

# INSPECTION REPORT

**Simon Marks Jewish Primary School**

Stoke Newington, London

LEA area: Hackney

Unique reference number: 100275

Headteacher: Mr. Laurie Rosenberg

Lead inspector: Tim Boyce

Dates of inspection: 10<sup>th</sup> –13<sup>th</sup> November 2003

Inspection number: 259780

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	3-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	142
School address:	75 Cazenove Road London
Postcode:	N16 6PD
Telephone number:	0208 806 6048
Fax number:	0208 442 4722
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Jo-Ann Myers
Date of previous inspection:	02/11/1998

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Simon Marks Jewish Primary School is a smaller than average school in Stoke Newington, in the London Borough of Hackney, which is supported by the Scopus Educational Trust. The school serves the Jewish community for quite a large area and the social and economic circumstances of the parents span the full range. A higher than average proportion of pupils is eligible for free school lunches. There are 142 boys and girls on the roll, which is slightly less than at the time of the last inspection. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is above the national average, whilst the proportion of pupils with statements of special educational needs is below the national average. The proportion of pupils with a mother tongue other than English is much higher than average, with the majority of these pupils speaking Hebrew. The school receives some additional funding from the Excellence in Cities initiative, and this is used to provide a learning mentor. The school is working towards Healthy School status. Attainment on entry spans the full range, but is broadly average.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
20932	Tim Boyce	Lead inspector	Mathematics, information and communication technology (ICT) and physical education (PE).
9173	Sarah McDermott	Lay inspector	
21992	Jean Newing	Team inspector	English, English as an additional language (EAL), modern foreign languages (MFL), geography and history.
32531	Sue Pearce	Team inspector	Art and design, provision for the Foundation Stage, citizenship and music.
22361	Marina Gough	Team inspector	Science, design and technology (DT), special educational needs.

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a rapidly improving school which, under the leadership of its head teacher and new chair of governors, has made considerable advances in the quality of education it provides its pupils. However, as the school has identified in its improvement plan, much important work remains to be done and the school has serious weaknesses in the balance of its curriculum.

Pupils achieve well and attain well above average standards in English, mathematics, music and Hebrew, but achievement is not yet good enough, and standards are not as high in science, art and design, design and technology (DT), geography, history and physical education (PE). These inequalities exist because the school's curriculum gives insufficient emphasis and time to the teaching of these subjects. When the school's broadly satisfactory performance is weighed against comparatively high expenditure, the value for money provided is poor.

#### The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The curriculum lacks sufficient balance and not enough emphasis and time is given to the teaching of skills and understanding in science, art and design, DT, history, geography and PE. As a result achievement in these subjects is unsatisfactory.
- The head teacher, with the support of the chair of governors, provides the school with clarity of vision and an infectious enthusiasm for success.
- Standards in English and mathematics are well above the national average, whilst standards in music and Hebrew comfortably exceed the national expectation.
- The very strong spiritual and moral values promoted by the school impact very positively on pupils' attitudes, values and behaviour. As a result pupils form very secure relationships.
- The provision in the nursery and the reception classes is good overall and is consistently of a very good standard in the nursery class.
- The very effective partnership that the school has forged with parents enhances many aspects of school life, including punctuality, and is beginning to impact significantly on attendance, which is still below average.
- Effective procedures for assessing and recording the achievements of pupils have not been developed in most subjects. As a result teachers do not always match work to the individual needs of all the pupils.
- Many subject managers have yet to make a significant impact on the quality of provision and the standards achieved in their areas of responsibility.

Many advances that have been made since the relatively recent appointment of the current head teacher, however, despite much recent progress, **the school has shown an unsatisfactory level of improvement since the last inspection in 1998**. The head teacher has been very effective in raising the school's profile in the community and in attracting more pupils. Under his leadership the school has also been successful in involving parents and pupils more effectively in the decision making process. At the same time, standards have been raised in mathematics, the provision for information and communication technology (ICT) has been much improved and the curriculum for physical education (PE) now meets statutory requirements. However, despite being designated as key issues for action in the previous report, pupils are still not achieving well enough in some subjects and standards are not high enough in these areas. Assessment arrangements have improved in English, mathematics and ICT, but in science and most other subjects pupils are sometimes given work that is either too easy or too hard.

## STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Care must be taken when interpreting the results of schools with small numbers of pupils.

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	All schools			Similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	D	B	B	A
Mathematics	A	C	A	A*
Science	B	E	E	C

*Key: A - well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average*

*Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals*

**Overall, the achievement of pupils is satisfactory throughout the school.** Most children start school in the nursery with broadly average skills. Achievement is very good in the nursery and good in the reception class and, as a result, most children exceed most of the early learning goals and enter Year 1 with above average standards in all of the areas of learning.

Achievement is satisfactory overall in Years 1 and 2, but varies from subject to subject. Achievement is good in mathematics, Hebrew and music, satisfactory in English, ICT and science, but is unsatisfactory in art and design, geography, history, DT and PE. Inspection evidence shows that most pupils in Year 2 are on schedule to complete the year with very high standards in mathematics and Hebrew, high standards in English and standards in music that are broadly in line with the national expectation for science, ICT, geography and history. Standards in art and design, DT and PE are below average.

