explicitly stated within laws and regulations, or within the legally compulsory NC subject documentation. Thus the claim of Pikuach to legitimacy for inspection purposes within an OFSTED framework appears to be difficult to reconcile with that principle.

Inspection findings on the ethos of Jewish schools

In the case of all the schools, we need to look to the Section 9 inspection report for judgements about the extent to which the schools are achieving a Jewish ethos overall. In the case of both the secondary schools, the Section 9 inspectors commented on the relative lack of integration between the secular studies of the school and its Jewish life. In the case of one secondary school, the stark comment was that

> ...most teaching misses valuable opportunities to contribute to pupils' spiritual development. Likewise, outside Jewish studies and modern Hebrew, there are few references to Jewish culture in the curriculum, with

> the result that Jewish matters are separated from secular matters. The school should consider whether this situation accords with its ethos. (OFSTED (1995a) para 33)

The Section 9 inspection of the second secondary school reported that

> The curriculum makes a variable contribution to pupils' cultural development. In most subjects the content is restricted to white western cultures. Modern Hebrew plays a role in reflecting and affirming Jewish identity, values and experiences; some Holocaust literature is read and discussed in English; Jewish musical styles are studied and performed, alongside culturally and stylistically varied musical traditions; and in art there are incidental references to Jewish craft and design traditions and their contribution to culture in a variety of contexts. However, the potential for Jewish exemplars in all areas of the curriculum is not fully realized. Pupils generally do not appreciate deeply enough how other societies function and pupils awareness and appreciation of cultural diversity is limited.(OFSTED (1994c, para 39))

The primary school's Section 9 report, while praising the positive impact of the school's Jewish life on the school as a community, made similar points about the relative insulation of Jewish ethical perspectives from those of the curriculum as a whole:

> ...prayer is an important feature of each day, restating and celebrating the school's values and beliefs. There is scope across the curriculum to address spiritual and moral issues more directly and to promote greater levels of curiosity and a sense of discovery amongst the pupils. Attitudes to work and to the life of the school are positive. There is a strong Zionist flavour throughout the school and the children are taught Hebrew as a second language. However, the pupils need to explore more fully the variety of cultural traditions both within their own and the wider world. (OFSTED 1994b)

Dilemmas of inspecting Hebrew teaching

Further common findings of the inspection reports related to the teaching of Hebrew, reported on as a modern foreign language as part of the Section 9 report. Although Hebrew reading is a major component of Jewish studies, neither the Section 9 nor the Section 13 inspection reports of the secondary schools addressed the issue of the effectiveness of the modern Hebrew teaching in contributing to preparing pupils for those needs. In the case of both the secondary schools, the Section 9 reports commented that the Hebrew department needed a closer relationship with the separate modern languages department. In both schools, comments on the status and quality of Hebrew teaching reflected a mixed verdict.

Although achievements in public examinations were above expected national standards, and pupils benefited from teachers who were native speakers, there was evidence of underachievement by lower ability pupils, and of a lower status being accorded to Hebrew as an option beyond the first two years of the school. In spite of its importance in relation to the schools' ethos as Jewish schools, the schools offered Hebrew as an examination subject only beyond the first two years of the secondary

phase. In the case of one of the schools, it was criticised for offering Hebrew, for pupils who wished to take both French and Hebrew, only as a course to be taken outside school hours.

The reports on both secondary schools reflected variations in the quality of teaching and learning, with a significant minority of lessons showing evidence of poor organization. In one school, no pupil below sixth form level was observed to speak Hebrew spontaneously. In neither secondary school was the use of information technology incorporated into Hebrew teaching as required by NC, and pupils did not make sufficient use of dictionaries and glossaries. Both secondary reports commented on insufficient provision to meet the needs of pupils with learning difficulties.

In the case of the primary school, the Section 9 report commented favorably on the Hebrew teaching offered, and the Section 13 report specifically considered the extent to which it enabled the pupils to tackle religious texts. The latter report identified lack of liaison between the Hebrew and Jewish studies departments as contributing to mismatch between pupil capability and teacher expectations.

