



King David Primary School

Inspection report Draft

LEA	Liverpool
Inspected under the auspices of	Pikuach
Inspection dates	6 – 7 October 2010
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	5 - 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	421
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs. L. Lesin-Davis
Headteacher	Rachel Rick
Date of previous school inspection	19 – 20 th December 2007
School address	Beauchair Drive Liverpool L15 6XH
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two inspectors. The inspectors visited 8 lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at documentation which included the school development plan, the school's self-evaluation for Jewish Studies, lesson plans, reports, curriculum for Jewish Studies and *Ivrit* (Modern Hebrew) and relevant resource material. They analysed the 38 responses received from parents in answer to the Pikuach parental questionnaires.

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

- The provision of Jewish education in King David Primary School.
- The quality of pupils' learning in Jewish Studies and *Ivrit*
- Leadership and Management in relation to Jewish Studies and *Ivrit*

Information about the school

King David Primary School is the only Jewish Primary School in Liverpool. It works closely with the King David Kindergarten, King David High School and the Harold House Community Centre. All of these organisations are linked with the King David Foundation. The school is long-established and has a very good reputation locally. The proportion of Jewish pupils has fallen gradually, and is currently about 20% of the total roll.

There have been a number of staffing changes since the December 2007 inspection. The then Head of Department left and was replaced by an Acting Head of Department. The school has also taken on a part-time teacher who teaches *Ivrit* to the non-Jewish pupils and works also with the Jewish pupils in Key Stage 2.

Inspection judgements

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

Overall effectiveness

3

Capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

1. The school is warm and welcoming and has a tangible Jewish ethos even though Jewish pupils make up only 20% of the total roll. Pupils are happy and work hard. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of what the school is trying to achieve in Jewish Studies and *Ivrit*.
2. The quality of Jewish education at King David Primary School is satisfactory. Pupils enjoy their Jewish Studies and behave well in lessons. They make satisfactory progress in both Jewish Studies and *Ivrit* but weaknesses exist in Hebrew reading and aspects of general Jewish knowledge.
3. Teaching is satisfactory overall with some good and outstanding examples, especially in *Ivrit*. Teaching falls below the level of good or outstanding where opportunities are often missed to challenge pupils through learning that is matched carefully to their abilities, especially for the more able learners.
4. Pupils' progress is now monitored but the current school practice in marking and assessment of their work often gives only a general guide to progress and attainment in Jewish Studies and *Ivrit*.
5. The quality of the curriculum has improved since the last inspection but further development is required. The Jewish Studies curriculum does not currently meet the needs of all pupils and needs to ensure that more challenge is provided so as to stimulate all pupils, especially those of higher ability.
6. The school provides a good level of care, guidance and support.
7. Pupils' behaviour, both in and outside the classroom is good overall. Pupils are polite and speak positively about their Jewish learning. The extra provision provided in the school by visiting rabbis and Jewish outreach organisations such as the JNF and the UJIA has had a positive effect on the pupils' attitude to Jewish learning.

8. The effectiveness of leadership and management is satisfactory. The headteacher has a clear vision of where she wants the school to be going Jewishly and is well supported by the Acting Head of Jewish Studies and the Governing Body.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Continue to improve both the general quality of the curriculum and the assessment procedures used to measure pupils' progress in their Jewish and *Ivrit* studies.
- Take more account of the needs of pupils of different abilities, making specific provision in teachers' planning to meet these varying needs.
- Improve the quality of teaching in Jewish Studies by providing training which meets the specific needs of both teachers and pupils.
- Improve pupils' Hebrew reading and writing skills.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Pupils have very positive feelings about their Jewish Studies and say they enjoy their lessons very much. During observation in classes, most pupils behaved extremely well and were very keen to participate and contribute. This was particularly evident in the *Ivrit* lessons. At present, their *Ivrit* speaking skills are satisfactory at best, although most have a good understanding of what the teachers are saying to them. In those lessons where teaching is more sound pupils make good progress. In the other lessons however, the rate of progress is less marked.