Levels of achievement are satisfactory in Years 3 to 6 but, as in Years 1 and 2, there is too much variation from subject to subject. Achievement is good in English, mathematics, music and Hebrew, satisfactory in ICT, but is unsatisfactory in science, geography, history, art and design, DT and PE because these subjects are not allocated sufficient time. When compared with all schools, the scores gained by pupils in the national assessments in 2003 are well above average in mathematics, above average in English and well below average in science. When compared to similar schools, standards are very high in mathematics, above average in English and broadly average in science. Inspection evidence shows that current standards are well above average in English and mathematics and below average in science. Standards are well above national expectations in Hebrew and music, below average in geography, history, art and design and DT and well below average in PE. Standards in ICT are broadly average in Years 3, 4 and 5, but are slightly below average in Year 6 because these pupils have only had an appropriate provision for a relatively short time. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs and those who have English as an additional language is similar to most other pupils. The achievement of higher attaining pupils is satisfactory. Boys and girls achieve similar standards.

**The overall quality of pupils' personal development is very good.** Pupils have very positive attitudes and values, form very secure relationships with adults and their peers. Standards of behaviour are very good. **Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good overall.** Spiritual development is excellent. Attendance is below average, mainly because a significant number of parents take family holidays in term time.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION

**The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory overall, but there are serious weaknesses in the balance of the curriculum.** The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. The teaching is good overall in the Foundation Stage and is very good in the nursery class, where children get a very good start to their life in school. Teaching is satisfactory overall in the rest of the school, and consistently good teaching is found in the upper years of Key Stage 2. Hence pupils develop very good learning habits, work hard in class and get a lot done in the allotted time.

They work very well collaboratively or alone. The overall quality of assessment and the use of assessment data are unsatisfactory because, in many subjects, too little regard is paid by teachers to what pupils have already learned.

The quality of the curriculum is unsatisfactory because the allocation of emphasis and time is completely out of balance and insufficient attention is given to teaching and learning in science in Years 3 to 6 and in art and design, geography, history, DT and PE throughout the school. As a result achievement is unsatisfactory in these subjects and pupils do not attain high enough standards. The school provides a satisfactory range of opportunities for curricular enrichment, including extra-curricular activities. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. Resources to support teaching and learning are unsatisfactory in some subjects. Procedures to provide a caring and safe environment for the pupils are good, whilst the provision for the guidance and support of pupils is satisfactory. The school's partnership with parents is very good and makes a very positive contribution to pupils' achievements. Links with other schools and the wider community are satisfactory.

### **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**The leadership and management of the school is satisfactory overall.** Since his appointment last year, the head teacher, who is a charismatic leader, has provided the school with a very clear vision and has inspired a will to raise standards by improving the school's provision. With the support of the committed chair of governors and the Senior Management Team, he has inspired almost all the staff to share his vision and to forge ahead with the improvements that are essential for the school's long-term future. The management of the head teacher is satisfactory overall, but the management of the curriculum is unsatisfactory. The head teacher and governors are aware of these weaknesses, which are identified in the school's well constructed development plan. The management of most curricular areas is currently unsatisfactory, as most subject managers have not yet had sufficient opportunities to effect the changes that would drive up standards in their areas of responsibility. The governance of the school is satisfactory and all members of the governing body are now aware that substantial revisions of the school's curriculum are urgently required. Statutory requirements are met. There are weaknesses in the financial management of the school, with too much money being spent to support very high staffing costs and small classes. In addition, there are not enough good quality resources in some subject areas. When the school's broadly satisfactory performance is weighed against this very high expenditure, the value for money provided is poor.

### **PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

Parents are very pleased with the work of the school. They have noticed a great improvement in the school and most are delighted that their children settle in so well and enjoy coming to school. The overall quality of information made available to parents is satisfactory. Parents are pleased with the efforts the school is making to involve them in the education of their children. Pupils are generally satisfied with the school but some find the work either too easy or too hard. They like their teachers and wish they had more time to enjoy a wider curriculum.

### **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

The most important things the school should do to improve are:

- improve the balance of the curriculum so that more emphasis and time is given to the systematic development of skills and understanding in science, art and design, DT, history, geography and PE so that pupils' achievement is improved and standards are raised.
- Develop the role of subject managers so that they have a greater impact on the quality of provision and the standards achieved in their areas of responsibility.
- Improve teaching by ensuring that members of staff make better use of assessment information to match work more effectively to the needs of individual pupils.
- Continue to improve levels of attendance.



## **PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS**

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

#### **Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses**

Most pupils attain very good standards in English and mathematics throughout the school. Standards in science at Key Stage 2 are below national expectations whilst standards in ICT are broadly in line with national expectations. Standards in music and Hebrew exceed national expectations, but standards in geography, history, art and design, DT and PE are below the expected standard. The achievement of pupils is satisfactory overall. Pupils with special educational needs, including those with impaired hearing, achieve satisfactorily. The achievement of higher attaining pupils and those for who English is an additional language is satisfactory.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards attained in English and mathematics are well above the expected level. The school gives a very good emphasis to the development of speaking and listening skills.
- Standards in science, geography, history, art and design, DT and PE are not high enough.
- Standards in music and in Hebrew are much better than are usually found.
- Children in the Foundation Stage achieve well. The achievement in the nursery class is very good.

