

SUBMISSION ON ANTISEMITISM IN SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES



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ABOUT CAMPAIGN AGAINST ANTISEMITISM

Campaign Against Antisemitism (CAA) is a registered charity (charity number 1163790) dedicated to exposing and countering antisemitism through education and enforcement of the law. We do that through pioneering litigation, innovative communications campaigns, research and policy work and education at all levels. CAA operates nationally.

Representative polling of the Jewish community shows that 86% of British Jews believe that CAA is representative of their views on antisemitism, with more than half strongly believing that.¹

The Secretary of State for Education has asked Sir David Bell to conduct a review into antisemitism in schools and colleges in England. This is our submission to the Independent Review into antisemitism in schools and colleges.

We are grateful to Sir David for the opportunity to provide a submission. In addition to the material presented in this submission, we would be pleased to provide any other additional information that Sir David may find helpful. We are also available to assist the Department for Education or other relevant bodies in training or implementation of any of the recommendations set out below.

For more information about our work or to schedule a meeting to discuss the fight against antisemitism, please e-mail policy@antisemitism.org. You can also find us on social media using the handle [@antisemitism](https://twitter.com/antisemitism), or visit our website at antisemitism.org.

¹ See <https://antisemitism.org/new-polling-shows-britains-failure-to-protect-its-jews>

SUMMARY

Jewish pupils at schools and colleges are encountering antisemitism from their peers and teachers, and Jewish staff from their colleagues and pupils. Whether isolated incidents of antisemitic abuse or sustained campaigns of racist harassment, whether it is the appearance of swastika graffiti or contemporary political symbols or the use of propagandistic teaching materials, Jewish people are finding non-faith schools to be hostile territory. Those at Jewish faith schools find their schools a refuge from the hatred without, which they experience in no small part from children their age on their commute to school and online.

The extent of the crisis is borne out by evidence presented in this submission, drawn from both quantitative sources that demonstrate the intensity of the problem and its effect on British Jews, and from case studies that illustrate the effect on individual Jewish pupils and teachers.

Worst of all is the dismal failure of the authorities to address the issue. School administrations and regulators have failed in their duty of care to the pupils and staff in their charge, as this submission details. The fact that already back in 2021, Ofsted felt compelled to warn schools that if they did not act on antisemitism they could fail their inspections, must represent a staggering regulatory failure that, half a decade later, the problem has become considerably worse.

We propose a number of recommendations in this submission, which are designed to secure three outcomes: our children's education equips them to recognise and reject antisemitism; our teachers and school leaders are trained and empowered to identify and act against it; and parents and regulators are able to hold schools and their leadership to account where anti-Jewish racism is not addressed.

Our recommendations are grouped under four headings:

- Classroom education and curriculum;
- Staff and training;
- Internal policies and accountability; and
- Regulatory oversight.

We are available to assist the Department for Education and any other relevant bodies in the implementation of these recommendations and the delivery of training.

BACKGROUND

On 7th October 2023, Hamas, an antisemitic, genocidal terrorist group, carried out a barbaric attack in southern Israel. During the attack, Hamas terrorists fired rockets into southern and central Israel and led a campaign of horrific murder of some 1,200 people in cold blood, including women, children and the elderly. They used sexual violence and other humiliating techniques to maximise the suffering of their victims, some of whom were burned alive, and recorded their acts with pride, having put into practice their radical antisemitic theology. This was the worst antisemitic massacre since the Holocaust.

In addition, the terrorists took some 250 people hostage. Those who were not slaughtered were maintained in inhumane conditions, humiliated, sexually victimised and psychologically tortured, in some cases for over two years. Their captivity was an enduring wound to Jewish communities across the globe.

The traumatic impact on Jewish people, including in Britain, of the 7th October 2023 atrocity and the ensuing war, cannot be understated. This was a modern-day pogrom unlike any since the Nazis, and the victim was the very Jewish state that Jews around the world, regardless of where they live, see as the guarantor of their safety, not to mention the home of many of their family and friends. With British Jews and Jews worldwide facing surging antisemitism – beginning with celebrations of the attacks on 7th and 8th October 2023 in London and cities around the world – not only were Jews mourning for their brethren, campaigning for the release of the hostages and concerned for the future of the Jewish homeland, but they also felt a blow to their personal safety. In view of the levels of antisemitism over the past two and a half years in Britain and elsewhere, they were, unfortunately, right to feel insecure.

