



Make your mark
on the Jewish story

**JEWISH LIVES:
A LONGITUDINAL STUDY
TO EXPLORE CHANGING
LIVES OF JEWISH
SECONDARY SCHOOL
STUDENTS AND THEIR
FAMILIES**

FOCUS: PROJECT OVERVIEW

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JEWISH LIVES FOCUS: PROJECT OVERVIEW

Six Jewish secondary schools in the greater London area and one in Manchester, are taking part in a longitudinal study to understand the school's significance in the lives of the families whose children are enrolled in the school. It is not intended to evaluate the school's performance. This project represents a unique opportunity to help understand the school's significance in the lives of students, their families and the wider community. Our work will help with policy and planning for the short and medium term future.

DATA COLLECTION

We are following the cohort of students who entered Year 7 in September 2011. We surveyed and interviewed their parents at the end of Year 6 once they had chosen secondary schools for their children. We returned to them when their children started Year 9. We'll be going back to them again when their children are in Year 11, Year 13, and during their University years at least. This is an open ended project and we would like to follow these families as long as we are able to do so.

Alongside the students who entered Jewish schools, we are also following two comparison groups: families who applied to a Jewish school, but chose to send their child to non-Jewish schools and families who did not apply to Jewish schools at all.

We are surveying and interviewing parents, and we're also surveying the students – all 1,042 who started Year 7 at our seven participating schools in 2011.

WHY IS THIS AN EXCITING OPPORTUNITY?

- Longitudinal research with young people and schools is very rare
- The type of data we're collecting has never been previously gathered by the Jewish community
- The range of schools participating in the project is unprecedented



MONEY WAS A MAJOR FACTOR FOR US, AND IF WE COULDN'T AFFORD THE PRIVATE SCHOOLS, WE'D HAD TO LOOK AT THE JEWISH STATE SCHOOLS, BECAUSE THEY'VE GOT BRILLIANT ACADEMIC RECORDS



Parent, non-Jewish school

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SAMPLE

Our sample is taken from the Year 7 cohort (2011–12) in Jewish secondary schools in the UK. The families come from the mainstream Jewish community i.e. from modern Orthodox, Masorti, Reform, Liberal, traditional and secular homes.

THEORETICAL ORIENTATION

Our study of Jewish parents and their children draws on two research traditions: life-course theory and the sociology of school-family relations. Together these traditions help us examine the ways in which families lives unfold over time. These research traditions lead us to believe, through direct and indirect interaction with Jewish schools, that both parents and children are changed in interesting and often significant ways. The interactions between Jewish parents and their children's schools, and the changes they produce over an extended period of time – in our instance, over the seven years of secondary school – have not previously been studied on such a scale. We expect our study to make a watershed contribution to the understanding of Jewish education and Jewish life in the UK and beyond.



RESPONSE RATES

Round One: 2011–12

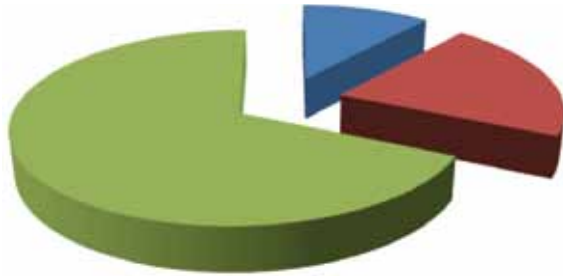
- **486** complete responses from Jewish family units who had applied for enrolment in Year 7 at participating Jewish schools in 2011
- **394** complete responses from family units whose child started a Jewish school
- **92** complete responses from family units whose child started a non-Jewish school

Round Two: 2013–14

- **416** complete responses from Jewish family units
- **372** complete responses from family units whose child attends a Jewish school
- **46** complete responses from family units whose child attends a non-Jewish school

The following charts profile the families involved in our sample:

RESPONDENTS WITH CHILDREN IN NON-JEWISH SCHOOLS



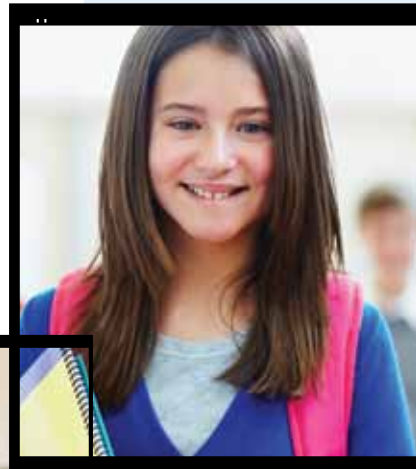
Numbers of respondents, and as a rounded percentage of the non-Jewish school sample

Selective non-Jewish state (10)	11%
Non-selective non-Jewish state (19)	21%
Non-Jewish private/independent (63)	68%

Almost 70% of respondents with children in non-Jewish schools send their children to private/independent schools and a further 11% send their children to selective State schools. Those who responded to the survey with children in non-Jewish schools had all registered for entry to Jewish schools. This is how their contact information was obtained.

