

# King David Junior and Infant School

## Inspection report

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<b>Local authority</b>	Birmingham
<b>Inspected under the auspices of</b>	Pikuach
<b>Inspection dates</b>	18–19 June 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Selwyn Ward

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	246
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Barry Henley
<b>Headteacher</b>	Stephen Langford
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	21 March 2007
<b>School address</b>	Alcester Road Birmingham B13 8EY
<b>Telephone number</b>	0121 449 3364
<b>Fax number</b>	0121 449 3364
<b>Email address</b>	enquiry@kingdavid.bham.sch.uk

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## Introduction

Inspection team

Selwyn Ward

Lead inspector

Sandra Teacher

Team inspector

This inspection followed the recent Ofsted inspection and was carried out with four days' notice. The inspectors visited 11 lessons taught by six teachers, with a particular focus on how religious education is taught to both Jewish and non-Jewish pupils. The inspectors visited whole-school assemblies, listened to pupils read in Hebrew, and spoke with pupils, staff, and members of the governing body. Inspectors looked at school planning and policies, school self-evaluation and the questionnaire responses of pupils, staff and parents.

## Information about the school

King David is a one-form entry primary school with a nursery. The school serves a culturally diverse community. Around 25% of the pupils are Jewish and around 60% are Muslim. The large majority of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds, including 40% of Pakistani origin. Nearly half of the pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is average. The percentage of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is below average.

Jewish Studies is taught in two parallel courses: *Limudei Kodesh* (Jewish Religious Studies), primarily for Jewish pupils, and Religion from a Jewish Perspective for non-Jewish pupils, known in each class as the 'parallel group'. Hebrew is taught as a modern foreign language. King David has Healthy Schools status.

## Inspection judgements

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The achievement of pupils in their Jewish education</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The quality of teaching and assessment</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The extent to which the Jewish Education curriculum meets pupils' needs</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development including the duty to fulfill the daily act of collective worship</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management of Jewish Education, including through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>

## Key findings

- King David makes good provision for pupils' Jewish education. The school's contribution to community cohesion is outstanding. It is especially impressive that this school works as such a friendly, harmonious community, where Jewish pupils and those from other faiths get on very well together and are eager to extend their knowledge and understanding of Judaism and the Jewish perspective on religious belief. Pupils' very positive attitudes to learning contribute strongly to the good progress they make over their time at this school.
- The parallel curricula provide good grounding in the principles and practices underpinning Judaism, drawing on stories from the *Torah* and learning about the major Jewish festivals. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. As a result, behaviour is good and pupils learn respect for the Jewish faith. Pupils from different backgrounds all take a pride in their school and in the way it takes the Star of David symbol from its badge to create the school motto, 'Where Stars Shine'.
- Teachers know the pupils well and succeed in creating some memorable learning opportunities, particularly through themed weeks and extra-curricular activities. Because there are relatively small numbers in the *Limudei Kodesh* sets, these pupils are taught in small groups, which contributes to their progress. In the parallel groups, there is an over-reliance on worksheets. These are not always challenging enough. Progress in lessons is not always as rapid as it could be because work in Jewish Studies is not always matched to the different abilities in each class.
- Marking varies in quality. Some gives helpful tips on how to move learning on,

but there are also examples of marking which overly praises mediocre work. Pupils are not given enough opportunities throughout the school to take responsibility for checking their own and each other's work.

- Arrangements for collective worship involve all pupils in Jewish prayers. Pupils take part but they do not generally lead prayer. Whole-school assemblies are not always pitched at the right level for the different ages where children from Reception to Year 6 are together.
- Jewish Studies is managed effectively. Leaders have had marked success in bringing together pupils from diverse backgrounds so that they learn and play together, while achieving high academic success in their key National Curriculum subjects. The Head of Religious Studies has made huge strides in revising and developing the Jewish Studies curriculum to tailor it to the school's specific needs. This work is ongoing, with plans to further roll-out clearer targets for pupils linked to the levels at which they are working.