Discussions with Year 6 pupils reveal that they often find Jewish Studies work too simple and are not provided with material that is sufficiently stimulating and challenging. Inspectors agree with this view. The standards of Hebrew reading throughout the school are generally weak with little appreciable difference between year groups. The fact that the frequency of the Jewish Studies lessons decreases as pupils move up the school may be a significant factor.

The timetable for Jewish Studies and *Ivrit* is organised in a way that could impede effective Jewish learning. For example, there is sometimes a two day gap between one Jewish Studies lesson and the next. The school should consider the possible advantage of splitting a one-hour lesson into two half-hour sessions, one for Jewish Studies and one for *Ivrit*. If the school could achieve this then pupils would be exposed to Jewish Studies and *Ivrit* on a daily basis, thereby making the sequence of Jewish lessons more cohesive.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are identified and, where staffing levels allow, some of these pupils receive help, during school time, on an individual basis. There was little evidence, however, of their needs being met during class lessons.

Pupils have a good understanding of what a healthy lifestyle entails and participate enthusiastically in sporting activities. They enjoy opportunities to take on responsibility in school. For example, the School Council plays an important role in giving pupils a voice and bringing about changes. They also enjoy being appointed as prefects.

Pupils feel very safe in school and Year 6 pupils say that bullying is rare. However, some Year 3 pupils reported that they had experienced occasional bullying. They have the confidence to turn to their teachers if they have a problem as they know that their concerns will be dealt with sensitively. Behaviour around the school and playground is good and pupils of all faiths were observed playing happily together.

The very nature of the school in terms of its multi-faith pupil and staffing complements, operating within a Jewish ethos, indicates that pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.

Pupils say morning *tephillot* (prayers) during class or school assembly. They also *bensch* (say Grace after Meals) on a daily basis. The school therefore meets the statutory requirement for collective worship.

These are the grades for pupils’ outcomes

Pupils’ attainment¹	3
The quality of pupils’ learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and their progress	3
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’ attendance¹	1
How well do pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	NA
What is the extent of pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development?	1

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

How effective is the provision?

Teaching throughout the school is satisfactory overall with some examples of good and outstanding practice. Where teaching is outstanding, lessons typically are fast-paced and fun. Teaching is lively, tasks and concepts are clearly explained, and activities are carefully designed to challenge the pupils to learn at a swift pace. Teachers ask perceptive questions and these help pupils to think about what they are learning.

Teaching is more effective in *Ivrit* than in Jewish Studies. Teaching falls below good or outstanding where opportunities are sometimes missed to challenge pupils through active learning that is matched carefully to their abilities. This is certainly the case for the more able learners.

Lesson planning for Jewish Studies is satisfactory but there are omissions. The planning template does not offer an option to make provision for pupils of differing abilities and this omission is reflected in a lack of differentiation and challenge in the classroom for both *Ivrit* and Jewish Studies.

Lesson objectives are connected to targets in medium term planning which is good but often the objectives are difficult to measure. Many objectives in Jewish Studies begin with the words '*to appreciate*', for example, '*to appreciate it is good to do a mitzvah*' (good deed). 'Appreciation' is a difficult concept to measure. Teachers should focus instead on what their pupils are expected to know, understand and do. In addition, lesson objectives sometimes describe an activity such as writing a story rather than defining a specific skill or piece of knowledge that pupils are expected to acquire.

Assessment of pupils' progress has improved significantly since the last inspection and is linked to the Jewish curriculum. The assessment of *Ivrit* is based on national criteria for Modern Foreign Languages. The assessment of Jewish Studies is based on national criteria for Religious Education. However, the national criteria for Religious Education is designed to meet the needs of pupils studying the subject in multi-faith state schools and therefore can only measure more general targets such as pupils being able to '*recognise their own values and those of others.*' Assessment in specific areas of Jewish Studies is harder to gauge for example, whether or not a pupil knows and remembers particular *berachot* (blessings) or key vocabulary in *Chumash* (Bible) such as '*petach ha'ohel*' (entrance of the tent) or '*m'at mayim* (a little water).