In 2025, the Community Security Trust (CST) recorded 3,700 antisemitic incidents in the UK, the second-highest total ever reported, after 2023, when 4,298 antisemitic incidents were reported.²

The most severe incident was the fatal terrorist attack at Heaton Park Synagogue last year on Yom Kippur, the holiest day in the Jewish calendar, which left two people dead and three others seriously injured. Since then, there has been a spate of arson attacks on Jewish sites across London, the stabbing of two people in Golders Green, the beating of another individual in that same neighbourhood, and other attacks of which there are too many to enumerate. Indeed the Metropolitan Police Service logged 255 antisemitic hate

² See <https://cst.org.uk/data/file/3/1/CST%20Incidents%20Report%202025.1772031180.pdf>

crimes in May 2026 alone – up 72% on the previous month.³ That equates to over eight antisemitic hate crimes in our capital city every single day. Our analysis of Home Office statistics shows that Jewish people are more than nine times more likely to be the victims of hate crime than any other faith group (and this data likely understates the severity as it excludes data from the Metropolitan Police Service, which covers the area of the country with the most Jewish residents).⁴

This sustained campaign of hate has had a considerable effect on the wellbeing of British Jews. The sentiments of the Jewish community are best captured by our representative polling in our annual Antisemitism Barometer research,⁵ which shows that:

- A majority of British Jews (51%) feel that they do not have a long-term future in the UK. Less than a quarter (23%) do.
- Almost half (45%) of British Jews do not feel welcome in the UK; less than a third (32%) do.
- A clear majority of British Jews (61%) have considered leaving Britain in the past two years. A majority of them cite the surge in antisemitism since 7th October 2023 as the reason.
- 59% of British Jews try not to show visible signs of their Jewishness due to concerns relating to antisemitism.
- 96% of British Jews feel that Jewish people in Britain are less safe compared to before October 2023.
- 98% of British Jews believe that, since October 2023, the level of antisemitism has increased compared to before. This compares to 51% of the British public who said that they believed that antisemitism has increased in the UK since October 2023.⁶

Most tragically, the insecurity felt by British Jews is shared by their children, who have suffered their share of antisemitic abuse. Unforgivably, much of that abuse has been endured at school, the place where children should be equally welcomed and supported and able to focus on learning in a safe and pleasant environment. Meanwhile, for children attending Jewish faith schools, surrounded by their peers, the schools have become a

³ See <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/crime/antisemitism-islamophobia-london-police-data-b2990420.html>

⁴ See <https://antisemitism.org/jews-over-nine-times-more-likely-to-be-targets-of-hate-crimes-than-other-faith-group-cao-analysis-of-home-office-stats-shows>

⁵ See <https://antisemitism.org/new-polling-majority-of-british-see-no-future-in-uk>

⁶ See <https://antisemitism.org/extremism-rife-as-antisemitism-rises-to-highest-levels-on-record>

refuge from the hatred without, as Jewish children conduct their studies behind guards and walls, practicing lockdowns and other security drills.

These are all reminders that a Jewish childhood in contemporary Britain is not one of innocence. Instead, Jewish children realise painfully early in life that a portion of their fellow citizens despise them for who they are, that the state has to date shown itself incapable of guaranteeing the protection of their community, and that they must take precautions accordingly. Schools are not only not immune from the hate but have become forums or even incubators of it.

This submission seeks to illustrate some of the hardships that Jewish children are going through at school and provide recommendations to address the crisis of antisemitism in British schooling.

While Jewish children will be the first to benefit from major change to how antisemitism is addressed at schools and colleges, other children will also gain from a more tolerant and less divisive environment, and wider society will ultimately profit as well. As the former Chief Rabbi, Lord Sacks, said: “The appearance of antisemitism is always an early warning sign of a dangerous dysfunction within a culture, because the hate that begins with Jews never ends with Jews.”⁷

⁷ See <https://rabbisacks.org/quotes/antisemitism-is-a-warning-sign/>

QUANTITATIVE EVIDENCE

According to the CST, there were 204 recorded antisemitic incidents affecting people and buildings in the school sector in 2025 – the most recent year for which there are available statistics – and 266 incidents reported in 2024. These numbers are far higher than the already intolerable figure of 98 school-related incidents recorded in 2022, the last full year before the 2023 attack. Of the 204 incidents recorded for 2025, 28 were categorised as assault and 151 as abusive behaviour.⁸

It is highly likely that many antisemitic incidents are not reported, not to mention that an environment of unpleasantness can arise even without repeated incidents. In 2024, another report found that “around one-quarter of [Jewish] parents report that their child or children have experienced antisemitism at school, in the vicinity of school or travelling to and from school. Children attending Jewish schools are more likely to experience antisemitism travelling to and from school, particularly if they are Orthodox or Haredi” – in other words, visibly Jewish.⁹