#### **Commentary**

1. Most children enter the nursery with broadly average skills. They make a very good start to their learning in the nursery, where the overall provision is very good. They quickly settle into school routines and achieve very well in all areas of learning. Achievement is good overall in the reception class and most children exceed the early learning goals and enter Year 1 with above average standards in all of the areas of learning.
2. The standards attained by Year 2 pupils in the end of key stage tests administered by the school in 2003 were well above average in reading, below average in writing and average in mathematics. When compared to similar schools (those with between 20 and 35 percent of their pupils eligible for free school meals) results were very high in reading, (in the top five percent of schools in the country) average in writing and well above average in mathematics. Teacher assessments indicated that standards in science were above average. The scores gained in 2003 were similar to those gained in the previous year. Reading standards improved slightly but there was a dip in the standards attained in writing and mathematics. Care must be taken in interpreting these results since the age groups are relatively small and are statistically unreliable.

#### ***Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2003***

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	17.3 (17.1)	15.9 (16.0)
Writing	14.2 (15.0)	14.8 (14.5)
Mathematics	16.4 (16.9)	16.4 (16.7)

*There were 20 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

3. Inspection evidence shows that achievement is satisfactory overall in Years 1 and 2, but varies significantly from subject to subject depending on the emphasis and time that is given. As a

result achievement is good in mathematics, music and Hebrew, satisfactory in English, science and ICT and unsatisfactory in geography, history, art and design, DT and PE. Inspection evidence also shows that standards are above average in English and mathematics, and are broadly average in science. Standards exceed expectations in music and Hebrew, are in line with expectations in ICT, geography and history, but do not meet expectations in art and design, DT and PE.

- Standards attained in the tests administered by the school at the end of Year 6 in 2003 were above average for English, well above average for mathematics and below average for science. The scores were similar to those gained in 2002. Care must be taken in interpreting these results since the age groups are relatively small and are statistically unreliable.

**Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2003**

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.7.(28.4)	27.0.(27.2)
Mathematics	28.9.(27.4)	27.0.(26.9)
Science	27.5.(27.8)	28.9.(28.6)

*There were 26 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

- Inspection evidence shows that levels of achievement are satisfactory overall, but that there is considerable variation from subject to subject depending on the time that is allocated and the emphasis that the subject is given by the school. Achievement improves as pupils move through the key stage and levels of achievement in some classes towards the top of the school are good overall and sometimes very good. Standards in the current Year 6 class are well above average in English and mathematics, but well below average in science.
- Standards in ICT are in line with expectations throughout Years 3, 4 and 5, but are still slightly below expectations in Year 6 because the pupils have not yet had sufficient opportunities to make good the deficiencies in provision experienced in previous years. Standards in Years 3 to 6 exceed national expectations in music and Hebrew because of the quality of the school’s provision. Standards do not meet the expected level in history, geography, art and design, DT and PE because insufficient emphasis is given to develop the skills and concepts required.
- The achievement of pupils with special educational needs and those who have English as an additional language is satisfactory overall and is similar to most other pupils. The achievement of higher attaining pupils is satisfactory. Boys and girls achieve similar standards.

**Pupils’ attitudes, values and other personal qualities**

The attitudes and behaviour of pupils are very good. Pupils respond extremely well to the very effective promotion of spiritual, moral and social development. The promotion of cultural development is satisfactory because the appreciation of other ways of life and faiths is more limited. Punctuality has improved and is now satisfactory. However attendance is below the national average.

**Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils are confident learners who make the most of school lessons and activities.
- Relationships between pupils and with adults are very good.
- The whole of school life is underpinned by an impressive spiritual awareness.
- A substantial amount of absence is related to holidays in term time.

## Commentary

8. Pupils arrive cheerfully in the morning and love coming to school. The warm welcome that they receive from staff helps them to feel confident and valued and this has a very positive impact on their learning. In lessons pupils frequently offer perceptive and thoughtful ideas and are quick to ask if they do not understand what to do. They are keen to take part in clubs and activities out of lessons and, for example, the pupils in the dance club smiled and laughed as they confidently learnt the steps of a new Israeli dance. The money provided by the Excellence in Cities initiative is used by the school to purchase the services of a learning mentor who works, to good effect, to develop the confidence of shy or anxious pupils.
9. Pupils and adults get on very well together. The head teacher always has a special word for every pupil he meets about the school. In return the pupils enjoy his humour, yet are respectful and appreciate the personal approach. Pupils of all ages work and play together very well. Many pupils mentioned friendship as something special in school. On the playground pupils organise their own games and make the most of their time out in the fresh air with their friends. The pupils have high levels of self-discipline and respond very well to the consistent and positive approach to behaviour management.

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

### ***Exclusions in the last school year***

<b>Categories used in the Annual School Census</b>	<b>No of pupils on roll</b>	<b>Number of fixed period exclusions</b>	<b>Number of permanent exclusions</b>
White – British	49		
White – Irish	4		
White – any other White background	36	1	
Mixed – any other mixed background	23		
Asian or Asian British – Indian	2		
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	9		
Black or Black British – African	2		
Any other ethnic group	21		
No ethnic group recorded	2		

*The table gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.*

10. Pupils have an extremely well developed sense of self-knowledge and spiritual awareness. The ethos of Simon Marks is strongly founded on the principles and values of the Jewish faith, which permeate the whole of school life. Assemblies led by the head teacher are interesting and thought provoking, with time for humour and reflection. The behaviour and reverence of the pupils at these times for collective worship are exemplary. Pupils are given many opportunities to think beyond the tangible and material, developing a confidence to talk about inner feelings and understand what makes them tick. The recent introduction of philosophy lessons is giving a valuable extra dimension to the older pupils' understanding of what they want to get out of life. Pupils are extremely proud of their Jewish background and beliefs
11. The school has been working effectively to raise the profile of attendance and punctuality amongst pupils and parents. Punctuality has improved and now usually only a handful of pupils arrive after 9.00am. However good time keeping practice is not yet sufficiently established in the nursery where a significant number of children are brought late. It is commendable that the school has negligible unauthorised absence. However authorised absence is much higher than

most schools because parents too often take their children out of school for holidays or family celebrations. The school is sympathetic to families taking time for visits to Israel, but still reminds them that regular attendance is a vital ingredient for good achievement. The recent introduction of the Curley Cup, awarded to the class with the highest attendance each half term, is keenly looked forward to and proving successful in raising the profile of good attendance.

