

Clore Shalom School

Hugo Gryn Way, Shenley, Radlett, WD7 9BL

Inspection dates 3–4 March 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Early years provision		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is not effective enough. The learning opportunities that are provided do not always challenge or engage children, particularly those of lower ability.
- The systems that school leaders use to check on the quality of teaching and learning are not rigorous enough.
- The quality of teaching varies across the school, which has a negative impact on the progress pupils make from class to class. Consequently, their progress in a number of subjects is not good enough.
- When marking pupils' work, teachers rarely provide helpful advice to pupils about how to improve and move on in their learning.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to develop their writing, or use their mathematical skills and knowledge, in other subjects such as science and geography.
- When planning writing activities in English, some teachers do not take into account what pupils already know. As a result, the work that they set often fails to provide sufficient challenge, particularly for the most able.
- Teachers do not encourage pupils to present their work neatly.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils' achievement in mathematics is good. Pupils of all abilities make good, and often exceptional, progress.
- School leaders, including governors, ensure that the school is a safe place and that pupils are well-cared for.
- The school provides well for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. Enjoyment of learning is enhanced by their excellent relationships with each other and those who teach or support them.
- Teaching assistants are effective in supporting teaching and learning.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching in 15 lessons, and observed two of these jointly with the headteacher. In addition, the inspectors made a number of short visits to lessons.
- The team held discussions with pupils, staff, a representative from the local authority, a local leader of education and members of the governing body.
- The inspectors took account of the views of 93 parents who responded to the online questionnaire, Parent View. Inspectors also talked to parents at the beginning of the school day.
- The inspectors observed the school's work, heard pupils read and looked at a number of documents, including the school's own information about teaching and pupils' attainment, and the school development plan.
- The team scrutinised documentation relating to behaviour and attendance, safeguarding, and health and safety, along with the responses to a questionnaire on bullying that was used with twelve Year 5 and Year 6 pupils.
- The inspectors considered the 16 responses that were made to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Paul Tomkow, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Karen Lewis

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is an average-sized primary school.
- All pupils are from the Jewish community.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below average.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- Children in the Nursery class attend part-time. Children in the Reception class attend full-time.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, is around the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged and supported by the pupil premium is well below average. The pupil premium provides additional funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority.
- The school meets the governments' current national floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The headteacher was appointed in September 2012.
- The school is currently receiving support for leadership from the headteacher of Cranborne Primary School, who is a local leader of education.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and their achievement to good by:
 - giving pupils the opportunities to apply their English and mathematical knowledge and skills across different subjects
 - providing clear advice to pupils about how to improve their work
 - encouraging pupils to present their work more neatly.
- Improve leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - the checks that school leaders make on the quality of teaching and learning are rigorous and cover all areas of the curriculum and all ability groups
 - there is clarity about the roles of all leaders, including governors, in the process of self-evaluation
 - pupils in all classes are provided with greater levels of challenge in subjects other than English and mathematics.
- Improve leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage by ensuring that:
 - teachers and other adults provide interesting and challenging experiences that meet the needs of all learners
 - learning opportunities are well planned and based on accurate assessments of children's abilities and attainment.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and governance may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management requires improvement

- School leaders make regular checks on the work of teachers. However, the school's evaluations of the quality of teaching, and the impact it has on learning, are sometimes too generous. Some of the weaknesses that were identified during this inspection, through observations of teaching and scrutiny of pupils' books and assessment information, were not known to school leaders. Recent improvements, resulting from greater levels of involvement from subject leaders, are helping school leaders to gain a more accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
- School leaders have failed to ensure that the early years provision is effective. They have not set sufficiently high expectations for what can be achieved in this key stage.
- The school's curriculum covers a broad range of subjects. It contributes well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and helps pupils to understand how to stay safe. Older pupils, in Year 5 and Year 6, are provided with opportunities to apply their mathematical and literacy skills in subjects such as science. However, the work seen in other year groups was less challenging and too little was expected of pupils.
- Arrangements for the leadership of subjects other than English and mathematics are not effective and the quality of work in these subjects varies too much between different classes. Although inspectors saw evidence in pupils' books of high quality teaching and learning they also saw examples of pupils being provided with work that is too easy. This slows their learning and prevents more pupils from making the rapid progress they are capable of.
- Subject leaders for English and mathematics are becoming increasingly effective. They have a good understanding of their subject areas. They have helped to ensure that high levels of attainment in reading, writing and mathematics are being maintained. More regular involvement in monitoring activities, such as work scrutiny and meetings with class teachers to discuss pupil progress, is helping these leaders to make a greater contribution to the school's leadership capacity. They have developed a broad overview of standards within their subject area and also recently led staff training on the new curriculum and associated changes to assessment practices.
- School leaders have ensured that the school is a safe and secure place for pupils and staff. Appropriate safeguarding arrangements are in place and staff are well trained in identifying pupils at risk. The single central record is up to date and all necessary checks are carried out on staff. Risk assessments are carried out for activities in and out of school where necessary.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school. Pupils are tolerant and supportive of each other. Through the school's nurturing ethos, pupils are also taught the importance of being respectful to the views of people who have different values, including those of different faiths and belief systems.
- The excellent relationship that pupils have built with those who teach and support them is a strength of the school. Pupils understand the importance of rules and are aware that their actions have consequences which can result in positive recognition or varying levels of sanction. Pupils also learn about democracy, through the curriculum and active involvement in elections for the school's council and eco council. This is helping to prepare them well for life in modern Britain.
- The pupil premium funding is being used effectively to provide support for the very small number of pupils that the school receives funding for. As a result, these pupils make good progress and achieve well.
- The school spends its sports premium funding well. It has resulted in increased levels of participation by pupils in a wide range of sporting activity in and out of school hours. The additional funding has led to a significant increase in pupils becoming involved in competitive sport.
- The school has good relationship with most parents. Those who spoke to inspectors during the inspection, and the majority of those who responded to the Parent View survey, were positive about the school's