14% of incidents in the school sector in 2025 involved physical attacks, compared to 4% in other environments, indicating that incidents at schools are often more severe than those involving Jewish people of any age elsewhere. That has a bearing on Jewish children as victims but also on other children as perpetrators.¹⁰

Despite the scale of the problem – which is likely underreported by children to their parents and by parents to Jewish organisations or other authorities – most schools do not have appropriate policies in place to address it. A report in 2022 found that, of the schools that responded to the author’s request for information, only 3.4% reported that they had a policy that specifically referred to antisemitism.¹¹

It should also be borne in mind that children are not the only demographic present in the school environment. Last year, NASUWT – The Teachers Union surveyed Jewish teachers across the country, revealing that educational professionals are also being subjected to antisemitism.¹²

The survey found that 51% of Jewish teachers had experienced antisemitism in the workplace over the preceding year, including a staggering 79% working in non-faith

⁸ See <https://cst.org.uk/data/file/3/1/CST%20Incidents%20Report%202025.1772031180.pdf>

⁹ See <https://www.jpr.org.uk/sites/default/files/attachments/School%20experiences%20a>

¹⁰ See <https://cst.org.uk/data/file/3/1/CST%20Incidents%20Report%202025.1772031180.pdf>

¹¹ See <https://henryjacksonsociety.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/Antisemitism.pdf>

¹² See <https://www.nasuwat.org.uk/article-listing/call-to-act-on-antisemitism-in-schools.html>

schools. These incidents ranged from witnessing or being subjected to Nazi-related comments, seeing swastika graffiti at school, anti-Jewish insults and antisemitic ‘banter’. A majority of respondents (52%) felt that when they reported issues, appropriate action was not taken to deal with the problem, and nine in ten said that their employers needed more training on recognising and challenging antisemitism. Given the apparent lack of confidence of Jewish staff in their employers, it is very possible that instances of antisemitism are underreported.

In view of a recent whitewash report on antisemitism by the National Education Union (NEU), the country’s largest union for educators, which discouraged adoption of the International (IHRA) Definition of Antisemitism – despite support for its adoption across the mainstream Jewish community – Jewish teachers have fewer places to turn.¹³ The NEU’s political positions may well also be emboldening activist teachers, for example when the visit by a Jewish MP to a school in his constituency had to be postponed reportedly at least in part due to the prospect of protest by some of the school’s own teachers, backed by the NEU. The local branch hailed the cancellation of the visit as “a victory for education workers, parents and the community.” Clearly, such teachers are likely to be bringing their politics into the staffroom, which will have an effect on colleagues, and it would be naïve to presume that they are not introducing their politics into the classroom as well, adversely influencing children. This is also a reminder that antisemitism can arise whether or not there are Jewish pupils at a school.

Every year, CAA commissions YouGov to poll the British public on antisemitic attitudes. In recent years, the figures for 18-24-year-olds, the youngest cohort in the sample, are considerably worse than for their older counterparts, with British young adults exhibiting markedly higher levels of antisemitic views.¹⁴ For example, one in ten people in Britain believe that compared to other groups, Jewish people have too much power in the media; among 18-24 year olds, this rises to 16%. Almost one in ten – 9% – of 18-24 year olds have a favourable view of Hamas, compared to 3% of the general British public. This pattern is seen across question categories. While universities no doubt play a role in this trend, it stands to reason that young people do not suddenly acquire these views at eighteen, but rather that they develop during their younger years. While the review to which this report is being submitted focuses on the educational environment, schools are only one of three main sources of learning for modern children, the other two being the home and social media. The fight against antisemitism among our children will at some point require addressing problems arising in those two other environments as well.

¹³ See <https://neu.org.uk/sites/default/files/2026-04/Monaghan%20report%20final.pdf>

¹⁴ See <https://antisemitism.org/generation-hate> AND <https://antisemitism.org/new-polling-shows-extent-of-sympathy-for-hamas-and-frightening-trends-of-radicalism-among-young-britons>

The figures reveal a significant problem of antisemitism in our schools, and due to underreporting by children, parents and staff, it is likely that they mask a deeper rot in the sector. Indeed, reporting is most likely to occur when antisemitism is expressed towards or witnessed by a Jewish person. Yet given how few Jewish people there are in Britain, there is every likelihood that antisemitic views expressed by pupils and learned at school, home or on social media are going unchallenged in schools across the country. They may not be recognised for what they are by untrained teachers and administrators, or they may simply be ignored because they appear to be victimless. That may be true in that particular classroom or playground, but that pupil may take those views onto social media later that evening, and worse still they may carry them into later life, representing a fundamental failure in their education.

