

WOHL ILFORD JEWISH PRIMARY SCHOOL

INSPECTION REPORT

Local Authority Redbridge

Inspected under the auspices of Pikuach

Inspection dates 16–17 June 2016

Lead Inspector Rabbi Yaakov Heimann

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 Children	3–11
Gender of Children	Mixed
Number on roll	318
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of Governors	Ben Saltman
Headteacher	Andrea Elliker
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Inspection team

Rabbi Yaakov Heimann Lead Inspector
Rabbi Jonathan Spector Team Inspector

Introduction

- Inspectors observed a number of lessons; all were observed jointly with the headteacher. They observed *tefillah* (prayer) and *Kabbalat Shabbat* (special Sabbath prayers) assemblies and visited the school nursery. They also scrutinised pupils' books and the curriculum, and tested Year 2 and Year 6 pupils in Hebrew reading, *Chumash* (Bible Studies), Jewish general knowledge and *Chagim* (Jewish Festivals).
- Inspectors held meetings with the Honorary Principal of Jewish Studies, Chair of the Governing Body and other governors, headteacher, deputy headteacher, Jewish Studies Leader, teachers and pupils.
- Inspectors spoke to parents and analysed the comments made by the parents who responded to the parental survey.

The previous inspection (September 2011) made three recommendations:

- 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 Leader is given the necessary time and training to undertake leadership tasks and develop her role as Head of Jewish Studies.

Since the previous inspection the school has developed its assessment procedures and the data is analysed and used effectively to help pupils improve in their Jewish Studies. The curriculum has been updated to include more specific and realistic learning objectives for all age groups and in breadth and depth is well suited to the time allotted to Jewish Studies. The Jewish Studies Leader has not been given the necessary training and time to enable her to develop her role due to time constraints on her timetable.

The inspectors looked in detail at the following:

- The overall effectiveness of the provision of Jewish education in the school.
- The quality of leadership, management and governance of Jewish education in the school.
- The achievement and progress over time of pupils in their Jewish education in the school.
- The quality of teaching and learning in delivering the Jewish curriculum of the school, including standards of behaviour and the quality of assessment of pupils' progress.
- The quality of the Jewish curriculum itself, including meeting the statutory requirement for a daily act of collective worship.
- The quality of provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, including its impact on the whole school community.

Information about the school

- Wohl Ilford Jewish Primary School (WIJPS) is a designated one and a half form entry primary school, with a nursery, for boys and girls, situated in the London Borough of Redbridge.
- The school has experienced a falling roll over the past number of years as a result of a change in demographics caused by some members of the Jewish community moving away from the area.
- Approximately 75% of pupils on roll are Jewish. Around 20% of curriculum time is devoted to Jewish Studies, and both Jewish and non-Jewish pupils are taught Jewish Studies together.
- Wohl Ilford Jewish Primary School moved into its current, purpose-built school in September 2013.
- The headteacher was appointed in September 2015.

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness	2
The achievement of children in their Jewish education	2
The quality of teaching and assessment in Jewish education	2
The extent to which the Jewish education curriculum meets children's needs	2
The extent of children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development including the duty to fulfil the daily act of collective worship	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of Jewish education, including through partnerships	2

Overall Effectiveness:

The quality of Jewish Learning provided in Wohl Ilford Jewish Primary School is good

- The school sets itself high aims in transmitting to pupils a love and appreciation of *Torah* (Bible) and *mitzvot* (commandments) and is effective in meeting these aims through the formal and informal curriculum, as well as many special activities and events.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding because diversity and difference are valued and celebrated.
- Achievement is good and the current systems of assessment and recording that are in place enable pupils to make good progress.

- Teaching and learning are good. Pupils' behaviour is very good, and there are good relationships between adults and pupils.
- The Jewish curriculum has been very well planned and developed, and meets the needs of all pupils.
- Leadership and management are good. The headteacher and Jewish Studies Leader work extremely effectively together to ensure that pupils make good progress and achieve well in their Jewish education.
- The school offers a good range of extra-curricular activities and educational experiences so that pupils are very well prepared for the future stages of their Jewish life and education.
- There is a positive learning environment with the displays in the classrooms and around the whole site clearly linked to Jewish Studies.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- To develop the leadership capacity within the Jewish Studies Department.
- Raise the quality of Hebrew writing by continuing to teach script handwriting in Key Stage 2.
- To further train Jewish Studies teachers so that they are able to raise the level of teaching and learning in Jewish Studies thereby providing pupils with the skills needed to move on effectively into secondary education.

