

Ilford Jewish Primary School

Inspection report

LEA	Redbridge
Inspected under the auspices of	Pikuach
Inspection dates	19 th – 20 th September 2011
Reporting inspector	Jeffrey Leader

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 48 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary-Aided
Age range of pupils	3-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	353
Appropriate authority	The Governing Body
Chair	Howard Kemp
Headteacher	Roz Levin
Date of previous school inspection	14 – 15 May 2009
School address	Carlton Drive Barkingside Ilford, Essex, IG6 1LZ
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two inspectors. The inspectors visited 10 lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documentation including pupils' books, teachers' lesson plans, the Jewish Studies Curriculum and the school's Self-Evaluation document.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- The progress pupils make in their Jewish Studies.
- The quality of teaching in Jewish Studies.
- Leadership and Management in Jewish Studies.

Information about the school

Iford Jewish Primary School is a designated, two form entry primary school, with a nursery, situated in the London Borough of Redbridge. It has experienced a falling roll over the past few years. The demographics of the community are changing rapidly and many members of the Jewish community have moved out of the area. In the last few months, the school has admitted a significant number of non-Jewish children, many of whom have little or no English. These pupils amount to approximately 30% of the total roll. Nevertheless, the school has retained its strong Jewish ethos. 20% of curriculum time is devoted to Jewish Studies, including the teaching of Modern Hebrew as a modern foreign language. Both Jewish and non-Jewish pupils are taught Jewish Studies together. This appears to have no adverse effect on the ability of Jewish pupils to progress well in their Jewish Studies.

In September 2013 Ilford Jewish is planning to move into a new, purpose built, one and a half form entry school on the King Solomon site.

Inspection judgements

Grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Overall effectiveness

2

Capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Iford Jewish Primary School retains a strong Jewish ethos and provides a good standard of Jewish education. Pupils enjoy their lessons. Pupil questionnaires are mainly positive and one pupil wrote, 'I love being in IJPS and I would not want to go anywhere else.' In addition pupils spoke highly of their Jewish Studies teachers when talking to inspectors. They feel valued and as a result mostly behave well especially in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. However, good behaviour is not always consistent in the older classes. The success of Jewish Studies in the school is also appreciated by the vast majority of parents who praise the school for its work in this area. One parent wrote, 'A fantastic part of my children's schooling. They are learning very quickly and enjoy all aspects of their Hebrew and Jewish studies which is linked well with secular learning. The Jewish Studies teachers are brilliant. Families are included in beautiful events too.'

Key to the school's success in Jewish education is the level of leadership shown especially in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. The Jewish Studies Co-ordinator is a very good role model who values the support of the headteacher, link governor and teaching staff in trying to develop the school's Jewish education programme further. Outstanding leadership and teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 ensure that pupils are given a very good start in their Jewish Studies.

Pupils make good progress in Key Stages 1 and 2 and are well prepared, according to one teacher at the local Jewish secondary school, for Jewish education at secondary level. Teachers plan effectively to make sure that all pupils' needs are met. They assess their pupils' work and track their progress but this is stronger in some areas, notably Hebrew reading, rather than others. The school is in the process of developing assessment folders which will track pupils' progress, more effectively, in a range of Jewish Studies from Reception to Year 6. The Jewish Studies curriculum is adequate in offering a wide range of teaching topics. However, while some of the curriculum's teaching objectives offer clear guidance as to what needs to be taught, others do not. The school is in the process of reviewing and developing the curriculum into a more cohesive and coherent study programme.

Pupils of different social and ethnic backgrounds mix happily and pupils and staff hold each other in high regard. The influx of a number of non-Jewish children who learn Jewish subjects alongside their Jewish classmates has had no negative effect on the teaching and learning of Jewish Studies. In fact, as one parent points out, the questions about Judaism asked by non-Jewish pupils help to re-inforce learning among Jewish pupils.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Develop the assessment procedures to cover all subject areas of Jewish Studies.
- Develop the Jewish Studies curriculum in a more coherent way by introducing more specific and realistic learning objectives for all age groups.
- Ensure that the Jewish Studies Co-ordinator is given the necessary time and training to undertake leadership tasks and develop her role as Head of Jewish Studies.

