

# King David Infant School

## Inspection report

---

LEA	<b>Manchester</b>
Inspection dates	27 – 28 March 2007
Inspected under auspices of	Pikuach

This inspection was carried out under section 10 of the Education Act 2005.

---

Type of School	Infant	School address	Wilton Polygon
School category	Voluntary Aided		Bury Old Road
Age range of pupils	4 -7		Manchester M8 6DR
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0161 740 4110
Number on roll	166	Fax number	0161 702 1471
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Simon Rosenthal
Date of previous inspection	April 2002	Head teacher	Mrs Janice Rich

---

© Pikuach copyright 2006

Website: [www.bod.org.uk](http://www.bod.org.uk)

This document has been modified from the *Every child matters: framework for the inspection of schools in England from September 2005* with their permission.

It may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## Introduction

### Description of the school

King David Infant School is a voluntary aided school serving Jewish children from four to seven years old. The ethos of the school is based on the fundamental principles and beliefs of Orthodox Judaism.

The home backgrounds, environments, personal and social economic circumstances of the children at the school vary enormously as does their Jewish knowledge on entry. The main intake comes from the King David Nursery where some Jewish Studies is incorporated into the curriculum.

The vast majority of pupils are British white. There is very little pupil mobility. The percentage of pupils whose first language is not English is low 0.7%. There are no looked after children. The level of free school meals is 3%. The majority of the pupils are Ashkenazi Jews.

The school is the holder of a Leading Aspect award Certificate.

### Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Unsatisfactory

What the school need to do to improve further:

- Develop a system of marking which allows pupils to recognise what they do well and what they can do to improve.
- Make sure that pupils are more secure in their knowledge of Torah and are able to recall information learned from their *Parashah* sheets.
- Continue to develop and encourage the use of Information and Communication Technology.

## Overall effectiveness in its provision for Jewish education

King David Infant School achieves its aim of providing a happy working environment with pupils working to their maximum potential, taught by a responsible, professional and caring staff.

The Jewish Studies Department of the King David Infant School is good overall. It works closely with secular colleagues so that, wherever possible, secular and Jewish Studies subjects complement each other and reinforce, in the pupils, a strong sense of their Jewish identity. Practical examples of this are to be found in history, geography and art.

The strength of the Jewish Studies department lies in the commitment of its staff and their ability to impart Jewish knowledge, skills and understanding at a level that meets the needs of most of their pupils. In this they are ably supported by their secular colleagues. Consequently, pupils make good progress.

Good teaching however, is not simply defined by an ability to impart knowledge. It also consists of an ability to plan lessons effectively and assess pupils' progress in a way that will enable them to improve still further. The quality of marking of pupils' work needs to improve so that pupils are made aware of their strengths and weaknesses.

Pupils' achievement and standards are good in most areas of Jewish Studies but they are less secure in their knowledge of Torah and have difficulty in recalling information learned from their *Parashah* sheets.

The school's Self Evaluation Form indicates that the school knows itself well and in this respect has a clear idea of how to improve its Jewish Studies provision.

Relationships between pupils and Jewish Studies staff are very good and enhance the sense of togetherness which pervades the school.

The effective leadership by the head teacher who is also the head of Jewish Studies ensures that high expectations in terms of pupil progress and teacher effectiveness are not restricted to impressive results in the secular field but also to most aspects of Jewish life and learning in the school.

**Grade: 2**

## Achievement and standards

Whilst pupils' prior attainment varies considerably, most, including those with learning difficulties achieve well and make good progress in line with the school's expectations as they advance from year to year. The school regards the teaching of Hebrew reading as a priority and this takes place most days. Very good standards are achieved and by the end of Year 2, most pupils are able to read unfamiliar texts accurately and fluently and use their *Siddur* with confidence. In Year 2, pupils are taught to read the script alphabet so that once this foundation is laid script writing is put to greater use later in the year.

Standards achieved in other areas of the Jewish Studies curriculum are mostly very good and in line with the school's expectations. In testing a Year 2 representative group, pupils were able to answer questions on a variety of Jewish topics including festivals, *brachot* (blessings) and months of the year. Pupils were less secure in their knowledge of Torah and had difficulty in recalling information learned from their *Parashah* sheets. The *Chagim* (Jewish festivals) are celebrated in school and the inspectors had the opportunity to observe the two model *Sedarim* (*Seder* ceremonies). These were beautifully organised and conducted, and the pupils' contribution and participation richly demonstrated their range of knowledge and skills.

## Grade: 2

## Personal development and well-being

The school has a clear policy for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development which is incorporated into the Jewish Studies policy. There is an emphasis on good standards of behaviour and these are promoted through well established reward systems one of which is directly based upon the Jewish values of care, courtesy, consideration for others and general acts of kindness. The behaviour of the pupils in Jewish Studies and throughout the school is mostly good.

Staff and pupils enjoy a good relationship. Pupils are respectful towards their teachers and other adults.

Observations of lessons, assemblies and discussions with pupils show that they enjoy their Jewish learning and have a positive attitude to their Jewish identity.

There is a daily act of collective worship in which the pupils clearly demonstrate the development of skills which contribute to *tefillah* (prayer) such as active participation in *tefillot* and the ability of Year 2 pupils to follow *tefillot* in their *siddurim*.