### Attendance in the latest complete reporting year 2002/3 - 93%

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	6.9%	School data :	0.1%
National data:	5.4%	National data:	0.4%

The table gives the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

### Teaching and learning

**The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory.** There are no differences between the progress made by girls and boys. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory and these pupils make similar progress to their peers.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good overall in the Foundation Stage and is very good in the nursery class.
- Pupils work very hard in class and in most lessons they get a lot done in the allotted time. They work very well, either collaboratively or alone.
- Teachers ensure that pupils behave well and this has a positive effect on their achievement in most lessons.
- Pupils with special educational needs do not all have equal access to all curricular subjects.
- The quality of teachers' planning is generally weak, and in too many lessons pupils do not understand the purpose of the activity.
- Teachers do not make sufficient use of assessment information to ensure that the lessons consistently meet the needs of all the pupils.

### Commentary

#### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 44 lessons*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0 (0%)	8 (18%)	15 (34%)	16 (36%)	4 (9%)	1 (2%)	0 (0%)

*The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages where 30 or more lessons are seen.*

12. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, a similar situation to that found in the previous inspection. The teaching seen during this inspection spanned the range from very good to poor, with most of the better teaching being seen in the nursery, the reception class, Year 3 and in the classes for the older pupils. Pupils also make good and often very good progress in some of the classes because teaching groups are small and the pupil teacher ratio is very low.

13. The teaching in the nursery is consistently very good and pupils are provided with a very wide range of stimulating and exciting learning experiences. Teaching in the reception class is always at least satisfactory. Teaching is satisfactory overall in Years 1 and 2. However, several of the lessons observed in the Year 1 class were unsatisfactory because the teaching lacked sufficient pace and purpose. A careful analysis of the work in the books and detailed discussion with pupils revealed, however, that teaching in this class is usually of a much better standard and that learning is satisfactory overall. Teaching in the Year 2 class is satisfactory. The teacher has good subject knowledge but her planning sometimes lacks sufficient clarity and the tasks set in some lessons are not always matched to the needs of all the pupils.
14. Teaching in Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory overall, with just over half of the lessons observed being either good or very good. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and because of their very positive relationships with the pupils they are able to enthuse and encourage them to try their very hardest. As a result learning is very effective since pupils work very hard and make the most of the time at their disposal. Pupils are effectively encouraged to be independent and resourceful and as a result they develop very good learning habits. They work very well either alone, or in groups of different sizes, and are keen to conduct independent research.
15. Throughout the school pupils receive very effective specialist teaching for music and Hebrew and, as a result the pupils achieve very well and attain high standards. Teaching in English and mathematics is generally good and is effectively supplemented by much of the work done in Hebrew. The school has adopted the national guidelines in many subjects and these are helping teachers in their planning. The overall quality of planning is weak, however, because not all staff follow these guidelines with sufficient care and there is no assurance that all pupils will have covered all the required content as they move through the school. Opportunities are missed to share learning objectives and in many of the classes observed pupils did not know the purpose of the activities they were completing. Teachers' planning sometimes takes insufficient account of the progress made in previous lessons and the work set is subsequently either too easy or too hard.
16. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory and enables them to make satisfactory progress as they move through the school. The school is aware that pupils are often withdrawn from lessons in other subjects to attend special support classes in English and that this further reduces the access of some pupils to lessons in science and other important subjects. Whilst this has a positive impact on the standards these pupils achieve in English, it further reduces their achievement in many other subjects.
17. Formal assessment arrangements in the school, whilst developing, are still not of the required standard and in some lessons insufficient use is made of that assessment information that is available to plan work that is appropriate to the needs of all pupils. Progress in this area has been poor since this is a similar situation to that found in the previous inspection when assessment was a key issue. During the past year a start has been made in introducing some assessment procedures for English and mathematics for pupils in Key Stage 2, but these are cumbersome and time consuming and do not readily give the information teachers need. The procedures do not have sufficient impact on the work completed in Key Stage 1 or the Foundation Stage and there is currently no effective means of tracking the progress of individual pupils as they move through the school. The school has recently started to analyse national assessment data and, as detailed in the school development plan, is aware that this is an area that requires further development.

## The curriculum

**The curriculum is unsatisfactory overall as there are serious weaknesses in the balance between subjects in Key Stages 1 and 2.**

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum for Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 is unsatisfactory since it lacks balance.
- The curriculum for the Foundation Stage is very good.
- Curriculum planning is poor overall and results in gaps in pupils' learning.
- Provision for pupils with SEN in Foundation Stage is very good.
- Overall resources are unsatisfactory. They are poor in Foundation Stage.
- Accommodation is good and the school provides a bright and attractive learning environment.