Inspection findings on the quality of Jewish Studies

In terms of the specific quality of religious education in Jewish schools, there are now three Section 13 reports published (OFSTED, 1994b; 1994d; 1996) although as shown above, the Section 9 reports did address the impact of aspects of religious education across the whole of the curriculum offered by the school. All the reports commented substantially favorably on the Jewish studies curricula of the schools. All commented on the positive effect of the programmes of Jewish teaching offered on the pupils' social and moral development.. On the case of one secondary school and the primary school they also reported on the pupils' knowledge of Jewish prayers and practices, identifying substantial knowledge of texts.

The Section 13 report on the second secondary school contained many highly complimentary findings, but also more surprising ones, such as the fact that it does not conform with legal requirements for collective worship, that its pupils do very little written work in Jewish studies, that its GCSE results in Jewish Studies are substantially lower than in the great majority of secular subjects, with those of girls showing a very substantial decline in the last year. It reported that by choice the school does not offer any Advanced (University Entrance) Level examination courses in Jewish Studies. There appeared to be no attempt in this report to evaluate the pupils' knowledge of Jewish texts or prayers and other rituals. Among its most complimentary findings were those on the success of its Informal Education program of Jewish studies, which includes organized periods of study in Israel, study weekends and other activities in and out of school. Nevertheless the report indicated that only a small minority of the school's 1400 pupils participated in the programme. The report commented that the school had no objective system designed to measure the success of its objectives of increasing commitment to Judaism, Israel and Jewish life.

In fact, in all cases, the Section 13 reports drew attention to the relative lack of in-house monitoring and evaluation of the quality of Jewish education. All the reports comment on the lack of effective whole school assessment policy in Jewish studies, with considerable variations of assessment and marking practice. The primary school report indicated that no records were being kept of progress in Jewish studies.

The messages in the reports so far do much to confirm and extend the analyses presented in the earlier reports of the United Synagogue and the Scopus foundation bodies. Those reports primarily focused on the need to build better structures and

mechanisms for those bodies, and on the need for a major program of general in-service training. However, it would seem that the enthusiasm which the Heads of the Jewish schools are showing for the establishment of published curriculum, assessment and inspection systems specific to Jewish Studies and Hebrew, owes much to the advent of the OFSTED inspection era with its system of published criteria, quality control procedures and published reports.

Reporting inspection findings in the Jewish community press

It is also an additional measure of the impact of the new inspection system that it provides a new focus for discussion of the performance of Jewish schools in the Jewish press. In recent years, the "Jewish Chronicle" has regularly published features summarizing the GCSE and A Level achievements of the various Jewish schools (Note 21). However, although the results of NC assessments at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 3 have been published for several years, they have never been reported on in the Jewish or local press. The publication of OFSTED reports has attracted coverage, and the report in the Jewish Chronicle on one secondary school's OFSTED report highlighted criticisms made of the teaching of modern Hebrew (Note 22). The only mention of the primary schools in the OFSTED report referred to the inspectors' commendation of Hebrew and Jewish studies teaching. There is evidence of growing attention to achievements in these subjects, with the appearance of an editorial in the "Jewish Chronicle" in the same week as its reporting of Jewish schools' secular examination successes referring to the failure of the schools to reach the levels of achievement in Hebrew and Jewish studies required by the community (Note 23). Nevertheless, the fact that schools are able to set their own timetable for Section 13 inspections can mean that the attention of the press is avoided. The report on the school which had its Section 13 report published in the following academic year to is Section 9 report received no mention in the Jewish press, although it contained what might be thought to be some newsworthy revelations, as referred to above. This lack of press coverage was presumably due to the fact that inspection reports on the school were considered old news.

