

Clore Shalom School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	131456
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	381343
Inspection dates	8–9 February 2012
Lead inspector	Tusha Chakraborti

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	241
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Irene Blaston
Headteacher	Irene Kay
Date of previous school inspection	6 November 2006
School address	Hugo Gryn Way Radlett WD7 9BL
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Age group	3–11
Inspection date(s)	8–9 February 2012
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Introduction

Inspection team

Tusha Chakraborti

Additional inspector

Enid Korn

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed 15 lessons taught by eight teachers. Inspectors heard children reading, scrutinised pupils' work, visited assemblies and undertook other activities in order to observe pupils' learning. Meetings were held with parents and carers, groups of pupils, members of the governing body and staff. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at school evaluation documents, safeguarding documentation, data on pupils' progress and development planning. Responses from questionnaires completed by 74 parents and carers were analysed, as well as those from 103 pupils and 20 staff.

Information about the school

This is an average-sized primary school serving the Jewish community in the local and surrounding area. The school ethos is one where the school is open to all children, giving priority to children from all Jewish backgrounds according to the school's admission criteria. Most pupils are of White British heritage. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language and none are at the early stages of learning English. The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals is well below average. The percentage of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is below average. The school provides part-time child care provision for a maximum of 16 children. All these children are three or four years old and attend the Nursery in the morning. The school meets the current floor standard, whereby government sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress. It has Healthy Schools status and Basic Skills Quality Mark award.

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

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	1
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- This is a good school. It provides a harmonious and welcoming environment where pupils enjoy learning and feel very safe and secure. Its excellent partnership with parents and carers ensures that pupils and their families are very well supported.
- All groups of pupils achieve well and reach significantly above-average levels of attainment by the end of Years 2 and 6 consistently.
- Pupils' outstanding behaviour and positive attitudes to learning contribute considerably to their achievement and to the school's highly inclusive ethos. They are punctual and their attendance is high. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding.
- Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to keep themselves and others safe. They report that bullying is extremely rare and are confident that any such incidents would be dealt with promptly and effectively by the school.
- Teaching is consistently good. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and work. Nevertheless, higher attainers are not always challenged sufficiently.
- The marking of pupils' work, although regular, does not always guide pupils effectively enough to understand how to improve it. Teachers do not always give pupils time to respond to their guidance.
- The school's self-evaluation is accurate and supports its drive for high standards and effective planning for improvement. The governing body is well organised and effectively uses the information gained from their visits and that provided by the headteacher to hold the school to account for pupils' achievement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching by:
 - using assessment data more effectively to set sufficiently challenging tasks for higher attainers in all lessons, so that they achieve as well as they can
 - ensuring that marking consistently supports pupils to help them understand how they can improve their work, and that they subsequently have time to act upon the guidance.

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Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Main report

Achievement of pupils

'Clore Shalom is a lovely school, both nurturing and academic, it cares for the whole child.' 'My daughter has blossomed at Clore Shalom. She is happy, confident and her knowledge increases day by day. I feel privileged that she is a pupil here.' These are the views shared by most parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire or who spoke to inspectors. They are right to be pleased with their children's achievement.

Children make a good start in the Nursery with skills and aptitudes that are above those expected for their age, especially in speaking skills. A well-planned curriculum and careful monitoring of children's progress help them to make rapid progress and to achieve above average standards in all areas of learning by the time they move to Year 1. Pupils continue to make good progress across the school and their attainment is significantly above average in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Years 2 and 6. The school has placed strong focus on raising the standards in writing to similar level to reading over the past year and current assessment data indicate accelerated progress in writing. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make consistently good progress as a result of the very effective and well-targeted support they receive from all staff, which also helps them develop their independence. Consequently, most of these pupils achieve standards that are similar to their peers and above the national average for similar group of pupils.

Pupils enjoy 'talk partners' activities where they enthusiastically discuss their ideas in pairs, for example, before embarking on a continuous piece of writing on different topics. This is enabling them to improve their writing skills further. The school has rightly identified the need to develop writing skills across the curriculum to ensure that pupils are able to use a range of styles to write for different purposes. For example, in an English lesson, pupils developed a good understanding of a person from the Victorian period that they studied in history. They successfully evaluated and described the character using their knowledge and understanding of the lifestyle of the time. They reviewed and improved their own writing, using correct punctuation and imaginative use of language.

Quality of teaching

The vast majority of parents and carers feel that their children are taught well and report that the school is a team of dedicated teachers who work very well together to create a welcoming school which pupils love attending. Inspectors agree with parents' and carers' view that teaching is good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and successfully enthuse and engage pupils in their learning through effective questioning, building on their prior learning. For example, in an English lesson in Year 5, probing questioning and very effective involvement of pupils

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through whole class and group discussion enabled them to gain deeper understanding of the features of narrative poems. Teachers make excellent use of technology and use the interactive white boards very effectively to share the purpose of lessons. They explain success criteria to ensure that pupils know what they are expected to learn and are able to evaluate their learning. They plan well, usually matching work to the learning needs of all groups of pupils. Occasionally, opportunities are missed to extend the skills and understanding of the higher attaining pupils through sufficiently challenging tasks. Consequently, higher attainers do not always achieve as well as they can. Marking is regular but does not consistently support pupils' learning by providing appropriate guidance about how to improve, and when they should do it. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and promote their moral and social skills very well through group discussions and 'talk partners' activity. Pupils are given opportunities to read stories from different cultures and they learn to value different cultural traditions. Reading is taught well throughout the school, resulting in confident readers of all ages. Highly skilled teaching assistants provide effective support for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. This enables them to make progress which is equal to that of their peers.