### Commentary

18. The curriculum in the Foundation Stage is very good and a strength of the school. Teachers provide a very good range of activities and achieve a good balance between those that are teacher directed and those that are child initiated. Very good emphasis is placed on planned activities that very effectively promote their personal, social and emotional development and particularly their independent learning skills. Teachers do their best to provide a good range of resources for their children, but many of these resources are in a poor state of repair, are old and in urgent need of replacement.
19. The curriculum for Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 pupils lacks balance and is poor overall. Not enough time is given to science and most of the foundation subjects of the National Curriculum because too much of the available time is allocated to the teaching of Hebrew and Jewish studies. The head teacher, most staff, and governors are aware of the need to restructure the curriculum so that all subjects are given appropriate amounts of time and are given due emphasis. Pupils learning and achievement are most detrimentally affected in art and design, design and technology, geography, history and PE, which receive the least amount of time. As a result standards are not high enough in these subjects because pupils have not been given sufficient opportunities to develop the required skills and concepts. Whilst the school delivers aspects of these subjects through its programme of Jewish Studies, much of the content is not included in the national curriculum and makes insufficient impact on the pupils learning. Pupils would like to spend more time studying art and design, DT, history, geography and PE.
20. Provision for children with special educational needs is very good in the nursery. The teacher provides enriching experiences for these children and they make very good progress. The nursery nurse and nursery assistant are very good and are used effectively to make a significant impact on children's learning. The provision in the rest of the school is satisfactory since although this area is very well managed by the co-ordinator, teachers do not always plan their lessons to meet the needs of pupils with individual education plans.
21. Extra activities enhance the curriculum satisfactorily. These include a well-attended choir that, with the pupils in Year 6 will soon feature on a Radio 4 broadcast. Football coaching by Leyton Orient Football Club, school football training and an Israeli dance club take place weekly, but these are mainly for older pupils. A morning breakfast club run by staff provides for a regular group of pupils before school and is visited weekly by a philosopher, who later also works with pupils in Years 5 and 6. Visitors to school who have enriched the curriculum include the Bishop of Stepney, a theatre director and an expert on prime numbers. Good use is made of the local environment, with classes visiting the synagogue, shops and park. The school has links with other commonwealth Jewish schools around the world but recognises that it needs to broaden

its outlook to include non-Jewish organisations and experiences. The school has identified a number of extra-curricular activities that are planned for the near future.

22. Resources are satisfactory for English and mathematics and make an effective contribution to the high standards attained. However, there is insufficient equipment in some other subjects and in the foundation stage. The head teacher is aware of these weaknesses and has been very effective in accessing a significant sum of money to re-equip Key Stage 1 and the foundation stage. The teaching of ICT is greatly enhanced by the new computer suite, but the ICT equipment in most of the classrooms needs to be replaced. The school has provided one teacher with an interactive white board, which is used to good effect, and plans to equip all classes with interactive white boards as funds allow.
23. Since the arrival of the new head teacher the accommodation has been significantly refurbished using devolved funds from the DfES. The new ICT suite and art room are light and spacious, although the art room is currently underused. The new library and resource area is developing quickly and promises to be a very useful area where pupils will be able to access a wide range of information found in conventional books and via computers and the internet. The nursery is housed in a well-designed building with its own dedicated play area. Outside the younger pupils have plenty of apparatus with safety surfaces, while the junior pupils have a good safe space in the fenced playground.
24. There are sufficient teaching staff to deliver the national curriculum and pupils make good and sometimes very good progress in some subjects. Specialist teachers of Hebrew and music are very effective and make a very positive contribution to the high standards that are achieved in these subjects. Support staff make an appropriate contribution to teaching and learning in most classes. There are a number of part time staff who teach Jewish Studies. The school is over-staffed and this is having a significant drain on the school's financial resources and its ability to plan effectively for the future.

### **Care, guidance and support**

The school has good procedures to ensure the care and welfare of the pupils.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils are very effectively involved in the running of the school.
- The pastoral care of pupils is very good.

### **Commentary**

25. Procedures to ensure the health and safety of the pupils have improved since the last inspection and adequate records are kept of accidents and incidents. However there is not yet a governor to report on health and safety issues, particularly while there are builders on site at the same time as the pupils. The pastoral care and concern for pupils are very good. In this small, close-knit school staff are quick to notice if any pupils are having problems, whether domestic, personal or medical. Adults rally round to give kind and caring support and where necessary the school effectively arranges for individual help. The learning mentor is deployed well to help build up the self-esteem of the few pupils who are finding it difficult to cope, whether because of shyness or inappropriate behaviour. However the lack of effective systems across the curriculum to track and monitor pupils' academic progress means the school is not as well-informed as it could be in giving guidance for the best achievement of each pupil.

## Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The partnership with parents has improved significantly since the last inspection and is now very good. Links with the Jewish community are very strong, and are satisfactory with the local community and other schools.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are very pleased with the much-improved level of communication from school to home.
- The school has very effective links with the Jewish community.
- The quality of written communication with parents is good but annual reports do not give parents a sufficiently accurate picture of how their children have progressed over the year.

