

Inspection of a good school: Simon Marks Jewish Primary School

75 Cazenove Road, Stoke Newington, Hackney, London N16 6PD

Inspection date: 12 January 2023

Outcome

Simon Marks Jewish Primary School continues to be a good school. There is enough evidence of improved performance to suggest that the school could be judged outstanding if we were to carry out a graded (section 5) inspection now. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud to attend this school. They value the strong sense of belonging leaders and staff have created. They say, 'Everyone fits in here.' Pupils enjoy lessons and are kept safe. They look after one another and learn to cooperate politely right from the start in the early years.

Leaders expect staff to know pupils inside out. They make sure that all pupils have the chance to achieve well. Staff are skilled at helping pupils to build the confidence to try things they might at first think they cannot do. Pupils can explain what democracy means. They thrive on the wide range of opportunities available for them to take on responsibilities. Pupils are taught the skills they need to fulfil these responsibilities, for example, some pupils are trained 'peer mediators'.

Pupils report that any rare instances of bullying are tackled effectively by staff. Leaders, staff and pupils alike will not put up with intolerance of any type at this school. Pupils concentrate in lessons and enjoy one another's company at playtime and during meals. They enjoy talking about what they have learned and appreciate the wide range of clubs on offer, such as archery.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders have established a well-thought-out curriculum. The subject content leaders intend pupils to learn is clearly set out and faithfully matches what actually happens in lessons. Staff have consistently secure subject knowledge. An extensive and systematically planned programme of staff training ensures that this is sustained. Subject leaders have an accurate understanding of how well the curriculum is put into practice. This means that they can offer help and advice to staff as soon as they need it.

Teachers use assessment well and have the confidence to adapt lessons to help pupils catch up when necessary. Pupils and parents and carers appreciate the way that staff personalise lessons and make them relevant to each individual. Pupils achieve very well. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) study the same curriculum content as others. Staff know how to adapt materials so that these pupils can learn and remember new skills and knowledge. They use advice from specialist professionals to help pupils with SEND enjoy and achieve well in each subject.

Reading is a priority here. Staff in the early years have high expectations of what children should achieve and set up effective activities to help them learn phonics. They promptly establish which children need extra help to catch up. Pupils learn to read successfully because staff training ensures phonics is taught accurately. Pupils develop an enjoyment of reading. Leaders make sure that a challenging and diverse range of books is available. Staff inspire pupils to think deeply about the books they read together in class and teach them the skills to talk about reading eloquently.

In mathematics, the curriculum is well designed to enable pupils to build on what they have previously learned. Children in the early years are prepared well for the next stage of their education because they are taught accurate mathematical vocabulary from the start. Teachers expect pupils to explain their mathematical thinking clearly and precisely.

Leaders have succeeded in designing a curriculum which sparks pupils' curiosity and understanding of other cultures. There is a particularly strong emphasis on the provision of opportunities for pupils to take part in performing arts. Pupils influence their school community. For example, they have made sure that monitors have been installed in classrooms to check on air quality. School councillors helped reorganise and choose new books for the school library. Pupils with SEND participate fully in the range of wider opportunities on offer.

Pupils work hard and are polite. Children in the early years learn the daily school routines and commit these to memory. They help each other out without being reminded to by adults. Learning is not disrupted by poor behaviour.

Leaders consider staff's well-being and workload in all that they do. Staff feel listened to and appreciate the acknowledgement leaders show for their efforts and skills.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and governors know the school community very well. They use this knowledge to decide the focus of safeguarding training. Staff know what signs to look for that may indicate pupils are at risk. If leaders are worried about a pupil, they are tenacious in following up on their concerns until the pupil receives the right help. Leaders and governors carry out and manage checks on the suitability of staff appropriately and using current statutory guidance.

Staff, pupils and parents are confident that pupils are safe. Leaders arrange suitable

support to help pupils whose mental health may have been affected by their experiences to build resilience.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in June 2017.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	100275
Local authority	Hackney
Inspection number	10240317
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	109
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Howard Pallis
Headteacher	Gulcan Metin Asdoyuran
Website	www.simonmarks.hackney.sch.uk/
Date of previous inspection	6 June 2017

Information about this school

- Simon Marks Jewish Primary School is much smaller than the average primary school.
- Leaders do not make use of alternative provision.
- The school has a Jewish ethos. The last section 48 inspection of the school's religious character took place in June 2017.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors met with senior leaders and subject leaders. They held meetings with members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and computing. During each deep dive, inspectors discussed curriculum content with subject leaders, visited lessons, looked at pupils' work, spoke to pupils and met with teachers. They also observed pupils reading to an adult in the school.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils about their experiences of school. They saw pupils at lunch.

- Inspectors looked at documents about school improvement, the curriculum and safeguarding. They took account of the responses to the Ofsted Parent View survey, pupil survey and staff survey.

Inspection team

Andrew Wright, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Sacha Husnu-Beresford

His Majesty's Inspector

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