Responses to inspection by governors and foundation organizations

The legislation on OFSTED inspections defined how schools must respond to both Section 9 and Section 13 inspection reports. It required the governors of each school to submit to OFSTED and publish to parents a separate action plan for each report, detailing their intended response to the key issues for action identified by the inspectors, within forty days of its publication. As already indicated above, for Section 9 reports of Jewish schools, this has in practice covered substantial aspects of the school's distinctively denominational practice, noticeably the teaching of Hebrew. In practice, unified action plans by Jewish schools have included responses to both the Section 9 and Section 13 reports (Note 24). It is not widely appreciated that governors of schools in England and Wales, community volunteers who have official responsibility for the curriculum and policy management of schools, have in the past had little access to direct evaluative evidence about the achievements of their schools, other than the results of external examinations and. latterly, the results of the externally monitored and marked tests which NC requires at ages 7, 11 and 14 for secular subjects. There has not previously been any consistent and reliable source of evidence about the efficacy of a particular school's Jewish Studies or Hebrew programme, and most governors of Jewish

schools will readily acknowledge that they know little or nothing of what is achieved beyond what they can deduce from parental comments or public presentations by the school. The advent of OFSTED reporting adds dramatically to the base of evidence which is available to them.

Governors, head teachers and staff are now having to debate and agree responses to inspection reports, which may include responses related to school policy and practice on curriculum, resources and assessment. Those responses must ultimately derive from the teaching staff concerned, and it is now clear even with only a small number of inspection reports so far published th at the impact on them in terms of expectations and accountability will be considerable. Many responses will need to be at the level of the whole school, where such matters as resource allocation and assessment policy may need to be reviewed. A further major impact must therefore be in increasing the integration of Jewish studies and Hebrew teaching into the centre of school development as a whole.

Parental interest in inspection reports

Whether this new level of accountability will have any lasting impact on parents remains to be seen. The very fact that the Section 9 and Section 13 reports are published separately may tend to lessen parental focus on the inspection verdicts on the specifically Jewish dimension of the school's achievements. While parents receive free of charge summaries of both reports, an indication of levels of parental interest can be derived from the number of parents and others being prepared to pay for full copies of reports, for which schools are allowed to charge. The demand for full reports for Section 9 inspections has been substantially higher than for full Section 13 reports. In only one school, copies of the complete Section 13 report have been provided to all parents, when the Section 9 report has been distributed to them as a summary, as required by the regulations. This suggests some particular motivation on the part of the school, perhaps connected with building parental support for desired policy initiatives, since the expense of duplicating the report must have been a significant budgetary decision taken by the governors and senior management staff.

Parental reasons for choosing a Jewish school are complex, including their assumptions about whether their children are likely to do better in secular subjects at Jewish schools, as well as considerations of their desire to foster their children's commitment to Judaism, and their perceptions of the peer groups their children might meet in non-Jewish schools . It is clear that the popularity of Jewish schools owes much to their high achievements in secular studies. Recent demographic research on the Jewish community suggests that only a small minority of the community actually practises orthodox Judaism (Note 25). The reports as circulated have included in the cases of some schools some very substantial criticisms in relation to both secular and Jewish studies. There is as yet little evidence that reporting on the quality of Jewish education and Hebrew will affect parental decisions for the vast majority of parents. However, it will certainly heighten awareness of what their children are and are not achieving in this field.

Notes

Elements of an earlier version of this material were previously presented at the Conference of the International Sociological Association Sociology of Education Research Committee, "Educational Knowledge and School Curricula: Comparative

Sociological Perspectives", The Hebrew University, Jerusalem, December 27th 1995.

1. Minutes of a meeting on the Inspection of Jewish Schools, Board of Deputies of British Jews Education Department, 6th February 1994. Her Majesty's Inspector Mr R Long reported that there are an additional forty seven known Jewish independent schools, which HM Inspectorate service. Further applications for state-aided status are currently in the pipeline for at least five further Jewish schools, three of which are from reform or liberal Jewish bodies, and two from orthodox bodies. All but one are for the outer London suburban areas.

2. The oldest Jewish school in England, the Jews' Free School (JFS) comprehensive, formerly the Jews' Free School, dates back to 1817 (Gartner (1960) p.221).

3. ibid., p.22. There was opposition to the payment of grants to religious schools in general by some Liberal nonconformists at the time of the establishment of the state aid system established in 1870, with additional objection to support for non-Christian religious education. There was also opposition by nonconformists to religious education in secular schools, and it was open to the School Boards established by the 1870 Education Act to decide whether or not it was to be included.