### Commentary

26. The new head teacher and chair of governors have very effectively paved the way for far more productive and open lines of communication between the school and parents. The head teacher is engagingly enthusiastic and very welcoming to all visitors. Parents look forward to the head teacher's weekly News Notes, which not only give a philosophical view on current affairs and Jewish festivals, but also keep them well up to date on celebrations and achievements. The vast majority is right behind his mission to steer the school to becoming more outward looking, yet to keep its distinctive and special Jewish ethos. A recent comprehensive survey of parents' views has brought them right back into the heart of the school and allowed the governors to act on parental suggestions and concerns.
27. Parents receive satisfactory information on what is being taught in the classroom when they meet the teachers at the beginning of the year, but would appreciate an overview of the topics to be studied in the term. The "Learning Showcase" made a good start in showing the school's work to parents, but there is still more that could be done by the way of meetings to explain how certain subjects are taught and how parents can help their children from home. In the same vein, a few parents are confused about the school's policy on homework. Parents are very supportive of the school and turn up to Jewish celebrations and open events in great numbers. They are now being accepted as valuable partners in education and are becoming a very useful sounding board to help the school's vision become a reality.
28. Parents are keen to see their children achieve well and value information on their progress. Most end of year reports give parents a satisfactory overview on the subjects in which their children have participated, but too many are inaccurate about the exact progress made. While assessment systems are underdeveloped it is difficult for teachers to be precise in how much each pupil has improved in a subject over the year. Some teachers give useful and meaningful targets for improvement, but other teachers identify targets that are too vague.
29. The school has particularly strong and productive links with its Jewish community locally, nationally and internationally. Local Jewish contacts are used well to enliven the teaching of Jewish studies, with visits to the butcher and workshops to make rams horns or unleavened bread. The older pupils visit the home for elderly Jews to hear memories of the past and bring real experiences to their history lessons. The Simon Marks Learning and Resource Centre is well on its way to completion, when it will provide a focus for Jewish family education. So far the school has offered ICT tuition to parents via the Hackney Community College and a date has been set for a course to explain the most recent approach to teaching mathematics. Links with the locality of Stoke Newington are less well developed, although the school has a useful contact with a nearby primary school and the pupils enjoy their football competitions with other Hackney schools. The inspection team is sensitive to the school's faithful adherence to its



Jewish heritage, but more needs to be done to raise pupils' awareness of the wealth of cultures on their doorstep.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The head teacher's leadership is **satisfactory** overall. The management of the school is **satisfactory** overall, but has strengths and weaknesses. The governing body satisfactorily fulfils its duties and responsibilities and statutory requirements are met.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The head teacher is an inspirational and charismatic leader who has a very clear understanding of the strengths of the school and the challenges that still need to be tackled.
- The Chair of the governing body is a driving force who works very closely with the head teacher, sharing his very clear vision for the school's future development.
- The leadership and management of the curriculum are weak, and there are serious weaknesses in the balance of the curriculum.
- The school is over-staffed, and this results in the inefficient use of funds.
- Because of the very high costs per pupil, and the under-achievement resulting from serious weaknesses in the curriculum, the school is giving poor value for money.
- The head teacher has made great strides in developing a genuine partnership with parents, thereby strengthening bonds with and within the local community.
- The Jewish ethos is very strongly promoted, and is characterised by a very warm, happy and friendly atmosphere.

### Commentary

30. The charismatic and energetic head teacher provides the school with effective leadership and a very clear vision for the future. During his relatively brief term of office he has, with the enlightened support of the chair of governors, worked very hard to transform the school's fortunes and to develop an environment that will encourage the creative and imaginative aspects of pupils' learning. Together they have a very clear understanding of the strengths that exist in the school and of the very significant challenges that remain to be tackled and they have now created an environment in which this can now take place without further delay.
31. There have been many successes in the relatively short time since the head teacher has been in post. He has increased the popularity of the school to the point where the classes in the lower years of the school are now almost full. He has also led a significant improvement in the quality of the school's relationship with parents. Secure and trusting relationships have now replaced widespread dissatisfaction and parents report that they are now welcomed into the building and that their views on future development are sought and considered. He has also been effective in sharing his vision for the future that has had a very positive impact on staff morale with almost all members of staff and the majority of the governing body understanding the need for continued reform. Whilst it has retained and built upon its distinctive Jewish character, under the current leadership the school is quickly becoming a much more open and inclusive community.
32. However, the leadership of curriculum matters is poor and as a result there are serious weaknesses in the balance of the curriculum. The school is well aware of these weaknesses, which are detailed in the well-constructed school development plan, but too little has been done to resolve these matters. Swift and decisive action must be taken to ensure that all pupils are given opportunities to experience all of the subjects of the National Curriculum to the required level, since whilst all subjects are taught, the excessive amounts of time currently allocated to the teaching of Hebrew and Jewish Studies mean that insufficient emphasis and time is given to the teaching of science, art and design, geography, history, DT and PE. As a

result insufficient achievement is made in these subjects and standards are lower than they should be.