As seen above, almost 90% of non-Jewish school children took up places at private or selective non-Jewish schools.

If the Jewish community seeks to increase the numbers of those enrolled in Jewish schools, then this increase will most likely come from among other families like those in this sub-group. The more we can understand their profiles and motivations, the more useful it will be for Jewish community policy-makers.



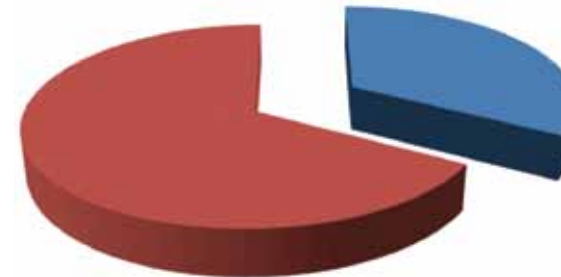
DENOMINATION



Orthodox	44%
Masorti	7%
Reform	15%
Liberal	7%
Secular	6%
Just Jewish	17%
Not Jewish	4%

Overall, respondents with children in Jewish schools and those with children in non-Jewish schools are almost indistinguishable in terms of their declared denominational affiliation.

PRIMARY SCHOOL ATTENDED

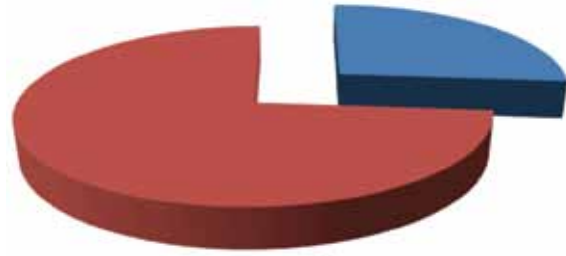


Type of primary school of child	Percentage
Non-Jewish	33%
Jewish	67%

A third of the respondents from Jewish schools reported that their children had attended non-Jewish primary schools.



VISITS TO ISRAEL



In much research on Jewish education, frequency of visits to Israel often serves as a strong indicator of Jewish identification. Generally, respondents to this survey reported an exceptionally high number of such visits. Overall, more than 70% of those with children in Jewish schools reported visiting Israel at least three times. The proportion was even higher (78%) for those with children in non-Jewish schools; something that might be associated with the higher reported levels of household income in that group.

HOUSEHOLD INCOME



When the profiles of respondents whose children attend Jewish schools are compared with respondents whose children attend non-Jewish schools, the most significant differences are in relation to levels of household income and, to a smaller degree, levels of the parents' own education.

57% of families attending non-Jewish schools reported incomes over £100,000 compared to only 30% of those at Jewish schools.

How many times have you been to Israel?

Never & once or twice	26%
Three of more times	74%

AGE OF PARENTS

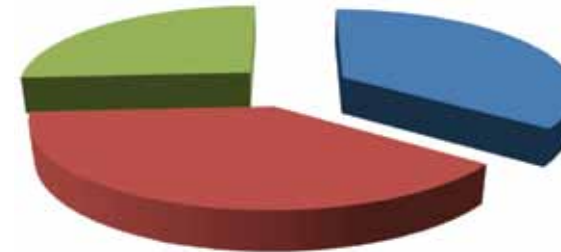


Overall there is a higher proportion of respondents (19%) under the age of 40 with children at Jewish schools than those with children at non-Jewish schools (10%).

Age ranges

30-39	17%
40-49	69%
50-59	13%
60-69	1%

PARENTAL EDUCATION



There is a large difference between respondents whose children attend Jewish schools (23%) and those who do not (37%) in relation to the proportion of parents that received the highest levels of education (MA/MSc and above).

Otherwise, it is noteworthy that there are no significant differences between the Jewish and non-Jewish school samples in terms of Jewish denomination or in terms of the communal, national and religious profiles we developed.

Level of education

Secondary school +	35%
BA or BSc college degree	39%
Graduate courses +MA/MSc/PhD	26%

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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FIND OUT MORE

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