In the Early Years Foundation stage, staff are particularly successful in creating a welcoming environment where children develop rapidly in all aspects of personal and social development. A wide range of indoor and outdoor activities are planned effectively to ensure that children learn through a balanced programme of child-initiated and adult-led activities. Regular teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds they make) supports children well in rapidly developing their reading skills.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils' safety, welfare, personal development and academic achievement are at the heart of the school's work. Procedures for adults to manage pupils' behaviour are comprehensive and applied consistently. As a result, pupils display high levels of self-discipline in and out of the classroom, so that behaviour is outstanding. Virtually all parents and carers say that there is a good standard of behaviour and their children feel safe at school at all times. Pupils confirm this view and say that bullying is extremely rare and add that on any such rare occasions, when bullying does happen, staff respond very quickly and successfully, ensuring that they feel totally safe and secure. Pupils develop an excellent understanding of how to keep themselves and others safe. They understand the risks they face in their every-day lives; for example, they are well aware of cyber-bullying and know what to do if they should encounter it. Pupils' attitudes to learning are extremely positive. In lessons, they listen attentively, contribute to discussions confidently and work well together supporting each other in their learning. Their excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is reflected in their consideration and support for others. They have a very clear understanding of what is right or wrong which has a very positive impact on their behaviour. As a result, the rate of exclusion is exceptionally low. Pupils take on roles of responsibility within the class, through their 'School Council' work and when arranging many activities to support school and local events. Older

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pupils enjoy acting as 'buddies' to younger ones and escorting them to classrooms from the playground. Pupils enjoy coming to school and this is reflected in their punctuality and in their attendance which remains consistently high over the years.

Leadership and management

The leaders, supported by the other staff and the governing body, consistently communicate high expectations and have been successful in sustaining good and better standards in all areas of the school's work. The school has a good capacity for further improvement. Leaders have put in place strategies by which they can develop the expertise of teachers and consistently raise pupils' achievement. Consequently, staff are fully aware of their roles and responsibilities in driving the school's improvement forward. A thorough analysis of progress data enables the leaders to identify the action that is needed to drive further improvements. For example, the school had identified developing pupils' writing skills as a priority to raise standards in writing close to that of reading and supported pupils rigorously in this over the past year. Inspection findings show that, currently, the rate of progress in writing has accelerated as a result and standards of attainment are rising. The governing body has a wide range of expertise that is used effectively to challenge and support the school. Governors hold specific responsibilities for monitoring the work of the school, particularly pupils' progress and well-being. As a result, there is a good, shared understanding of the priorities of the school's improvement plan and a high commitment to the actions necessary for them to be realised.

The curriculum meets pupils' needs well with strong focus on the development of literacy and numeracy skills, although there are a few occasions when higher attaining pupils could achieve even better. Good cross-curricular links with literacy and information and communication technology enthuse pupils and involve them in their learning effectively. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues are taught extremely well through the curriculum. All pupils are given opportunity to learn Hebrew and Jewish studies. Assemblies and religious studies along with Jewish studies, support pupils to reflect on the connections between spirituality and action in their own lives. The personal, social and health education programme promote pupils' understanding of right and wrong and ability to make appropriate choices. Pupils' cultural awareness and understanding of other religions is enhanced very effectively through the school's links with local non-Jewish schools and other Jewish schools in England and abroad such as in Israel and Belarus. A good range of enrichment activities broaden the curriculum considerably. For example, visits to the local theatre provide pupils with inspiration for their drama activities.

The school is highly committed to promoting equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination in raising and sustaining improvement in the performance of different groups of pupils. Policies and procedures for safeguarding pupils are robust and are monitored regularly. Risk assessments are very well developed and careful checks are made of the suitability of adults to work with children. The school has established excellent partnership with parents and carers, engaging them successfully in all aspects of its work.

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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 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.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

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.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



10 February 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Clore Shalom School, Radlett, WD7 9BL

Thank you all very much for welcoming us to your school and being so friendly and helpful. We were pleased to see how much you enjoy school. This is clearly reflected in your excellent rate of attendance and punctuality. We agree with you that your teachers take very good care of you. We think your behaviour is exemplary and are pleased to see how considerate you are to each other in lessons and around the school. You develop an outstanding understanding of spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues. You have an excellent understanding of right and wrong and that of people from other culture and backgrounds. You carry out your duties, including your jobs as 'buddies' and school council representatives, very responsibly. Thank you also for the questionnaires that you filled in for the inspection and for sharing your views with us.

Your school is providing you with a good education and, as a result, you grow up as confident learners. You progress at a good rate in your learning and reach significantly above-average standards in English and mathematics by the time you leave Year 6. To improve your school further, we have asked the headteacher, staff and governors to:

- make sure that the work provided for you is just a bit harder to move your learning forward as rapidly as possible, especially those of you who learn quickly
- ensure that teachers help you to understand how you can improve your work.

You already make an excellent contribution to the life of the school. You can help the school to improve even further by continuing to work hard, so that your school remains a happy place.

Yours sincerely

Tusha Chakraborti
Lead inspector

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