All of this is having an effect on the Jewish community. Our representative polling has shown that nearly nine in ten – 88% – British Jews said that if anybody in their family were choosing a school, antisemitism would be a factor in their choice.¹⁵ It is unacceptable that in this day and age, the risk of racist abuse should have to be a consideration for parents when selecting their children’s schooling.

¹⁵ See <https://antisemitism.org/do-british-jews-believe-that-they-have-a-future>

ILLUSTRATIVE INCIDENTS

A number of incidents have been reported to CAA or documented in recent months, of which the following are an illustrative selection.

ABUSE

Example 1

A parent reported to CAA that her children experienced sustained antisemitic abuse at school after the October 2023 Hamas attacks. Incidents included pupils chanting "Jew, Jew", shouting anti-Israel abuse, drawing swastikas on school property and making threats of violence against Jewish families.

The parent also reported concerns about staff responses, including allegations that reports were minimised or dismissed. The parent made it clear that she felt that schools are not equipped to deal with antisemitism and that they deal with antisemitic incidents differently to other forms of racism.

This sort of abuse is commonplace, and it is happening even among younger pupils.

Example 2

A parent told CAA that her ten-year-old child had received antisemitic abuse in a primary school playground. She was astonished at how such antisemitic rhetoric is being spewed in schools even among young people. Her ten-year-old was surrounded by other pupils of the same age saying Hitler was right. They also said that they wanted to play a game called 'finding the Jews'.

Example 3

It was reported in the media¹⁶ that a six-year-old Jewish girl in London was subjected to verbal abuse for singing in Hebrew. The girl had been asked to read a poem or sing a song reflecting her culture, and she chose to sing an Israeli song with her friend, who was also Jewish. Their parents said that during the performance, classmates had shouted "baby killers", which reduced the children to tears. In a separate alleged incident, the same six-year-old was taunted while playing fairies with a friend. The child's mother said that when her daughter said, "let's fly to Israel", another pupil responded by asking "isn't that where they kill babies?"

¹⁶ See <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2026/04/04/revealed-shocking-scale-of-anti-semitism-in-britain-schools/>

Example 4

Meanwhile a thirteen-year-old in Devon allegedly performed a Nazi salute and declared that “Jews shouldn’t have the same rights as others”.

Children at Jewish schools are also being subjected to antisemitic abuse by school-aged children: it simply takes place off the premises.

Example 5

A thirteen-year-old girl was travelling on the school bus during her first term at a Hebrew school in north-west London in November 2024, when a group of eleven-year-olds from another school began banging on the windows, shouting abuse and filming the children inside while yelling “f*** Israel”. The teenager’s mother still feels too scared to let her daughter travel to school independently and now collects her from the bus drop-off point.

It was not without good reason that Jewish schools directed pupils in the wake of October 2023 to remove their blazers with Jewish insignia when they travelled to and from school.¹⁷

BULLYING

Where the abuse is sustained, it escalates from an isolated incident to antisemitic bullying.

Example 6

A Jewish pupil attending a North London secondary school in London reported to CAA that they were surrounded by classmates performing Nazi salutes during a drama lesson. Following the incident, the behaviour spread into the playground and onto social media. A class messaging group was reportedly renamed to “F*** Israel, Heil Hitler”. The pupil was also subjected to antisemitic stereotypes, including claims that Jews control global finances and were responsible for 9/11, and was sent voice notes accusing him of being a paedophile “who thinks he can get away with it because he’s a Jew”. According to the child’s parents, the child lost confidence in teachers’ ability to protect him and was ultimately withdrawn from the school.

TEACHERS

The problems are not just from pupils but also from teachers. Sometimes staff conduct can be directly abusive, but at other times their lack of neutrality can create an environment of hostility and embolden pupils to express views learned elsewhere.

¹⁷ See <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/education/parents-jewish-schools-security-hamas-b2428383.html>

Example 7

For example, it has been reported¹⁸ that In Epping, a mother withdrew her daughter from a local school after a failed complaint regarding a teacher wearing a watermelon pin – a symbol of solidarity with Palestinians (a half watermelon contains the same colours as the flag of the Palestinian Authority and replicates the entire shape of the state of Israel, implying, however mundanely, the destruction of the Jewish state and its replacement with a Palestinian state). The same teacher was also accused of imposing “unfair” disciplinary measures on the child, including giving her a detention on her birthday.

TEXTBOOKS

Example 8

Teachers are one source of education in the classroom; textbooks are another. In Leeds, one Year 7 teaching pack referred¹⁹ to Jesus as being born in Palestine. This is plainly historically inaccurate and therefore a poor resource to be providing to children: the Romans only began calling the territory ‘Palestine’ in around 135 CE, a full century after Jesus died.