Achievement of pupils in their Jewish Learning is good

- In terms of the school's overall aims for pupils to have a love and appreciation of *Torah* (Bible) and *mitzvot* (commandments) and engage in Judaism, pupils of all abilities make good progress. This includes pupils who have special educational needs and disabilities.
- Actual achievement in knowledge and skills in Jewish Studies is varied. Year 2 and Year 6 pupils were tested on their Hebrew reading. Whilst many of the pupils were able to read fluently, not all Year 6 pupils were accurate and fluent readers.
- All pupils had a good knowledge of the *Chagim*. (Festivals)
- Hebrew Handwriting is currently taught until the end of Year 2. This needs extending into Key Stage 2 and a tracking system implemented so that level and progress can be monitored.
- All pupils spoke in praise of Jewish Studies and their enjoyment of the subject, with a Year 2 pupil saying, 'I like learning about Jewish things'. A Year 6 pupil commented, 'I enjoy learning about our ancestors and miracles'. Pupils were able to answer questions about topics they had learnt in *Chagim* and *Chumash*.

The quality of teaching and assessment in Jewish Learning is good

- The teachers know their pupils and pitch the lessons at an appropriate level based upon pupils' prior knowledge and their different abilities.
- Teachers have positive relationships with the pupils, who enjoy their Jewish learning.
- Since the previous inspection, the school has implemented rigorous assessment procedures in the areas of Hebrew reading, Hebrew writing and Jewish living. Assessments are carried out each term and pupil data is recorded which enables the teachers to fully evaluate the impact of their teaching and pupil learning.
- Many of the lessons are well planned and a range of teaching strategies were observed that develop independence, active pupil engagement and social interaction. For example, in a

Key Stage 1 lesson, pupils were expected to follow a number of instructions independently. In another lesson they were given religious artefacts to handle which generated much interest and discussion and pupils were able to write about them. Some activities, however, do not always match the lesson's learning objective and some lessons lack pace.

- Further training opportunities for teachers are therefore needed in the planning of and delivery of lessons to ensure that they have good pace so that pupils will find them both exciting and engaging.
- Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is used effectively by both teachers and pupils, and this enhances pupils' learning.
- Teachers often provide encouraging feedback to their pupils. Inspectors noted several examples where pupils received a detailed comment which helped them to understand how to improve. However, this was not a consistent feature of teachers' marking.
- Hebrew reading is taught in a systematic way. Pupils' reading is regularly monitored and they have the freedom to move through the reading scheme at their own pace.
- Pupils are taught to write until the end of Year 2. Most of the children develop the ability to write Hebrew block and the more able pupils learn Hebrew script. Pupils do not attain as well as they could in Hebrew writing because the teaching of this does not currently extend into Key Stage 2.
- Teachers provide activities that are matched to pupils' abilities. Additional provision is made, including resources to support pupils who have special educational needs.
- The school meets its aim of inspiring pupils in their Judaism. One parent said, 'My proudest moment was watching my children lead Grace after Meals at my cousin's *Bar Mitzvah*. My parents, my husband and I cried tears of joy.' Parents also said that Jewish Studies is the lesson that their child is most concerned about missing if they are absent through illness; while another parent commented that their child has started to attend *shul* (synagogue) because of a teacher's influence.

The extent to which the Jewish education curriculum meets children's needs is good

- The school's Jewish Studies curriculum is well organised and matched to pupils' learning needs.
- In breadth and depth, the curriculum is well suited to the time allotted to Jewish Studies.
- Enrichment activities and informal Jewish learning form a central part of the school's curriculum and these activities are enjoyed by the pupils. For example, *Kabbalat Shabbat* (special Sabbath prayers) and Creative Jewish Education on Fridays are enjoyed by pupils while *Chagim* (Festivals) whole-school celebrations and assemblies place Jewish learning and experiences at the heart of school life.
- Inspectors observed an engaging, cross-curricular and experiential *Kabbalat Shabbat* in the nursery. Pupils were excited to be modelling the full range of *Shabbat* activities. Teachers and teaching assistants were animated and passionate about sharing their Jewish knowledge with the pupils.
- The curriculum is updated and adapted regularly. For example, the *Chagim (Festival)* curriculum was amended as teachers found the aims to be unrealistic in the time allocated to teaching it. There are a number of annotations in the curriculum as a whole which demonstrates that the curriculum is continuously being reviewed and updated to ensure that it is both relevant and pragmatic.