work. A large majority of parents believe that the school is well led and managed and most would recommend the school to another parent.

- The local authority has provided support to the school which has been effective in helping to ensure that good levels of achievement have been maintained. Teachers have valued the training opportunities provided and recently the local authority has helped to commission additional leadership support following a number of changes to the teaching staff.

■ The governance of the school:

- There is considerable expertise on the governing body and governors are highly ambitious for the school. However, currently, governors rely too much on the headteacher to provide key information about the performance of the school, particularly in relation to the quality of teaching and the curriculum.
- Governors know how pay and promotion are linked to teachers' performance. However, recent information provided to governors on the quality of teaching, is more positive than what was observed during this inspection.
- Governors ensure that all statutory duties are met, including arrangements for safeguarding.
- The governing body is committed to ensuring equality of opportunity, and is successfully promotes tolerance and encourages good relationships. Governors ensure that pupils respect and value diversity. The ethos that permeates the school ensures that pupils are well prepared life in a modern democracy.
- Governors ensure the efficient management of financial resources and understand how additional funding is spent and its impact.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are kind and friendly towards each other. They support one another socially and when working in class. They say that they enjoy school and they have extremely positive attitudes to learning. Rates of attendance are high.
- Pupils show great respect for each other and for the adults who teach and support them. Pupils work together enthusiastically, demonstrating the ability to listen to each other and accept different ideas and points of view. Most of the behaviour seen in class and around school during this inspection was exemplary.
- A large majority of parents feels that the school makes sure that its pupils are well behaved. The behaviour seen by inspectors during this inspection supports this view. Pupils were polite, friendly and keen to talk about their experience of school.
- Occasionally, when activities lack challenge, pupils lose interest and disengage from their learning. However, they respond well when staff intervene and soon return to their work, allowing lessons to flow smoothly.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Pupils say that they feel safe at the school. They look after each other. Those pupils spoken to during this inspection could explain, at an appropriate level, how to use the internet safely. This is because the school provides regular advice on this matter.
- Almost all of the parents who responded to Parent View stated that their children feel safe at the school and feel happy there.
- Pupils understand about the different kinds of bullying that can occur. During this inspection a discussion,

about bullying, was held with a group of twelve Year 5 and Year 6 pupils. These pupils also gave written feedback about their experience of bullying, anonymously. Their responses, both written and verbal, indicate that, although a small amount of bullying does occur, it is dealt with effectively by staff at the school.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- There is too much variability in the quality of teaching across the school. In most year groups, teaching is effective and helps pupils to make good, and often very good, progress. However, in some year groups the quality of teaching is less effective. As a result, the pace of learning slows and some groups of pupils do not make good progress in all subjects.
- When marking work, some teachers fail to provide helpful advice to pupils about how to improve and feedback also fails to encourage pupils to present their work more neatly. The quality of pupils' handwriting and presentation, therefore, is not good. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are not as well prepared as they should be, in this aspect of their development, for the next stage of their education.
- Teachers do not give pupils enough opportunities to practise their writing, or use their mathematical skills and knowledge, in subjects other than English and mathematics. Teachers do not have high enough expectations about the standards that can be achieved in these subjects. As a result, the progress that pupils make in these subjects is limited.
- Mathematics is taught effectively. As a result, pupils make good progress and attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is significantly above the national average. In Year 6, pupils make rapid progress due to the teacher's excellent subject knowledge and the detailed assessments that are made.
- The school teaches reading well. Improvements have been made, over the past two years, to the teaching of phonics (the sound that letters make). Children in the early years learn letter sounds and names and some children quickly develop into competent readers.
- Effective assessments and good teaching ensure that pupils continue to make good progress in Key Stage 1. Teachers and teaching assistants ensure that the books that pupils read are appropriate to their abilities. By the time they leave Key Stage 1, the vast majority of pupils read fluently. This means that they are well prepared for the next stage of their education. In Key Stage 2, the teaching of reading continues to be effective. Pupils develop a love of reading and many read widely and often.
- Teachers often make good use of questioning to check pupils' understanding and to challenge them to think more deeply. They also provide pupils with opportunities to work with partners and collaborate in small groups. In the teaching that was observed during this inspection, pupils engaged with enthusiasm and enjoyed being given the opportunity to contribute to the lessons.
- The work of teaching assistants is highly effective. Teaching assistants are clear about their role and knowledgeable about the pupils they support. They have good knowledge of the subjects in which they provide support, for example a teaching assistant was seen using complex mathematical vocabulary to challenge one of the most-able pupils.