But it is not a mere error: it is part of a wider campaign that manifests much more broadly and seeks to strip away Jesus’ and Christianity’s Jewish heritage and, above all, to sever the connection of Jews to Israel. It is a throwback to classic antisemitic tropes alleging that Jesus was not a Jewish victim but a victim of the Jews, and, the logic goes, hardly the last of their victims in Palestine. Moreover, if there was never an ancient Israel in that region, there is less justification for a modern Israel to be there either.

Given the sensitivity around this topic and the need to educate around it extremely carefully, ideologically biased teaching resources risk doing enormous harm to children’s education and their perception of their Jewish peers.

FAILURE OF ADMINISTRATORS

Pupils engaging in antisemitic conduct is bad enough, but could be mitigated if teachers, school administrators and regulators were intervening to protect victims and punish and educate perpetrators as appropriate. But, as alluded to by a number of incidents above, that is often not happening, and this failure to address and confront antisemitism in the school sector has created a systemic problem.

¹⁸ See <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2026/04/04/revealed-shocking-scale-of-anti-semitism-in-britain-schools/>

¹⁹ See <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2026/04/04/revealed-shocking-scale-of-anti-semitism-in-britain-schools/>

Example 9

A Jewish sixth-form student in a non-Jewish school told CAA of how he was subjected to a sustained period of antisemitic harassment from a new pupil who had joined from another school. In November 2025, the new pupil stated that “the Rothschilds control the world because they are Jewish.” In December, the new pupil issued something of an “apology”, but the victim did not consider it sincere, and hours later the perpetrator reposted a TikTok video insinuating that Jews control the United States. As far as the victim was concerned, the perpetrator’s “antisemitism was not the result of ignorance, but rather it was intentional and malicious.”

The victim collected further evidence from social media, and after a month of deliberation, the victim decided to report the perpetrator. During the school’s investigation, more incidents ensued. The victim reported feeling unsafe and wrote formally to the school, stating: “I no longer feel safe being in lessons or shared spaces with [the perpetrator]...This has had a real impact on my mental health and wellbeing” and “I am scared, and I want to be clear that this fear is not abstract or political. It is about my safety at school.” The letter invoked the school’s Safeguarding, Anti-Bullying and Behaviour policies.

Despite being assured by the school that the perpetrator would not return to the victim’s economics class, he did after only a one-day suspension. On his first day back, the perpetrator was overheard saying that he would “start cracking less Jewish jokes [sic].” The perpetrator’s parents reportedly believed that “he had done nothing wrong and that he was punished because he was ‘pro-Palestine’.”

The victim told the school in no uncertain terms that “keeping [the perpetrator] in the school shows that any other student can just be antisemitic and get off with a one-day suspension.” A restorative conversation was eventually arranged but the victim was told that they “were not allowed to talk about the incident.” The victim left the meeting “even more disappointed than when I had come in.” When he proposed that the perpetrator be made to research antisemitism and present his findings, modelled on a practice at another school, it was rejected as “too exposing”. The writer noted bitterly: “I don’t understand why school does far more to protect racist antisemites rather than the victims.”

Example 10

A Jewish secondary-school pupil experienced repeated antisemitic bullying over an extended period. Classmates directed antisemitic slurs at the pupil, performed Nazi salutes and mocked the Holocaust. The harassment escalated to physical intimidation and exclusion. The parents were disappointed and frustrated that the school did not take steps to resolve the bullying as, in their view, the school would have done for a pupil from another minority. The parents eventually sought alternative educational arrangements because they felt that the school had been unable to stop the abuse.

Example 11

A girl was called a “f***ing Zionist pig” at school, among other incidents. Of the school’s response, she told *The Times*: “The school’s leadership was very, very weak on all of it. I would show them a post [on social media] and they’d say they would deal with it. And then I would see the girl who just basically called me a Nazi in class the next day. I felt often they were protecting other students over me. They never once said there was zero tolerance for antisemitism in the school.” Her mother pointed towards a much larger issue when observing that schools “don’t feel empowered to have conversations about this [antisemitism]. They don’t have the vocabulary or understanding.”²⁰

Example 12

Another Jewish pupil from a school in North London contacted CAA to disclose that for the past two years her ‘friends’ stopped talking to her and would only socialise with her again if she said that Israel was committing a genocide.

This is a useful illustration of how what may appear to be merely political discourse – albeit of a deeply offensive nature – is inseparable from hostility towards Jewish people in modern Britain. Children have a way, through their bluntness, of clarifying matters that can elude adults.