- Develop teachers' understanding of pupils' individual learning and behaviour needs in Jewish Studies and the use of strategies to support them.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

In every lesson observed, pupils made at least satisfactory progress, and in most they made good progress in their Jewish Studies. This is possible, because they generally behave well, are motivated and engaged. This is especially so in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, where pupils remain attentive and eager to please. In Key Stage 2, although pupils respond well the majority of the time, there are momentary lapses where this is not the case. Sometimes pupils lose concentration when there is a gap between the teacher's explanation and a child-centred activity. Learning objectives and outcome criteria enable pupils to understand what is expected of them.

The school has worked hard to raise standards in Hebrew reading. This is a main target in its Pikuach Action Plan which is based on the previous inspection's findings. In a Year 1 class, for example, many pupils were able to recognise Hebrew letters, answer questions on *Rosh Hashanah* (New Year) and recite basic *berachot* (blessings). In Key Stage 1, the *Ivrit* (Hebrew) teacher and in Key Stage 2, a teaching assistant have been employed to work with individual pupils to boost their reading levels. Pupils are seen at least weekly and when possible twice a week, they read and are set homework to practice reading at home. Accurate records are kept and pupils are making good progress, becoming noticeably more fluent. The pupils in Key Stage 2, most of whom have attended the school since the nursery, display a good range of skills and knowledge. They are able to explain clearly the meaning of *Rosh Hashanah* (New Year), its customs such as giving *zedakah* (charity); visiting the *mikveh* (ritual bath), the meaning of purity and *teshuvah* (repentance). There were a few pupils, however, who could not tell that *Rosh Hashanah* is the Jewish New Year. Hebrew reading in Key Stage 2 has improved since the last inspection. Inspectors tested a random group of Year 6 pupils, the majority of whom were able to read difficult, previously unseen Hebrew sentences, with accuracy.

Pupils' contribute well to the school, the wider community and the global community. This includes raising money for Jewish and non-Jewish, local, national and international charities. Pupils and their families raised £10,000 in less than 15 months to purchase a rapid response, medical motorbike in memory of a dearly loved teacher who died. Other examples include taking flowers and fruit to old age homes, choir and dance troupe entertaining at these homes, involvement in local synagogues/youth groups and also in the JLGB (Jewish Lads' and Girls' Brigade) volunteering scheme. The school has established productive links with a school in Ghana. It also collaborated with a school in New Zealand and helped to collect one and a half million buttons in memory of the one and a half million Jewish children who perished during the Holocaust. Pupils are encouraged to express their views through the school council and healthy school forum.

Inspectors gathered pupils' views about their Jewish education through interviews and questionnaires. 121 of which were completed and returned by Key Stage 2 pupils. While the majority responded positively, a significant minority claimed, in the questionnaires, that they only sometimes or never enjoyed *tefillah* (prayer). Although behaviour in and around the school has improved substantially since the last inspection, some older pupils, in their questionnaires, refer to misbehaviour that sometimes disrupts their Jewish Studies lessons.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. The ethnic make-up of the school population means that pupils have a very good insight, based on first-hand experience, into similarities and differences between their own and others' cultures.

Pupils' attainment¹	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and their progress	2
How well do pupils achieve and enjoy their learning?	2
To what extent do pupils feel safe?	2
How well do pupils behave?	2
To what extent do pupils adopt healthy lifestyles?	2
To what extent do pupils contribute to the school and wider community?	1
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
How well do pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	2
What is the extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development?	1

How effective is the provision?

The teaching of Jewish Studies in Key Stage 1 is of a consistently high standard with mostly good and some outstanding practice. There are many examples of good teaching including well planned and delivered activities that ensure an understanding of the topics taught. Pupils are encouraged to learn independently and to interact with each other. There are excellent examples of the use of *Ivrit* (Hebrew) as a natural part of the lesson to which the pupils respond very well. Relationships between teachers and their pupils are excellent and staff clearly liaise and work well together. The pupils are well behaved, enthusiastic and enjoy their learning whilst making good progress.