33. The head teacher is very active around the school and, with the support of the local authority the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school has been monitored regularly. As a result he is beginning to develop a suitable understanding of the strengths and weaknesses that exist in the teaching. Performance management has now been established and the targets set are now starting to be used to raise standards. The management of the curriculum is poor, however, and there are no effective procedures in place to ensure that the limited amount of time available to teach certain subjects is used most effectively. Class timetables are not generally devised to ensure that all pupils receive their curricular entitlement and that any additional time available is used to raise standards in key areas identified by the school. In too many cases they are structured around the availability of part time teachers. Insufficient attention is given to the length and timing of lessons and key lessons are often fitted in at times of the day when learning is not at its most effective. Teachers often do not follow timetables with sufficient attention to detail and lessons are often switched with little regard to the impact that this will have on pupils' learning opportunities.
34. The leadership and management roles of key staff are, as yet, poorly developed. Subject managers have not been sufficiently active in promoting or monitoring development within their areas of responsibility. They have not been given enough opportunities to monitor provision, check planning or to observe teaching within their subjects. The management of special educational needs is very effective and all the required procedures are maintained to a high standard. The leadership of this area is unsatisfactory, however, as there is no effective systems for monitoring the progress of pupils as they move through the school. The nursery teacher and reception teacher effectively manage the curriculum for the foundation stage.
35. An enthusiastic and knowledgeable Chair of Governors leads the governing body, which is a committed and supportive group who are developing a clearer understanding of the many challenges that face the school. Link governors are now in place for key subjects. Governors fulfill their statutory duties, and most are aware of the need to ensure balance in the curriculum.
36. The school receives a very high income per pupil but because of the enormous sums spent maintaining an overly large staff and some very small classes the use of the available resources is very inefficient. Despite the fact that the school receives additional funding for the teaching of Jewish Studies and Hebrew from Scopus, the head teacher is aware of the urgent need to pare down expenditure on staffing so that more money is available for the purchase of much needed resources. Together with the governing body he is looking at ways of reducing staffing levels over an appropriate period of time. Although firm plans are in place to do this, there is currently not enough sense of urgency, and this must be a priority if the school is to give value for money in the future.

## Financial information

### *Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003*

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	677,342
Total expenditure	734,607
Expenditure per pupil	4,930

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	87,816
Balance carried forward to the next	30,551

## **PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING,**

## **SUBJECTS AND COURSES**

### **AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

37. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage, which is made up of the nursery and reception class, is good overall. The nursery admits children from the age of three on a full time basis and they enter the reception class in either the September or January before they are five. The nursery is based in a separate building whilst the reception class is based inside the main school building, but the nursery teacher and reception class teacher plan together well and provide an interesting range of well-considered activities.
38. All children achieve well in all of the areas of learning because teaching is very good in the nursery and good overall in reception. The majority of children will achieve the early learning goals well before the end of the Foundation Stage. The curriculum is very well balanced and appropriate to the individual needs of all children. It makes a significant contribution to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, which is very good. All adults within the nursery act as excellent role models, they are aware of the individual needs of pupils, plan carefully together and provide a wide range of interesting and challenging activities that enhance all areas of learning.
39. Teachers know their children well and assessment of their progress is satisfactory and in line with the completion of the Foundation Stage profile. All children have a very positive attitude to their learning and are developing their confidence in this positive and welcoming environment. The nursery is housed in purpose built accommodation with an adequate outdoor area that is used very well on a daily basis. However, although teachers are highly resourceful and do their very best to provide an interesting range of activities and equipment, the resources within the nursery and reception class are poor and need replacing.

### **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in personal, social and emotional development is very good.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children achieve very well because of the very good teaching in nursery and good teaching in reception.
- Every opportunity is made to provide a variety of activities that will enhance children's development in this area of learning.
- Children are confident in their surroundings, interact very well with adults and peers and feel secure in exploring new concepts and ideas.

#### **Commentary**

40. Children in the Foundation Stage are offered an exciting and stimulating curriculum through which personal, social and emotional development is a key strand. All children are very effectively encouraged to involve themselves in the wide range of very well planned activities that very effectively support the development of their self-esteem and self-confidence. Very good teaching assistants and numerous parent helpers work with the teaching staff in the nursery to ensure that all children, particularly those with limited English and with special educational needs are given good opportunities to develop independent and collaborative learning skills. As a result achievement is very good in the nursery and the majority of children exceed the expected level by the time they enter Year 1.

### **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

Provision for communication, language and literacy is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Speaking and listening skills are well developed. Children communicate clearly and confidently with each other and adults.
- Teachers are creative and provide a variety of activities that enhance children's development in writing, speaking, listening and reading.
- Resources are old, worn and unexciting.

### **Commentary**

41. Communication, language and literacy are key themes running through every planned activity in the Foundation Stage. Pupils enter the nursery with above average skills in this area and continue to make good progress in nursery and reception because the careful planning is well matched to the early learning goals. Teaching is good overall and the stimulating speaking and listening opportunities that are provided encourage individual conversations between adult and child, and the richness of language that is central to the ethos of the Foundation Stage enables children to make very good progress and achieve high standards in speaking and listening. All of these strategies promote learning very effectively and enable all children to reach their potential. Resources in nursery and reception are of poor quality, old and dated but teachers work very hard to make them as attractive as possible in order to support children's learning.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

The provision for mathematical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children's numeracy skills are promoted effectively through all areas of learning within the Foundation Stage.

### **Commentary**

42. Teaching is good overall and teachers use a wide variety of strategies to strengthen and develop children's mathematical development. In practical activities and discussions teachers use every opportunity to use vocabulary involved with this area of learning. In the nursery class children count up to ten with ease and in reception they count to 50 and beyond. They have a good understanding of shape, space and measure and its associated language. Creative activities linked to mathematical development include robot making, using cubes, cuboids and cylinders in reception and making cakes in the nursery where children match one to one, use language such as smaller, greater, heavier and lighter to describe size and quantities. Achievement is good because teachers link mathematical concepts to the rest of the curriculum, provide creative activities and ensure that teaching assistants and parent helpers support learning at all times.

## KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

The provision for pupils' knowledge and understanding of the world is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are provided with an environment that encourages them to be curious, ask questions and investigate the world around them.
- Children have very good opportunities to experience their own culture and beliefs.