The Jewish pupil refused to submit to this racist purity test and everywhere she went in school, she heard people whispering about her being a supporter of killing babies (it is extraordinary how modern British children, likely ignorant of the antisemitic blood libel that originated in England, are now repeating it). The pupil reported the bullying to the Head of Pastoral and her Form Tutor but for two years nothing was done. As a result she did not attend her end of Sixth Form prom or graduation ceremony. Her final two years of school were lonely and she felt very intimidated. Above all she felt let down by the staff members who did nothing to resolve the bullying that was taking place.

²⁰ See <https://www.thetimes.com/uk/education/article/antisemitism-schools-jews-holocaust-xpcmg9q96>

Example 13

Several Jewish teachers from schools in London have also contacted CAA over recent months and have reported that they have felt increasingly isolated amongst teaching staff and have been disappointed at how other teachers were handling the explosion of antisemitism in schools. They stressed that schools do not have the proper safeguarding measures in place to deal with antisemitism and that education is needed not only for pupils but also for teachers.

Example 14

A veteran Jewish teacher noticed, prior to October 2023, a large swastika in the playground of the school. The school's response was to say, "We're aware of the graffiti; it's been there for a month already. We'll get round to painting over it when we can." The teacher pushed back at the lax attitude, explaining how leaving it there normalised it and would make it harder to re-educate the pupils. But the school never did get around to removing the graffiti. The teacher reportedly left the school after just one month.

In a new school, after October 2023, she recalled: "I recently had a group of three girls in a state school in North London verbally attack me in Arabic, once again, for simply asking them not to disrupt the lesson with their silly antics. The students threw accusations of racism towards me and shouted slurs such as 'intifada' and curses in Arabic. One male member of [Senior Leadership Team] entered the space and immediately excused the students' behaviour without any consequences. I felt bullied in my own classroom."

Although a number of sympathetic pupils supported the teacher and reported the incident to senior management, it was only when the teacher threatened not to return to the school to the Deputy Head that the three girls were put on immediate suspension.²¹

CUMULATIVE IMPACT

These selected examples illustrate how blatant antisemitic abuse can be, how it can morph into a sustained campaign of bullying, and how educational resources can contribute to a negative environment for Jewish pupils and ignorance and hostility on the part of their non-Jewish peers. This environment is not always quantifiable, but it is severely impactful.

CAA consulted with Dr Yaakov Barr, the founder and CEO of JTeen, a mental health service for Jewish youth utilised by over 5,000 teenagers. Dr Barr told us: "One observation from JTeen is that the impact of antisemitism on young people is often less about individual incidents and more about the cumulative effect. We regularly hear from

²¹ See <https://nicolelampert.substack.com/p/have-our-schools-become-a-breeding>

teenagers and students who feel less safe, less confident expressing their Jewish identity, and more anxious about how they will be perceived by others.

“Since 7th October in particular, we have seen increased levels of fear, hypervigilance and uncertainty among some young people. Many describe feeling that they need to think twice before wearing Jewish symbols, discussing Israel or openly expressing their views. The result is not only anxiety but a gradual erosion of confidence, belonging and emotional wellbeing.

“In our experience, the psychological impact of antisemitism is often underestimated because it is not always visible. Young people may continue attending school or university while carrying a significant burden of stress, fear and isolation.”

The examples also demonstrate how it is not just Jewish pupils who are impacted but also Jewish teachers, and how social media and parental values can be just as significant parts of the problem. They point to a systemic problem enabled by the failure of school administrations and regulators to identify and combat this pernicious hatred.

It was mentioned earlier in this submission that, while antisemitism in schools has surged over the past two and half years, it is not new. Already back in 2021, Ofsted felt compelled to warn schools that if they did not act on antisemitism they could fail their inspections.²² It must represent a regulatory failure if, half a decade later, the problem has become considerably worse.

²² See <https://www.jewishnews.co.uk/schools-failing-on-antisemitism-could-flunk-inspections-ofsted-warns/>

RECOMMENDATIONS

These recommendations are designed to secure three outcomes:

- Our children's education equips them to recognise and reject antisemitism;
- Our teachers and school leaders are trained and empowered to identify and act against it; and
- Parents and regulators are able to hold schools and their leadership to account where anti-Jewish racism is not addressed.

While this review focuses on schools and colleges in England, our recommendations apply in principle also to Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, albeit some of the mechanisms there vary.

The recommendations are grouped under four headings:

1. Classroom education and curriculum;
2. Staff and training;
3. Internal policies and accountability; and
4. Regulatory oversight.

Many but not all of the recommendations relate to the Department for Education (DfE).