## **What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Accelerate pupils' learning in lessons by ensuring that:
  - work is better matched to pupils' different capabilities and prior learning
  - particularly in the parallel groups, the learning objectives set out at the start of lessons are specific and are sharply focused on what the pupils are expected to learn rather than the tasks to be carried out
  - reliance on worksheets is reduced, particularly for pupils in the parallel groups
  - greater use is made of Hebrew lettering and displaying simple labels in Hebrew in classrooms and around the school so that, from the Early Years Foundation Stage onwards, exposure to the written language is reinforced.
- Improve the impact and effectiveness of assessment and marking, and help pupils to develop their independent learning skills, by ensuring that:
  - all marking helps pupils to identify what they need to do to do better
  - pupils are routinely expected to check and assess their own and each other's work
  - pupils on both Jewish Studies courses know and refer to their individual targets for improvement.
- Review the organisation of collective worship to extend opportunities for pupils to lead prayer and to ensure that prayer and worship are pitched at an appropriate level for each age group.

## **Main report**

### **The achievement of pupils in their Jewish education**

The large majority of pupils join King David with very little knowledge or experience

of Judaism. Both Jewish and non-Jewish children make good progress in their Jewish Studies courses from the Early Years Foundation Stage through to the end of Key Stage 2. They learn a great deal about Orthodox Jewish belief and practice, and the reasons for it. They learn about the major Jewish festivals, and learn stories and tenets from the *Torah* that are not only the basis of Jewish belief but which are also important to Islam and Christianity. Although King David School does not teach pupils about other faiths, the pupils from different backgrounds are readily able to draw on their own experiences to identify similarities and differences in belief. As a Moslem pupil explained, 'Jewish people pray to *Hashem*, and at Mosque we pray to *Allah*, but they are the same one G\_d.' All pupils learn *Ivrit* (Hebrew) as a modern foreign language, and non-Jewish children are every bit as enthusiastic at learning the language as those from a Jewish background. In some classes, non-Jewish pupils are among the higher attainers in *Ivrit*. Pupils learn especially well when, as in the younger classes, they are taught *Ivrit* using a scheme that emphasises letters and the sounds they make (phonics), thus mirroring the techniques now used to teach reading and writing in English. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs benefit from well-focused support from teaching assistants who have a good understanding of their specific learning needs. As a result, these pupils are helped to make the same good progress as their peers, even when tasks are not designed with their specific needs in mind.

### **The quality of teaching and assessment**

Relationships throughout the school are good. One of the reasons pupils try hard and work with concentration is because they like their teachers and are eager to please them. Although teachers know the pupils well, and know how well each is doing, they do not always use this information to plan activities in lessons that are matched to the wide range of abilities in the class. Learning objectives are routinely set out at the start of each lesson, but too often these are too broad to allow pupils to meaningfully assess for themselves how well they are learning. This is commonly the case for Jewish Studies lessons for the parallel groups, where a typically vague 'learning objective' might be to 'know some facts about the story of Adam and Eve' or to 'improve in Hebrew reading'. In the lessons of the parallel groups, often well-planned introductions are let down by follow-up activities that are unchallenging, frequently involving dull worksheets. These do not make the most effective use of the lesson time. Pupils from all backgrounds say they like Jewish Studies, but several of the older pupils in the parallel group told inspectors that they felt more could be done to make these lessons more fun. In this, they appear to contrast Jewish Studies lessons unfavourably with their experience of livelier lessons in secular subjects. Year 6 pupils complain that they are not all given homework in Jewish Studies.

Opportunities are missed to reinforce learning in *Ivrit* because there are few examples of Hebrew word cards in displays around the school or pinned to everyday objects, as is commonly seen in schools learning, for example, French as a modern foreign language. In a good Jewish Studies lesson introducing Year 2 pupils to the concept of *Parev* (foods, such as fruit that are neither 'milk' nor 'meat' and so can be eaten with either), pupils learnt the Hebrew word in its anglicised form but were not shown the word in Hebrew letters.

Marking varies widely in quality. There are examples of good marking, including some that guides pupils on what they need to do to improve their work. This is not the norm for all marking, however. Too often, work is applauded as excellent when it is mediocre and shows no great effort. There is not a routine expectation that pupils take responsibility for checking their own or each other's work, and so some pupils' written work incorporates careless errors that could be avoided. Even some older pupils are unaware of their personal targets in Jewish Studies or the levels at which they should be working.