The learning environment is safe and secure and as well as ensuring physical safety, there are also guidelines for ensuring pupils' emotional and personal safety. Pupils are given opportunities to discuss their feelings during circle time, drama activities and at other times as appropriate. The school measures, evaluates and acts upon its pupils' feelings through focus group discussions. So for example, when some children expressed a feeling of isolation at playtimes, the school introduced a befriending system. The school also participates in S.E.A.L. – the Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning programme. Links with the Manchester Jewish Federation have been established so that there are exchanges of information concerning vulnerable pupils and families to promote the well-being of the pupil.

## Grade: 1

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

Teaching in Jewish Studies throughout the school is good overall. It is thorough in the sense that teachers concentrate on developing in their young pupils the basic skills that they will need in order to participate effectively as active members of the Jewish community. There is an emphasis on teaching reading and writing in Hebrew and the effectiveness of this teaching is reflected in the good progress pupils make in their Jewish Studies lessons. Relationships between teaching staff and their pupils are very good and this enhances the teaching and learning experience. Planning is detailed and each teacher has a book in which they record weekly what they want to achieve with each class. Similarly, individual lesson plans show what teachers hope to achieve during the course of a lesson. The teachers' record books also contain useful evaluations where teachers reflect on their teaching.

When reporting to parents on pupils' progress in Jewish Studies, teachers will often make comments that concentrate on behaviour rather than on what a child is able or unable to do in specific Jewish subject areas.

Teachers use different strategies to assess pupil progress. These include regular tests and direct questioning. Pupils who are having difficulty in learning are identified during the course of the reception year, if not earlier. In each Jewish Studies reception lesson there is a full time Jewish Studies teacher supported by one of the part-time Jewish Studies teachers who works with either a group of children who need extra support or a group who can work at an accelerated rate. There is a close liaison between the Jewish Studies teachers and the Special Educational Needs Coordinator.

There has been an improvement in the provision of resources. This was an issue at the last inspection. The library, for example, has a wider range of Jewish books available. Display around the school and in the classrooms is tidy and ordered and reinforces Jewish learning. However, some of the display material appears dated. There are far more modern resource materials available which would provide a more attractive and stimulating learning environment.

Progress has been made in the area of Information and Communications Technology (ICT). This too was an issue during the last inspection. All classes are equipped with Inter-active white boards. When used it is to good effect. However, not all teachers have the necessary skills in this area. The school has identified this as a development point.

**Grade: 2**

## Curriculum and other activities

The quality of the Jewish Studies curriculum is mostly outstanding. It is suitably matched to the needs of the pupils and takes account of their varying levels of attainment on entry to the school and the wide range of standards of religious knowledge and observance of the families that it serves.

The curriculum is suitably broad and balanced and reflects the orthodox, Zionist ethos and values of the school by providing a solid foundation of Jewish knowledge and textual skills, while implanting Jewish attitudes, beliefs and practice. There are some good examples of integration with the secular curriculum including Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education (PSHCE) which contributes to the pupils' capacity to stay healthy and safe. The teaching of Israel is the main focus in geographical studies through which a love and knowledge of the Holy Land is nurtured. There are no formal lessons for the teaching of *Ivrit* (Modern Hebrew), but during *tefillah* (Collective Worship), a number of instructions are given in *Ivrit* thereby exposing pupils to spoken Hebrew. Pupils respond positively thereby demonstrating their understanding of what they are being asked to do.

Extra-curricular activities enhance the formal curriculum. These include a lunchtime Israeli Club, Israeli dancing and a school choir.

**Grade: 1**

## Care, guidance and support

The provision for pupils' care, guidance and support is good. The school has clear policies on Anti-Bullying, Health and Safety and Child Protection. Pupils are very happy at the school and enjoy their lessons. They feel very safe and secure and know to whom they should turn in the event they have a problem. Security in the school is outstanding. Security officers are on duty throughout the day and they ensure that everyone is carefully vetted before being admitted through the school gate.

All pupils transfer to King David Junior School and strong links exist between the two schools.

There is inconsistency in the quality of marking pupils' written work. In samples scrutinised, work is often ticked and a comment such as 'good' is added, but there is little evidence of informative comments that tell pupils what they do well and what they need to do to improve.

Good links exist with parents and outside agencies to support the school's work. Parents' questionnaires received by the inspectors reveal an overwhelming satisfaction and support for the way the school attempts to achieve its Jewish Studies aims.

**Grade: 2**

## Leadership and management

The leadership and management of Jewish Studies are very good. The head teacher is the designated Head of Jewish Studies and is the principle force behind the drive to further improve pupil achievement. In this task she is very ably supported by the Manager of the Jewish Studies Department whose main role is to liaise with the head teacher regarding matters affecting the organisation and delivery of Jewish Studies and to lead the Jewish Studies team in producing, delivering and monitoring an appropriate Jewish Studies curriculum.

The senior professional staff is, in turn, very well supported by the governing body which is committed to the school's aims which include enabling 'children to value the principles and ethos of a Jewish school.' There is a designated governor who chairs the Jewish Studies Sub-committee and who very regularly visits the school to offer advice and support to the head teacher. This governor plays an effective lay monitoring role by observing Jewish Studies teachers in action.

**Grade: 1**