1. CLASSROOM EDUCATION AND CURRICULUM

Classroom teaching and resources

- **DfE should provide all teaching staff with guidance on facilitating classroom discussion of politics, religion and international affairs, upholding the core value of freedom of expression without permitting discrimination, harassment or intimidation.** This must include how to distinguish legitimate political debate from antisemitic expression. Schools should be required to fulfil their duty of political balance through the fair presentation of opposing viewpoints – including on Israel and Zionism, which is the belief that Jews have a right to self-determination in their ancestral homeland – whether in lessons or in the selection and oversight of external speakers.
- **DfE should commission an independent audit of commonly used textbooks and teaching resources to identify and ultimately seek to remove inaccurate, biased or antisemitic material – particularly concerning Jews, Judaism, Israel and Zionism – and replace it with accurate, evidence-based content.** DfE should use its convening power to work with publishers and professional bodies (such as the Publishers Association and relevant subject associations) to develop and promote a voluntary accuracy standard for content concerning Jews, Judaism, Israel and Zionism, and signpost schools to vetted, accurate alternative resources, developed in partnership with recognised antisemitism specialists and Jewish communal organisations. Teaching materials carry authority in the classroom and must not be a vehicle for hate.
- **DfE should require schools to give parents access to the teaching materials used in lessons, so that curriculum content is open to scrutiny,** for example by publishing textbook lists on the school website or providing a list to parents at the beginning of the academic year. Parents have the right to know what their children are learning, including how they are being taught to view other communities.

Curriculum

- **DfE should work to ensure that non-statutory national guidance on Religious Education includes mandatory coverage of antisemitism across all Key Stages – covering not only the Holocaust but contemporary forms of antisemitism and the role of Israel and Zionism in modern Jewish identity.** This will involve collaboration with the Religious Education Council for England and Wales, Agreed Syllabus Conferences and Standing Advisory Councils on Religious Education (SACREs), and potentially Ofqual and the GCSE exam boards. This content should be developed in partnership with recognised antisemitism specialists and leading Jewish charities.

DfE should also consider how this requirement can be embedded via the Academy Trust Handbook or funding agreements, to ensure consistent application across the sector.

- **DfE should work to ensure that the study of both Christianity and Judaism is a required component of Religious Education, in view of the nation's essential Judeo-Christian heritage.** This will involve collaboration with the Religious Education Council, Agreed Syllabus Conferences and SACREs to update non-statutory national guidance, and DfE should also consider how this requirement can be embedded via the Academy Trust Handbook or funding agreements, to ensure consistent application across the sector.
- **The Government should maintain funding for school visits to Auschwitz-Birkenau and should extend funding to support educational visits to the sites in Israel attacked by Hamas on 7th October 2023.** Antisemitism is not confined to the far-right and did not end in 1945, and education on anti-Jewish racism must reflect its contemporary urgency.
- **DfE should introduce age-appropriate, mandatory lessons on the critical use of social media and online sources** – equipping pupils to question sources, identify misinformation and disinformation and recognise antisemitism online. Alongside the home and the school, social media is now one of the principal influences on what children learn.

2. STAFF AND TRAINING

Training

- **DfE should require mandatory training for Trainee Teachers undertaking PGCE and Early Career Teachers on recognising and tackling antisemitism, delivered within their funded time away from the classroom for professional development.** This training should be developed in partnership with recognised antisemitism specialists and Jewish communal organisations.
- **Any training on inclusion undertaken by school staff must include a dedicated module on antisemitism,** with the content used in those sessions developed in partnership with recognised antisemitism specialists and Jewish communal organisations, with implementation assessed by Ofsted as part of its inspection of schools' safeguarding and personal development provision.
- **Every school and college should be required to designate a member of its senior leadership team as the nominated lead on antisemitism.** This role – which is similar to the Designated Safeguarding Lead – should receive specialist training by

recognised antisemitism specialists, lead on antisemitism cases within the school and act as the first point of contact for antisemitism-related correspondence from the Government, Ofsted, the local authority and other statutory bodies.

Prevent

- **The Home Office, working with DfE, should further integrate antisemitism awareness into the Prevent framework, ensuring that Prevent leads in schools have the training and resources to identify and respond to antisemitic radicalisation, and the confidence to make use of existing Channel referral routes.** This should include reviewing whether school staff are sufficiently aware of and supported to use existing referral pathways, and increasing the number of Channel intervention providers commissioned with expertise in antisemitism.

Senior leadership and professional conduct

- **DfE should make preventing and tackling antisemitism an explicit element of the National Standards of Excellence for Headteachers** (the “Headteachers’ Standards”).
- **The Secretary of State should issue statutory guidance making clear that a serious and sustained failure by a school leader to protect pupils or staff from antisemitic abuse is capable of amounting to unacceptable professional conduct** — so that egregious failures may be sanctioned by the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA).