The school also uses an information technology assessment tool called *Sentio*. Using this tool, pupils respond to test questions on an interactive whiteboard by pressing a button on a remote control device much as the studio audience does in Who Wants to be a Millionaire. The teacher can instantly gauge the percentage of correct answers because they are presented electronically, in charts on the whiteboard. Although this is a fun way to test pupils' Jewish knowledge, the multiple-choice

selection of answers means that this form of assessment can give, at best, only a superficial guide to what the class is expected to know.

Teachers also grade progress in Jewish Studies and *Ivrit* numerically by giving scores e.g. 1 or 2. Ticks are used also to indicate that a target has been reached. This is a definite improvement on what previously existed but the school needs to develop this system to make it more informative. A tick or a number will only give a very rough guide to a pupil's ability and progress.

Similarly, reports to parents about their children's progress in Jewish Studies and *Ivrit* are sometimes vague; for example, under the subject heading of *Chumash* one report informs a parent that his/her child '*has tried her best throughout the year – well done!*'

The school should consider an alternative approach to teaching *Chumash* depending on what it is trying to achieve. Although there is a curriculum directing what pupils will cover and learn in *Chumash*, there is no overriding policy statement which would give teachers something to aim for. For example, if the aim of *Chumash* teaching at King David is simply to give pupils some knowledge of biblical characters and their stories with a passing reference to Hebrew words in the text then it is on the right track. If however, the school is more ambitious in its aims and would like, for example, to create a community of independent learners, then it needs to re-consider its approach to *Chumash* teaching. The Jewish Curriculum Partnership in London has created materials which introduce pupils to the concept of *shorashim* (roots) and key words such as *vayomer* (he said) which frequently occur in the *Chumash* text. Learning key words and their roots enables pupils to work out the meaning of Hebrew text for themselves, thereby setting them on the road towards independent *Chumash* learning.

The previous inspection in 2007 noted certain '*factors that impeded achievement.*' These included '*inadequate marking of written work by teachers who mostly tend to tick a piece of work without giving a mark or comment.*' Three years later this remains the case. The current inspection found many examples of unmarked work especially in *Ivrit*. Some work is marked simply 'good.' In such cases it would be helpful for the teacher to explain to the pupil why his/her work is 'good.'

Each Jewish Studies and *Ivrit* class has an interactive white board. Some teachers make effective use of these while others shy away from using information technology. Some of the software programmes enhance the teaching of Jewish Studies and *Ivrit*. By contrast, many of the worksheets used in Jewish Studies are several years out of date and can only have a negative learning effect on a 21st Century Jewish pupil. There is a small library containing Jewish books but it is limited in scope. Boxes placed in and around the library area make this an uninviting place for a Jewish reading experience.

Curriculum

At present 15% curriculum contact time in Key Stage 1 and 20% in Key Stage 2 is given over to the teaching of Jewish Studies and *Ivrit*. This does not include assemblies and extra-curricular activities such as the voluntary *Shacharit* (morning) service and Jewish themed lunch time and after-school clubs. The quality of the curriculum has improved since the last inspection but still further refinement is required. Hebrew reading and writing are taught within the *Ivrit* strand. Further clarity is needed to ensure consistency in the guidelines by specifying which letters, words or common greetings are to be taught in every year group. The Jewish Studies strand of the curriculum does not currently meet the needs of all pupils and needs to ensure that more challenge is provided to stimulate pupils of higher ability.

The school offers a variety of extra-curricular activities and informal learning initiatives to reinforce Jewish learning. These include an Israel club, *Ivrit* club and whole school activities such as the *matzah* factory, the *shofar* factory and activities relating to the *chagim* (Jewish festivals).

Examples of integration of the Jewish Studies and secular curriculum exist such as the planting of trees on *Tu Bishvat* (New Year for Trees) and teaching about the State of Israel in geography. However, further opportunities need to be explored and these should be contained in a written policy statement on integration.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher has a clear vision of where the school needs to go in its Jewish development and how it will get there. The Acting Head of Jewish Studies has done much since the last inspection to improve Jewish Studies provision. She has introduced a range of initiatives aimed at strengthening the Jewish identity of the 92 Jewish pupils attending the school. These include a weekly *Shabbat* party for all pupils between Reception and Year 5; a voluntary weekly *Shacharit* service; a Hebrew Reading Record Book for Years 2, 3, 4 and 5 which gives parents a clear understanding of the progress their children are making in Hebrew reading. She has introduced also a range of lunchtime and after-school clubs.