In Key Stage 2, teaching and learning while often good is not so consistent. Most teachers' lesson plans, for example, are carefully considered whilst a few are more general and less detailed. Where planning is good, learning objectives and outcome criteria enable pupils to understand what is expected of them. Although teachers in both key stages use success criteria in their planning they need to make more use of these effective measuring tools by involving pupils in assessing together what has been learned in a lesson. Some lessons lack pace and suitably challenging activities to engage pupil interest. Behaviour management is varied, in some classes there was some low level disruption such as chatting but the teacher was able to quickly bring the children back to focus on the work in hand. The inspectors were pleased to note staff have very good relationships with their pupils; provide positive feedback; use appropriate and popular incentives and ensure a safe learning environment. Children enjoy their successes and speak very warmly about their Jewish Studies teachers.

Pupils' work in Jewish Studies is regularly marked, with good praise and often with comments that help the pupils to improve. The quality of this written feedback tends to be varied. A good example of marking was found in the book of a Year 2 pupil where the teacher had written: 'A great start ...what happened next?' Or in another book; 'A great start ... how was Mordechai rewarded and why?' Less informative marking was found in the book of a Year 6 pupil, where the only comment on a piece of work was 'well done.' Although the comment was positive, it would have been useful to explain to the pupil why his work was 'well done.'

In its Pikuach Action Plan, the school has a target which aims to 'introduce effective monitoring and evaluation systems.' Although assessment of pupils' progress in Jewish Studies is good and teachers track the progress pupils make, especially in Hebrew reading, the school is in the process of developing a much more effective system of assessment with the creation of Assessment Folders

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

which will track pupils' progress in all areas of Jewish Studies from Reception to Year 6.

There is established among Jewish Studies teachers good practice to share information when pupils pass from one Key Stage to another. The Pikuach Action Plan also aims to 'expand the range of teaching opportunities in order to better meet the needs of all the pupils in the class.' It achieves this by teachers offering encouragement and employing good teaching strategies including encouraging 'talk partners' to discuss issues and the use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) for example, showing computer based video clips on how to make a mezuzah in Year 4.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, children with special educational needs receive individual support as appropriate and also benefit from careful planning and understanding of their needs. The support for those with greater levels of needs is excellent and noteworthy for the level of integration and inclusion the children achieve.

Some good provision of materials matched to pupils' ability levels was seen in Key Stage 2 along with specifically considered groups and pairings. The Individual Education Plans for those who have special educational needs are known to the teachers and are helpful. In some cases, however, the recommended strategies are not always used and some of those with special needs, particularly behavioural, emotional and social difficulties can become a disruptive influence in class. When these children have their needs appropriately met there is a significantly positive impact on learning.

The Pikuach Action Plan also contains targets relating to pupils with special educational needs. They aim 'to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs/weaker readers and those of more able pupils.' In response, the school has made specific provision for those with special educational needs to improve their fluency in Hebrew reading in both key stages. Specific individual booster work is contributing to a marked improvement in standards and confidence levels among pupils, particularly in Key Stage 2 are rising.

There is a clear ethos of inclusion and accessibility throughout the school. Teachers have a good understanding that for some children what appears to be a tiny step forward is, in fact, major progress to be celebrated. There is a lack of available and specific support in Key Stage 2 for children with Special Educational Needs in Jewish Studies. The school is aware of this and would wish to be in a position to provide appropriate levels of support.

The Jewish Studies Curriculum is satisfactory and provides a wide range of learning experiences for pupils of all ages and abilities. These contribute to pupil's enjoyment of school and to their good progress. Although the curriculum is wide ranging and provides generally a good guide on what to teach, some of the learning objectives are ambitious or even vague. In the Reception Year, for example, ambitious learning objectives for teaching about *Yom Kippur* (Day of Atonement) include: being 'aware of the concept of fasting.' This is a difficult concept for a 5 year old child to understand. In Year 4, vague learning objectives include: 'Medieval England and the Spanish Inquisition.' These are topic headings rather than learning objectives and provide little guidance as to what is to be taught within these topics. The school is a partner in the Jewish Curriculum Partnership (JCP) and uses its materials to teach *Chumash* (Bible) in Key Stage 2. Hebrew reading and writing is supported by *Tal Am*, a successful Hebrew language programme from Canada.