Political neutrality

- **DfE should issue statutory guidance reinforcing teachers’ duty of political neutrality in schools, making clear that trade union motions or campaigns on political matters cannot override an individual teacher’s professional obligations within schools and colleges, or in their vicinity where the activity involves or impacts children – for example, protests against external speakers.** It is unacceptable that teachers can support exclusionary protests at the school gates against Jewish visitors without professional penalty, even if the cause is, outrageously, supported by their union. For academies and further education colleges, this may need addressing through college funding agreements, the Education and Training Foundation and other mechanisms.
- **DfE should issue statutory guidance requiring all schools and colleges to adopt a staff dress code and code of conduct prohibiting the wearing or display of political or intimidatory symbols on school grounds, unless authorised in writing by the school’s or college’s leadership.** This guidance should make clear that policies may permit symbols recognised as part of shared national culture, such as

poppies, while addressing the risk that symbols associated with a foreign national flag or a side in a foreign conflict can be reasonably interpreted as taking a position on a contested issue. This risks compromising a school's duty of political balance and alienating pupils who hold a different view, and it must stop.

3. INTERNAL POLICIES AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Adopting a clear definition

- **DfE should require every school and college to adopt the full International (IHRA) Definition of Antisemitism – including all eleven illustrative examples in full and without amendment – within their inclusion policy or similar. The Definition must be applied whenever an allegation of antisemitism arises. Antisemitism should be named as a specific form of abuse** within each school's behaviour, anti-bullying and safeguarding policies, with reference to the Definition.

Recording and reporting

- **The Government should introduce a statutory duty on all schools and colleges to record, investigate and report antisemitic incidents to their local authority, and to the police where appropriate.**

Inspection and accountability

- **The Government should require Ofsted, the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) and all other relevant inspection bodies to assess schools' compliance with the requirement to adopt the International (IHRA) Definition of Antisemitism, and to treat a school's approach to antisemitism as a specific element of inspection,** with statutory guidance updated accordingly.
- **Ofsted should introduce complaint-triggered inspections in response to antisemitism referrals, so that victims and others do not have to wait for the next scheduled inspection cycle for their concerns to be addressed.** This is in addition to treating a school's approach to antisemitism as a specific element of its regular inspections.
- **The Government should establish designated national leads for antisemitism monitoring within DfE and Ofsted, with statutory authority to receive escalated concerns from pupils, staff and parents where a school has not adequately addressed an antisemitic incident, and to conduct independent reviews of serious incidents or alleged institutional failure.** Those leads should also work with local authorities to ensure that those authorities have the resources and processes to audit schools and to handle complaints. It may be appropriate to conduct a review to

clarify the roles in this regard of DfE's existing complaints-handling routes, the Office of the Children's Commissioner and the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman.

- **The Government should ensure meaningful consequences for schools that persistently fail to comply with these measures, or that allow a hostile environment for Jewish pupils and staff to develop** – including, where appropriate, revocation of academy status, termination of a free school's funding agreement, intervention in a maintained school or deregistration of an independent school. Institutions that tolerate antisemitism and teach children that it is acceptable are undeserving of public funding and cannot be entrusted with the education of our youth.
- **Within the next six months, schools should be required to give parents a clear route to escalate a complaint relating to antisemitism where they are dissatisfied with the outcome at school level**, in line with the transparency expected of complaints procedures in other industries. DfE should provide standardised templates for schools or local authorities to use.
- **DfE should produce and circulate to all school and college leaders, as an immediate measure, concise, practical guidance on what antisemitism looks like in contemporary settings, grounded in the International Definition of Antisemitism.** This can be developed in partnership with recognised antisemitism specialists and Jewish communal organisations.

4. REGULATORY OVERSIGHT

Statutory footing

- **The Government should place the Safe to Learn guidance entitled “Addressing Antisemitism in Child Safeguarding and Protection” on a statutory footing, and update the Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) statutory guidance to designate antisemitism as a specific safeguarding concern.**

Specialist representation

- **DfE should introduce a rule requiring any DfE-convened or DfE-funded inclusion or anti-racism forum to include a recognised antisemitism specialist or representative from the mainstream Jewish community.** DfE should also encourage other regulators and local authorities to adopt the same standard.

Ministerial leadership

- **The Secretary of State should make a public intervention reinforcing that existing powers will be used where schools fail to address antisemitism, and should then provide twice-yearly updates to Parliament** on progress in tackling antisemitism in schools and colleges, including on the implementation of these recommendations.