

Quality Mark Report

Quality Recognition Meeting took place on 6th March 2019, attended by following scrutineers:

Gillian Roberts – Rights Respecting Schools consultant – educational expert
Pascale Vassie – NRCSE Executive Director – governance expert

Observational visit performed on 14th October 2018 by
Zaitun Virani-Roper – NRCSE/Securing Success Quality Assurance Mentor

Name of Supplementary School:
HaMakom School

Membership No.:
NRC0241

Introduction

HaMakom (“The Place”) is the first pluralistic religion school in the UK. Children aged from 5 to 18 get a wide and grounded Jewish education, study for their Bar/Bat Mitzvah in a way suitable for each synagogue and can then take part in Kabbalat Torah programme and become Assistant Teachers.

HaMakom aims to teach children from pre-school to 18. The post Bar/Bat Mitzvah programme in particular explores the Liberal, Reform and Masorti perspective of Torah, Jewish Ethics, Jewish History and the Holocaust as well as Tikkun Olam – social action issues. There are two things HaMakom aims to give its children: a love and emotional attachment to Judaism, and the knowledge and educational tools to equip them to practice their Judaism.

Development plans include providing children who attend Jewish Day Schools with the one thing those schools cannot provide – a connection with their own synagogue and community. The programme HaMakom has developed is intended to be stimulating and enjoyable so that these children will want and demand to be part of HaMakom, even though they are also in a Jewish school environment the rest of the week.

Key recommendations from observation and recognition meeting

- The standard of teaching, the system of lesson planning and the support provided by the head teachers all contribute to the clear evidence of learning. Continue with differentiation and assessment of children’s needs and perceptions.
- Particularly struck by the practiced ethos ‘education is the responsibility of the whole community’. It would be good to see promotion of your pluralistic model by external agencies so that others could use the HaMakom model to develop similar provision across the country, and across different faiths and cultures.

Please list any outstanding achievements:

- Dynamic headteachers who lead a strong school. The curriculum is up to date with clear guidance and documentation that supports a high quality of teaching and learning. Heads encourage reflection and evaluation; teaching and learning is reviewed, children’s needs are met and learning is positive and celebrated.
- Excellent documentation, training and guidance for staff promoting best practice. Exceedingly well-structured programme for young people wanting to become Assistant Teachers.
- HaMakom achieved the advanced level on all eight standards.

Detail of findings overall from observation and recognition meeting

1. Create an effective learning environment - Advanced

Each class has its own 'Golden Rules' negotiated with the children. Good charter for learning, handbook for parents and clear behaviour expectations. Staff meet at the beginning and end of each session to discuss any issues and set focus. Feedback from parents reports 'happy children'. A well-organised and equipped learning environment with staff alert to children's needs and able to change class layout when needed.

2. Teach effectively - Advanced

Very clear aims and ethos feeding in to yearly action plans. Staff have focused on supporting differentiation this year, particularly in Hebrew, to ensure learning outcomes for all children. The school has developed its own Jewish Studies curriculum with progression to consolidate learning and provide greater depth and challenge.

3. Record progress and achievement - Advanced

The decision to have no formal assessment was clearly explained. Children's progress in learning is shared informally through verbal feedback and praise and through the parent/children link books and end of year progress report. Children share their learning at the end of each session through 'show and tell'. Headteachers observe lessons and give feedback/evaluation.

4. Choose the right resources - Advanced

Lessons have varied resources. Staff are encouraged to use websites/photos/worksheets/colourful prompt cards/technology/books/puppets. Assistant teachers (15-17 year olds) have thorough training and support learning in the classroom. Creative use of external opportunities such as partnership with Museum of London, visit to local park.

5. Plan and develop your organization - Advanced

Handbook for Parents, Parents' mornings, Grandparents' Day and collected feedback clearly demonstrate community engagement. Rabbis from the four synagogues provide spiritual support. There is a governance committee separate from staff which meets termly. Integral to the teaching at HaMakom are activities with local agencies: SUFRA foodbank, Noah's Ark Children's Hospice, environmental work on Croxley Common Moor. Also links with Leket Israel.

6. Select and support staff and volunteers - Advanced

Thorough recruitment procedure and staff induction. Evidence of excellent staff training, good feedback from participants. Headteachers observe teaching. Excellent staffing policy and exemplary assistant teacher training programme with in-house trainer. Good to see training on 'How to use your TAs' Would it be possible to share this with other supplementary schools?

7. Make sure children are safe - Advanced

HaMakom ensures children are safe at all times when they are in the school's care by implementing and reviewing procedures to protect them and carrying out appropriate checks. Headteachers attended Harrow SCB training in 1/2018 and First Aid training in 12/2017. Safeguarding training is cascade to all staff and assistant teachers. School has INVAC procedures and security monitoring everyone entering the premises.

8. Manage finances - Advanced

'Education is the responsibility of the whole community' – every member of four synagogues participating pays in. This covers the majority of the costs, teachers' salaries, premises, etc. Families contribute £100 per child and Gift Aid is collected. Governing committee and Heads meet regularly to discuss school expenses. Nine children p/a are presented for Jack Petchey Awards.