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- The quality of work in subjects other than mathematics and English doesn't always reflect the standards that pupils achieve in mathematics and English. Teachers' expectations are not as high in these subjects and the quality of work seen in pupils' books was significantly below that seen in English and mathematics.
- Most children start school with skills and abilities that are above those typical for their age and reach a good level of development by the time they move into Year 1. The results from the phonics check, in 2014, show that pupils make good progress with their early reading development.

- A lack of challenge in some lessons means that learning slows and pupils don't make the rapid progress of which they are capable. In 2014 not enough pupils made better than expected progress across Key Stage 2.
- Pupils continue to make steady progress in Year 1 and Year 2. In 2014, attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 was above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils read regularly and talk enthusiastically about their favourite authors and non-fiction topics. Having developed good early reading skills, many pupils quickly become independent readers. For example, a Year 2 pupil was able to read the word 'decaffeinated' and explained to an inspector that it meant, 'when the caffeine has been taken out of tea or coffee'.
- Attainment was significantly above the national average in writing at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2014. Many pupils write well-structured stories in English lessons, making good use of complex punctuation and grammar. However the quality of presentation and handwriting is not as good as it should be and not enough opportunities are provided for pupils to write at length. This limits the progress that pupils make, particularly the most-able.
- Pupils achieve well in mathematics. Results in 2014 showed that the most-able pupils had made very good progress across Key Stage 2, with around one quarter of the cohort achieving Level 6, the highest level possible, in the end of Key Stage tests.
- Pupil premium funding is used effectively to support disadvantaged pupils. There is little difference in the attainment of these pupils compared to others; indeed in some cases their standards are higher than those of other pupils. In 2014, the latest year for which national comparisons are available, there were too few disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 to evaluate their achievement without identifying individuals.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress from their various starting points. They receive good support from teachers and teaching assistants who help them to gain confidence in learning.

The early years provision

requires improvement

- School leaders have not set high enough expectations of what can be achieved by children in the Early Years Foundation Stage nor have they made sufficiently rigorous checks on the quality of teaching and learning. As a result, the quality of provision is not as good as it should be.
- Most children start school with skills and abilities that are above those typical for their age. In 2014, the percentage of pupils achieving a good level of development, at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage, was well above the national average. This meant that most children had developed the key skills that are needed for the next stage of their education. However some of the less able children do not make the progress they are capable of in the early years and are not as well prepared for key Stage 1.
- The range of learning opportunities planned for the children each day are not always based on accurate assessments of what the children can already do. As a result, too few children are provided with suitable levels of challenge. This prevents them from making more rapid progress.
- Effective routines, to ensure the smooth day-to-day running of the Early Years Foundation Stage, have not been fully established. For example, children are not encouraged to tidy up after themselves after completing a task or activity. This means that classrooms are often appear untidy and disorganised. This prevents children from developing concentration and pride in their work.
- Children are usually extremely kind and respectful towards each other. They interact well when working on interesting activities. However, on some occasions, when younger children are not interested or engaged in learning activities, they behave inappropriately and adults are slow to intervene. This is particularly true of lower ability children who need greater direction and support in order to close gaps in their learning.

- The children are inquisitive, confident and articulate. They speak with interest about a broad range of topics. When finding an activity which interests them, they often show perseverance which helps them to develop good behaviour for learning.

- Children feel safe in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Parents say that appreciate the work that the school does to keep children safe and secure and the approachability of staff.

What inspection judgements mean

School	Grade	Judgement	Description
	Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
	Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	131456
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	456440

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	238
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Simon Ezequiel
Headteacher	Sheree Oxenham
Date of previous school inspection	08 February 2012
Telephone number	01923 855631
Fax number	Not applicable
Email address	admin@cloreshalom.herts.sch.uk

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