### **The extent to which the Jewish Education curriculum meets pupils' needs**

The school's mission statement describes as its aim 'to provide a meaningful and inspiring Jewish education, relevant to all children.' The two parallel curricula are well conceived as the means of catering for the diverse backgrounds of the pupils, while maintaining the integrity of the ethos of the school. For example, the *Torah* stories chosen for study particularly focus on the Patriarchs who are also revered in Islam. Recent changes have been made to sharpen the levels used to assess attainment and progress in *Limudei Kodesh* but these have yet to be adapted for and rolled out to the parallel groups. Relevant links are identified with secular topics. For example, pupils in Year 3 learning in history about Ancient Egypt link this with what they have learnt before about the story of Joseph, although such overlapping topics do not always coincide. Where there is a dependence on worksheets, these limit opportunities for Jewish Studies to contribute to the development of pupils' key skills, in other subjects, such as literacy and numeracy. In Nursery and Reception, Jewish Studies is often but not always taught through the six areas of learning for Early Years Foundation Stage. Nursery children learning the story of Daniel in the Lion's Den, for example, made lion masks and acted out the story which helped bring the learning to life.

The taught curriculum at King David School is greatly enhanced through regular themed events and enrichment activities. During the inspection, for example, many parents from different faiths and backgrounds came in to join their children at a session in the *shul* (synagogue) attached to the school in order to take part in *challah* bread-making as part of a focus week on the rules of *Kashrut*. Extra-curricular activities, such as Israeli dancing, are popular with pupils, and the King David troupe performed earlier this year at a festival at Wembley Stadium.

### **The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, including the duty to hold a daily act of collective worship**

Pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is an important outcome of provision at this school. It is greatly appreciated by Jewish and non-Jewish parents alike. Pupils all learn mutual respect, including for their own and others' cultural traditions and beliefs. Through the secular curriculum, they learn about other ways of life in different parts of the world. *Mitzvah* Day is devoted to good deeds, and the pupils have taken part in projects to support a range of charities, including Children In Need. Older pupils have the opportunity to work towards Active Citizenship awards. The weekly *Torah* portion relates to Jewish values, so that, for example, during the inspection, the theme for reflection was on

the different roles people have in society. The good provision for pupils' personal development contributes to the good relationships between pupils throughout the school, and to the good behaviour and very positive attitudes to learning. In turn, these lead to pupils' good achievement in Jewish Studies, despite the shortcomings in some of the teaching.

Collective worship meets statutory requirements. Although parents have the right to withdraw their child from collective worship, none do so. This shows how much parents from non-Jewish backgrounds value the experiences that the school provides. Commenting on tradition at King David School, a Moslem parent explained this was her first choice of school because it was the school that she had attended, and her mother before her. Assemblies are inclusive experiences for all. Although older pupils read out introductions to prayers, prayers are led by a teacher. Children from Reception to Year 6 are together for whole-school assemblies. This makes it difficult to pitch the collective worship at just the right level. Jewish pupils in Years 4 to 6 learn to *daven* (pray) in specific *Tefillah* (worship) class assemblies.

### **The effectiveness of leadership and management of Jewish Education, including through partnerships**

Owing to unforeseen circumstances, the work under way to further develop the curriculum has temporarily lost momentum. This includes extending the use of level descriptors for marking progress of pupils learning religion from a Jewish perspective. There has been limited time available for senior leaders to monitor learning and teaching in the *Limudei Kodesh* and parallel groups. Nevertheless, leaders have maintained successful outcomes for the pupils: pupils make good progress over their time at King David School and leaders ensure a diet of experiences that contributes to their good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. It is a tribute to the vision of the governing body, leadership team and staff that King David has become an exemplar of community cohesion, where pupils from diverse religious and racial backgrounds live and learn together in harmony, and achieve well as a result.

Communication with parents is excellent. Parents are kept very well informed through a regular weekly newsletter that contributes to the sense of shared community.



## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Judgement</b>	<b>Description</b>
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
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. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

## **Common terminology used by inspectors**

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.