The quality of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding

- Although a quarter of the pupils are non-Jewish, the school has been successful in retaining its strong Jewish ethos. This has been confirmed by parents. As one commented: 'The school has done exceptionally well to maintain its Jewish ethos despite a mixed intake from across the spectrum.'
- The pupils regularly raise money for charity and have a strong sense of community. Pupils recently raised funds for the NSPCC and Norwood. They have also had a presentation in assembly from the Jewish Blind and Deaf Association and hosted a Macmillan coffee morning for parents.
- The school works with other faith groups and the school's *Midda* (value) of the week is shared with all children and whole-school staff and used to make cross-cultural links, often through world events.
- During assembly and *Kabbalat Shabbat*, the children participate in *tefillah* (prayer) and this is enhanced by the school's own unique prayer and songs about the importance of community.
- Pupils performed a song using Makaton, a language programme using signs and symbols to help people to communicate and to enable deaf parents to understand. When making a presentation about the Olympics, pupils ensured that they included the Paralympics; another example of them considering the needs of others.
- The interactive and relevant displays around the school are especially impressive. The variety and quality of Jewish displays are excellent and topics include the Holocaust, Israel, recent *Chagim*, Peace, 'Ask the Rabbi' and many others.
- Pupils participate in a large number of enrichment activities, including *Mitzvah Day* and *Shabbat* events at local synagogues. Jewish charities are invited to present at assemblies. Most recently, the school shared in a community event for a *Lag B'omer* (a day of celebration) barbeque at which all members of the community were in attendance.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of Jewish learning is good

- Key leaders and managers, including governors, share a joint vision for the school and they communicate high ambition and expectation on improving the school's provision of Jewish Studies.
- Behaviour across the school is very good; there is a calm atmosphere in the school and pupils are well-behaved and polite.
- Members of staff feel appreciated, morale is good and teachers are highly motivated.
- The school's self-evaluation and development plans clearly demonstrate that the school knows itself well, both in terms of its strengths and areas for development.
- The format of lessons has changed so that pupils are more active and engaged in their learning. A range of activities is planned to help pupils learn and reinforce their learning. Teaching and Learning has improved as a result of effective monitoring of lessons and performance management of staff.
- Jewish Studies teachers, however, are not currently being given enough time and opportunity for Continuing Professional Development which sometimes impacts negatively upon the level of teaching and learning.
- The school needs to further train and develop the role of the Jewish Studies Leader, and allocate her the necessary time, so that she is able to take a more active part in the oversight of Jewish Studies throughout the school including Key Stage 2. Alternatively, the school could consider appointing someone to coordinate Jewish Studies in Key Stage 2. This is an important issue which has not been addressed sufficiently since the last inspection.

- The school provides an excellent range of experiences that contribute well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Governors are actively involved in supporting and challenging the school, which is helping to raise the quality of teaching and the level of achievement. A parent wrote, 'The dedication and support of the Jewish Studies team and senior leadership, as well as that of the governing body, reassures me as to the reason why I send my child to this school, which has provided her with a love of Judaism.'
- The school's rabbi governor is the rabbi of a local community *shul* (synagogue) where many school families are members. This provides an important link between school and the synagogue. The rabbi spends time in school, is the Chair of the School Ethos Committee, and supports the life of the school.
- The headteacher and school leaders have ensured that there is strong, parental engagement through inviting parents to join their children in learning and fun activities including assemblies, model *Sedarim* (Passover Meal) and fun days.
- The school certainly has the capacity to continue to improve.

Views of parents and carers

Pikuach invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils at Wohl Ilford Jewish Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school. Inspectors also spoke to parents at the beginning of the school day. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school and the comments below encapsulate their views:

'My son enjoys Jewish Studies lessons and shares with us what he has learnt.'

'It's clear to me that Jewish life is woven into every aspect of school life. This brings the religion to life and allows pupils to engage with it in a way that they find interesting.'

'My child is always saying *brachot* (blessings) as a result of this wonderful school.'

'The Jewish Studies team at WIJPS do a phenomenal job. They are so dedicated and the children really benefit from their teaching.'

'A truly wonderful and enriching environment for them to grow.'

GLOSSARY

WHAT INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS MEAN:

GRADE	JUDGEMENT	DESCRIPTION
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupil's needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Requires Improvement	A school requiring improvement is not 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.