The Jewish Studies Curriculum is being reviewed and re-designed around the following 5 topic areas:

- Hebrew Language – reading, writing and speaking
- Jewish Way of Life
- The Jewish Year
- Tefillah
- Torah

The formal Jewish Studies curriculum is supported by an informal curriculum which includes residential trips for Year 5 and *Shabbatonim* (Sabbath experience) in local synagogues for Years 1, 2, 3 and 4. The school has streamed Year 4 in order to meet better the needs of the more and less able in *Chumash*. If successful and with better staff provision, this experiment could be introduced to more

year groups in Key Stage 2.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The Jewish Studies Co-ordinator is a committed, passionate and extremely hard working practitioner who acts as an excellent role model to the teachers and support staff within her team. The headteacher plays a very prominent role in the Jewish Studies Department and the Co-ordinator very much values her input and support. It is a good working team, however, a full teaching timetable means that the Co-ordinator has not got the time to develop her role by, for example, monitoring Jewish Studies teaching in other classes. Although the headteacher carries out this task, it is important that the Co-ordinator is given the necessary time to undertake this and other leadership tasks, together with professional training in order to develop her real role as Head of Jewish Studies.

The school has secure safeguarding systems which meet requirements and keep all pupils healthy and safe. It works hard to keep parents and carers informed and makes a very good contribution to community cohesion with close Jewish, local and wider community relations. Developing links with schools in Israel and Africa give pupils an insight into global diversity. The school promotes inclusion, illustrated by its friendly, happy atmosphere. Equal opportunities are promoted well. All staff have a clear role in tackling discrimination and they are proud that all groups of pupils achieve well.

Governors make a significant contribution to the development of Jewish education and the link governor responsible for Jewish Studies, who is also the minister of a local synagogue, plays a prominent role by visiting the school on a regular basis and teaching Jewish Studies to the more able Year 5 and Year 6 pupils.

Parents are overwhelmingly positive about their children's Jewish education at Ilford Jewish Primary School. The following quote from a Year 4 parent, one of many positive comments received, reflects the majority view: 'Absolutely delighted with the Jewish Studies Department/Education. Beautiful activities. Involvement through learning. Strongly recommend the school.'

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in communicating ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2

The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	1
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

Teaching and Learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage is consistently outstanding. Planning and record keeping are detailed and show clear progression and thought about how to develop children’s understanding of Jewish themes such as *Shabbat* and the festivals and their knowledge of the customs such as the food that is eaten. The Jewish Studies leader at this stage and her team work tirelessly to provide a calm and gentle but stimulating, interesting and safe learning environment in which the children, including those with special educational needs, clearly thrive and enjoy learning. Relationships are excellent and engender trust between adults and children. Early Years teachers and support staff consistently display high levels of commitment, professionalism and care. Whilst teaching Jewish Studies, every opportunity is taken to encourage other skills such as communication, language and literacy, problem solving and reasoning, numeracy, creative development and personal and social skills such as turn taking and sharing. Assessment of the progress children make in their Jewish learning is based on careful observations. There is clear direction and very good action planning. There is a consistency of approach and expectations, and excellent relationships are formed with parents, carers and other agencies.

Views of parents and carers

Pikuach invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Ilford Jewish Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school. If a parent has more than one child at the school, we ask them to record an answer against all the questions, for each of their children.

The inspectors received 110 completed questionnaires. In total, there are 248 families registered at the school.

	Always	Most of the time	Occasionally	Never
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	68%	29%	3%	0

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. In 2007-8, 15% of schools were judged to be outstanding.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well. In 2007-8, 49% of schools were judged good.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils. In 2007-8, 32% of schools were judged satisfactory.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Pikuach inspectors will make further visits until it improves. In 2007-8, 5% of schools were judged inadequate.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Attainment: the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.

Progress: the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

Achievement: the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, training or development. This may refer to the acquisition of skills, knowledge, understanding or desired attributes. Attributes include qualities or personal competencies which are important to the development of the pupil; for example personal, social, cultural, emotional or health.

Capacity to improve: the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.

Leadership and management: the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.