

Nancy Reuben Primary School

Independent school standard inspection report

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Reporting inspector	Dr Jonathan Yodaiken

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Purpose and scope of the inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Information about the school

Nancy Reuben Primary School is a modern-orthodox Jewish community school situated in north-west London, catering for pupils aged 2-11 years. The school, which opened in 2001, is primarily associated with the local Sephardi Synagogue and community, of which many of the pupils and their families are members. However, the school has numerous pupils from Ashkenazi families, and the traditions and customs of both communities are taught and celebrated with parity of esteem. There are two children at the school with statements of special educational needs. The school has 207 pupils on roll, 42 of whom are in the nursery and receive government nursery funding. There are 15 children under the age of three years. The school's aims are 'to help pupils become independent, lifelong learners and to experience the excitement and joy of learning, provided by a balanced curriculum of both religious and secular studies'. The last full inspection of the school took place in October 2007.

Evaluation of the school

This is a school which provides a good quality of education and care for its pupils and meets its aims and all of the statutory requirements. The school has made good progress since the last inspection and the premises have been developed in an imaginative and purposeful fashion. The curriculum is broad and balanced, and provides pupils with an interesting, varied and solid grounding in all of the required areas of learning. Good provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage ensures that children make a positive start to their education. Provision for children under three is good. Pupils make good progress in their learning and are polite and respectful to each other and to the adults at the school. Provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is outstanding and arrangements for the safeguarding and care of pupils meet all the regulations. Parents are very positive in their support of the school, making comments such as 'This school provides a wonderful, caring, family environment.'

Quality of education

The overall quality of education is good. The quality of the curriculum, and of learning, is good. Pupils of all ages, including children in the Early Years Foundation Stage, have access to a full range of learning experiences. The school commits itself to providing pupils with an education which helps them to reach their full potential. The curriculum is divided into two strands: *kodesh* (religious) studies and *chol*

(secular) studies. The comprehensive *kodesh* curriculum is a major feature of the school's provision and provides a spiritual ethos which permeates the whole school. It successfully promotes knowledge and understanding of all relevant aspects of the Jewish religion. The *kodesh* curriculum includes Hebrew reading, *tefillah* (prayer), Jewish history, Jewish general knowledge, *chumash* (bible studies), *parsha* (weekly reading of the week), and *mishnayos* and *gemoro* (talmudical studies) for Year 5 and Year 6 boys. The newly appointed Jewish Studies coordinator is working on writing an enriched *kodesh* curriculum. When finished, this will further develop the progression of pupils' skills and knowledge year-on-year. The *chol* curriculum is broadly based on the National Curriculum with appropriate time set aside for literacy and numeracy. There are long-term curriculum plans and appropriate schemes of work in place that help guide the work of the teachers. Throughout the school, pupils' personal, social and health education is taught effectively through the *kodesh* curriculum. A main focus is on the development of pupils' *middot* (desirable personal traits) of responsibility, modesty and consideration. The curriculum ensures that pupils are well prepared to take on the challenges and responsibilities which will come to them when they grow up and it prepares them to become good citizens.

Teaching and assessment are good overall and consistently so in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Teachers have high expectations of attitudes to learning and behaviour; consequently, pupils make good progress in their learning. Teachers plan lessons so that pupils are offered a wide range of learning experiences. In addition, teachers share working objectives regularly with pupils, which involves them effectively in their learning. Pupils confirm that they enjoy school and their lessons. In the most effective lessons, teachers employ a wide range of teaching methods, the pace is good and pupils are engaged well in their learning. Relationships formed between teachers and pupils are very positive. In less successful lessons, teachers do not fully utilise the opportunity to check all pupils' learning and some pupils lose concentration and are not fully engaged. Teachers offer excellent role models for pupils. Resources to support the teaching of *kodesh* and secular studies are good.

Assessment is undertaken regularly and used well to support teaching. The school has introduced half-termly assessments that track individual pupils' progress, which staff then use to plan future learning. These new systems for tracking pupils' progress also enable the senior leadership team to identify underperformance early and to organise appropriate interventions. Marking is done conscientiously and comments offered are helpful, instructing pupils on the next stage of their learning; this helps pupils to make progress. The majority of pupils make good progress. Provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities throughout the school is a particular strength which was favourably commented upon by several parents. The school identifies pupils who require additional support early in their school career and provides a wide range of assistance including remedial intervention, referral to appropriate professionals, and even therapy on the premises during school time.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is outstanding, including for those in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Nancy Reuben Primary School is a caring school where all the pupils are highly valued, including those who need additional help. Pupils are polite and respectful to each other and to the adults at the school. The spiritual guidance imparted by the *kodesh* curriculum is made relevant to the pupils' everyday lives. The 'middoh of the week' and the 'mitzvah-a-day' campaigns encourage kindness and empathy. Older pupils assist and support younger ones and all have a good understanding of right and wrong. Pupils' attendance is good as they enjoy school and have very positive attitudes to learning. Their self-esteem and confidence are developed effectively by staff. Pupils enjoy and participate enthusiastically in the full range of school activities including charity campaigns, fund-raising activities, school shows and the school council. Pupils' good basic skills in literacy and numeracy, their personal development and their knowledge of public services and institutions prepare them well for their future lives. The school works hard to engender in its pupils a good knowledge of their own and other cultures. The school takes great pride in the celebration of life in other countries. This gives pupils an increased cultural awareness and promotes racial harmony and cohesion.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety is good. The school provides all the required policies which detail procedures and guidelines on school routines. The school has taken action to ensure that all safeguarding guidelines are met in order to keep pupils safe. The child protection officer and all members of staff have received the required training and the child protection policy is appropriate.

Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their own safety and that of others. They are fully aware of how to keep themselves safe, for example when going swimming and walking outside in the dark. Pupils report that they feel safe, secure and valued in school. These sentiments are supported by most parents, who view the caring attitude of the school as a key factor in their children's learning and progress. A few parents have concerns about procedures while on educational visits, a concern which is not shared by the inspectors. Pupils are well supervised at breaktime and lunchtime.

The school keeps appropriate records of sanctions imposed upon pupils and admission and attendance registers meet the requirements. Pupils understand how to live healthy lifestyles and are encouraged to eat healthily. They enjoy the regular sports activities at the school. There are several trained first-aiders and there are robust procedures in place to ensure fire safety. Risk assessments are carried out routinely for educational visits and for activities within the premises, and these are implemented appropriately. The school fulfils its responsibilities under the Disability Discrimination Act 2002.

Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors

The school has satisfactory recruitment procedures in place which include all the required checks on such matters as identity, medical fitness and professional qualifications. The required checks on the most recently appointed staff have been requested from the Criminal Records Bureau but a response has not yet been received. These staff are always supervised when working with pupils and have been checked against List 99.

Premises of and accommodation at the school

The premises and accommodation are good and make a very strong contribution to the quality of pupils' education and personal well-being. The building is spacious, light and airy. Since the last inspection, the premises have been developed in an imaginative and purposeful fashion in order to keep pace with the increasing numbers on the roll. For example, reading, special needs, storage and medical rooms have now been established. In addition, a multi-use hall is almost complete. Classrooms are generally light, airy and spacious and there are new interactive whiteboards in every classroom. In addition to the main classrooms, areas for subjects such as information and communication technology and physical education are used regularly. The building is maintained and furnished well. The outdoor space is being developed steadily, although there is some more work to be done on the Early Years play area to enhance the quality of the safety surface.

Provision of information

A good range of information is available to parents, carers and prospective parents. There is an informative prospectus and parent handbook which provides detailed information about the range of school policies available. Annual reports give parents and carers valuable information about each pupil's progress.

Manner in which complaints are to be handled

The school has a comprehensive complaints procedure which meets all of the necessary requirements. It is made known to parents.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

The overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Children's language, mathematical and creative skills are very well developed and outcomes are good as they are well equipped for the next step in their education. Provision for children's independence is generally good and they are confident in making choices and expressing their ideas. They have a good understanding of being healthy, carefully washing their hands before eating a snack of fruit. Children enjoy climbing on imaginatively designed outdoor equipment, making good progress in their physical development. The quality of provision for children's learning is good.

Children develop their interests in a well-resourced learning environment. There is an appropriate balance between adult-led and child-initiated activities. Children's work is assessed thoroughly and staff make effective use of the children's interests to accelerate their learning. Planning is well informed by assessments of children's learning, although the learning objectives of the activities planned are not at the forefront in the planning of all lessons. Provision for under-threes is made in a separate room. There is a good ratio of adults to children and the provision is of good quality. There are close and effective links with parents. The outdoor area is timed to give exclusive use by the Kindergarten and children in the Reception class. It is spacious and suitably equipped to develop children's creative and counting skills. However, there is some more work to be done on this play area to ensure that the safety surface is of uniformly good quality. The current facilities for nappy changing are located in the same space as the provision for pupils who may become ill. This is not ideal and the school should seek to make other arrangements. Leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage is good and their vision and drive are shared by a dedicated team. Effective management and supervision ensure children are safe and secure. Those with special educational needs and/or difficulties are well supported and the inclusion of all children is a positive feature. Partnership with parents is well developed and they are very involved in supporting children's learning.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The proprietor has ensured that the school meets The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, schedule 1 ('the Regulations').

What the school could do to improve further

While not required by regulations, the school might wish to consider the following points for development:

- ensure that all lessons meet the needs of the whole pupil group and enable pupils to play a part in the lesson
- as planned, enhance the *kodesh* curriculum to ensure the best possible progression for pupils throughout the school
- ensure that the learning objectives of the activities planned in the Early Years Foundation Stage have a suitably high profile in teachers' planning.

Inspection judgements

outstanding	good	satisfactory	inadequate
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The quality of education

Overall quality of education		✓		
How well the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of pupils		✓		
How effective teaching and assessment are in meeting the full range of pupils' needs		✓		
How well pupils make progress in their learning		✓		

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Quality of provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	✓			
The behaviour of pupils		✓		

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The overall welfare, health and safety of pupils		✓		
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The quality of the Early Years Foundation Stage provision

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

School details

School status	Independent		
Type of school	Jewish primary school		
Date school opened	2001		
Age range of pupils	2–11		
Gender of pupils	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 109	Girls: 96	Total: 205
Number on roll (part-time pupils)	Boys: 1	Girls: 1	Total: 2
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs	Boys: 1	Girls: 1	Total: 2
Annual fees	£3,000		
Address of school	48-50 Finchley Lane Hendon London NW4 1DJ		
Telephone number	020 8202 5646		
Email address	office@nrps.co.uk		
Headteacher	Mrs A Haye		
Proprietor	Rabbi David		