4. Hyman & Ohrenstein (1993) cited four nursery schools, six primary schools and four secondary schools as being under the aegis of the ZFET. Two of the nursery schools and one of the primary schools are independent non-state aided schools.

5. Although by far the most influential organization in Jewish education, the United Synagogue is directly responsible for only five of the twenty four state-aided Jewish schools.

6. It currently runs withdrawal classes in Jewish religious education at two major prestigious independent schools in London which have very substantial numbers of Jewish pupils.

7. In 1995, the Hasmonean High School, a Jewish comprehensive school, achieved the highest percentage for all comprehensive schools in England and Wales of A and B grades in the GCE Advanced Level examinations, and the sixth highest percentage of all state schools, including selective schools. The JFS comprehensive school achieved forty fifth place in the percentage rankings for state schools for A and B A Level grades, and the King David High School Liverpool achieved 178th place nationally. Rankings in the previous year were: Hasmonean High, fifteenth, JFS, twenty-second and King David High, Liverpool, fifty-third.

8. Jewish Educational Development Trust (1992), known as the "Worms Report", after its Chairman, Mr Fred Worms, was the United Synagogue's review; Hyman & Ohrenstein, op. cit., was the ZFET's review.

9. The core subjects are: English, mathematics and science. The foundation subjects are: technology, history, geography, art, music, physical education and, for pupils over 11, a modern foreign language.

10. The somewhat complex arrangements for Section 9 and Section 13 reporting on the spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects of the school are set out in DfEE Circulars

7/93, Appendix B and 1/94, Para. 134. There is some ambiguity between the positions set out in the two documents, with Circular 7/93 stating in Appendix 6 Paragraph 6 that "inspection for a school which offers denominational education cannot cover this aspect, although it must cover the moral, spiritual, social and cultural development of pupils across the whole range of the school's activities". On the other hand Circular 1/94 Para. 134 states, "The Registered Inspector has the duty...to report on the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils in all schools, but in [denominational schools] that duty is limited to noting that the school meets the requirements of the law to provide RE and a daily act of collective worship. The Registered Inspector is not concerned with the content of such provision."

11. JDT (1992) op. cit. pages i-ii.

12. Sacks (1993) particularly at pages 34-48 and 104-111.

13. Jewish Continuity (1994). An initial outline of Jewish Continuity's goals and strategy was previously given in Sacks (1994) pages 106-111 and 117-123

14. Minutes of a Meeting of the Association of Governors of Orthodox Jewish Schools, 23rd January 1994. Notes of presentation by Mrs Syma Weinberg of Jewish Continuity.

15. Presentation by Mr Laurie Rosenberg, Director of Education of the Board of Deputies of Jewish Schools, 24th April 1994, Meeting of the Association of Governors of Orthodox Jewish Schools.

16. Meeting of Jewish Teachers' Forum on "OFSTED and the Jewish School", organized by the Education Department of the Board of Deputies, 1st February 1995

17. Board of Deputies of British Jews Education Department (1995a)

18. See for example OFSTED (1996a)

19. "Pikuach" Board of Deputies Education Department Consultation Conference, 20th November 1995

20. Reported in the Jewish Chronicle, 15th March 1996, pages 1 and 25.

21. Cf. Jewish Chronicle 25th August 1995

22. Jewish Chronicle 3rd February 1995

23. Jewish Chronicle 25th August 1995, Second leader.

24. For example, Simon Marks Jewish Primary School (1995)

25. See JEDT (1992), Section 1, para 1.1

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About the Author

Judy Keiner is Senior Lecturer in Education, Department of Education Studies and Management, University of Reading, England. She is also a school inspector. Her undergraduate degree is in English literature, and has postagrduate degrees in sociology and information technology. She taught in primary and secondary schools and in further and higher education and has worked for over 25 years in teacher education. Her current research interests focus on Jewish education and on the use of the World Wide Web by children. Samples of her current work may be reached via her Web page at http://www.reading.ac.uk/~veskeinr/.

Email: J.C.Keiner@reading.ac.uk

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