Demands on her time mean that it is difficult for the Acting Head of Jewish Studies to monitor teaching in Jewish Studies and *Ivrit*. The headteacher takes on this role and feeds back on what she has seen to the Acting Head of Jewish Studies. This

process has its drawbacks because although the headteacher, with her considerable experience, is able to monitor effectively the pedagogic aspects of a lesson i.e. how engaged the pupils are or how effective is a teacher's classroom management, it is more difficult for her to assess the effectiveness of what is being taught in terms of Jewish or Hebrew content. It should be noted however, that the headteacher is taking *Ivrit* lessons which will help her to assess more effectively, the impact of Hebrew teaching and learning and for this she is to be commended.

Under the direction of the Acting Head of Jewish Studies there have been improvements in some areas highlighted as needing attention in the previous inspection, such as assessing progress. Cohesion between the primary school and the high school is significantly better. However, these improvements need to be more focused on the specific areas that would have a positive impact on pupils' development. The previous inspection for example, recommended that the school '*provide staff development through training and observing good practice in other Jewish schools.*' There is evidence that this has taken place. Members of the Jewish Studies and *Ivrit* staff have attended the main school in-service training sessions. A member of the *Ivrit* staff has attended and contributed to the Jewish Curriculum Partnership's *Ivrit* project. The Acting Head of Jewish Studies has observed teaching in other Jewish schools. Although attendance at meetings and training is important for teachers' continuing professional development, it is what they bring back to the school and its impact on pupils that will provide a true measure of how successful their training has been.

The governing body makes a highly significant contribution to the work and direction of the school. They are confident in providing high levels of professional challenge to hold the school to account.

The school has secure safeguarding systems which meet requirements and keep all pupils healthy and safe. There is a detailed Safeguarding Procedure information leaflet handed to all volunteers and visitors on entry to King David Primary. The school keeps parents and carers informed of their children's and the school's progress, and parents and carers appreciate the ease with which staff can be approached. For the School Year 2010-2011 King David Primary is introducing a workshop for new parents which will address issues of *Kashrut*, *Shabbat*, and the cycle of the Jewish year.

The school enjoys effective partnerships with other organisations such as the JNF and the UJIA. These partnerships add to the quality of pupils' Jewish learning and do much to enhance their personal development.

The school makes a very good contribution to community cohesion with close Jewish, local and wider community relations. Jewish and non-Jewish pupils, for example, take an active part in the Annual Civic Ceremony held each year in the local synagogue. King David pupils have planted a tree on *Tu B'shevat* at a neighbouring

Catholic school. King David also has links with schools in Israel.

Much stronger links have been forged between King David Primary and King David High. This is helped by some governors having responsibility for Jewish education in both schools. Senior high school Jewish Studies staff meet with their primary counterparts on a monthly basis when information on pupils’ Jewish educational needs is shared and discussed. Joint projects such as the collaboration between primary pupils and high school students, who investigated together the development of the Liverpool Jewish community, strengthen the good links that already exist. The primary school also liaises well with the independent nursery.

King David Primary is soon to move to a state of the art building housed on the high school campus. This can only bode well for continuing and future collaboration.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in communicating ambition and driving improvement	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	NA
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	2
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	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

The school does not have an attached nursery and therefore the only Foundation Stage teaching seen was in the Reception class where teaching in Jewish Studies is satisfactory. Children are well behaved. They engage in their Jewish studies and are eager to learn. The teaching is varied and different strategies are used to keep lively young learners interested. The Acting Head of Jewish Studies has an understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the provision at the Foundation Stage and is

taking steps to improve it.

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

Pikuach invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at King David 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 38 completed questionnaires. In total, there are 67 Jewish families registered at the school.

	Always	Most of the time	Occasionally	Never
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	40%	43%	11%	6%

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.