### Commentary

43. The outdoor area is used effectively, by staff, to provide a stimulating learning environment. Teachers encourage children to use all of their senses to explore the world around them. They investigate objects and materials, visit the local park, collect and play in the leaves and record their findings photographically and graphically. Through Jewish studies children have the opportunity to experience their own culture and beliefs. The music teacher very effectively involves children in singing and music making activities that promote the Jewish ethos and encourage Hebrew speaking. Children have a well-developed sense of family. The home corner in the nursery is used well to develop speaking and listening skills within this area of learning. Teaching assistants subtly ask questions in order to develop language skills, direct play and ensure inclusion of all children.

## PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are confident and in control of the way they move and how they handle tools and equipment.
- Teachers plan effectively, but resources are worn and unattractive.

### Commentary

44. Children have good access to a variety of indoor and outdoor play situations. The nursery engages children in focused play and as a result they are increasingly independent in physical activities. Activities are both enjoyable and imaginative and as a result children are confident in their control and co-ordination. They are becoming increasingly aware of their own sense of space. Children in the Foundation Stage handle a variety of tools, objects and a wide range of materials safely. Teachers offer guidance, support and encouragement in the development of new skills. This enables children to make good progress over time and achieve well. In addition to the facilities available both inside the classroom or in the outdoor activity area, the children in the reception class use the hall for physical development lessons where the teacher makes effective use of strategies to enable good listening along with enthusiasm that in turn leads to good learning. Children in reception show a good sense of space, are aware of their bodies and control their movements well. Opportunities are missed, however, to support learning through active participation and demonstration.

## CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

The provision for creative development is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers plan for and provide a good range of activities to stimulate creativity.
- Opportunities are created to support and reinforce learning in other areas of the Foundation Stage curriculum through creative play.
- Resources are limited and of poor quality.

### Commentary

45. Well-planned imaginative and enjoyable play opportunities enable children to experience and explore a range of media and materials throughout the Foundation Stage. In doing so, children are encouraged to respond to what they see, hear and feel. In this language-rich environment children communicate and express themselves very well. Children with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs are very well supported by support staff and given individual encouragement and help; this in turn enables them to make good progress. In the nursery children are given access to a wide variety of free choice activities that promote the exploration of colour, texture and shape. They use their imagination in play situations through art, music, role-play and stories. The provision for music is a particular strength and the specialist music teacher spends a significant proportion of her time in the nursery and reception classes each day. As a result children learn from a very early age to sing with pleasure and without any inhibition.

## SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

### ENGLISH AND HEBREW

Provision for English and Hebrew is **good**.

### Strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in English are above average by the end of Year 2 and well above average by the end of Year 6.
- Standards in Hebrew are well above average throughout the school.
- Standards in speaking and listening are excellent.
- The teaching of English is good overall, and very good in Year 6.
- The planning of lessons is sometimes weak and opportunities are missed to share learning objectives.

### Commentary

46. Children make good progress in the development of their language skills in the nursery and the reception class and the majority of them enter Year 1 having already achieved the early learning goals. They make satisfactory progress throughout Years 1 and 2 and by the end of Year 2 standards in reading and writing are above average whilst standards in speaking and listening are well above average. Pupils make good progress overall throughout their junior years and by the end of Year 6 the majority achieve standards that are well above average in reading and writing and are very high in speaking and listening. This is a similar situation to that found in the previous inspection.

47. Pupils use their excellent speaking skills very effectively across the curriculum. Pupils who attend the Breakfast Club discuss newspapers articulately with the teacher and talk knowledgeably about current events. Spelling is accurate and pupils write in a legible joined script. A love of reading is very strongly promoted amongst the older pupils who read for pleasure and recommend books to each other.
48. The teaching of English is good overall, and is very good in Year 6. Teaching for the pupils in Years 1 and 2, whilst satisfactory overall, is sometimes uninspiring and in the lessons observed, the pace of teaching and learning was slow and introductions took so long so that the pupils did not have sufficient time to complete their tasks. The teaching for the older pupils is good overall because teachers are enthusiastic and the lessons are lively and provide a good level of challenge for the more able pupils. Pupils achieve very well in Year 6 because of the very good teaching they receive.
49. Planning is weak throughout the school and in most lessons the teachers do not share the learning objective with the pupils. As a result pupils often do not know the purpose of their learning. Time is not used as efficiently as it could be in some lessons. Some teachers are not very clear when explaining tasks to the pupils, but despite these weaknesses the overall quality of the teaching is often good because the very low pupil teacher ratio means that pupils are very well supported and achieve well. Pupils behave very well and have very good attitudes to learning. This makes a very positive contribution to the very high standards they achieve.
50. The management of the subject is satisfactory overall, but some weaknesses remain. The key issues from the last inspection have not been addressed properly and there is still a lack of rigorous monitoring to improve the quality of teaching and to ensure a more consistent standard. A start had been made in analysing national assessment scores but no analysis is made of the Key Stage 1 results. It is not possible, therefore, to accurately track the progress of individual pupils through the school accurately, or to set realistic targets for improvement.

### **Language and literacy across the curriculum**

51. Teachers develop pupils' speaking and listening skills across the curriculum very well and this contributes significantly to the very high standards achieved. Pupils are given good opportunities to read and to write at length in English lessons and this is an improvement since the last inspection. There are very good opportunities for pupils to develop their reading and writing skills in Hebrew and Jewish Studies, but limited opportunities for writing at length are provided in most other subjects.

### **Hebrew**

52. Pupils make very good progress in Hebrew and achieve very high standards because of the very good provision they receive. The teaching of Hebrew is good overall and often very good, and the subject is allocated a very large proportion of the available time. The work covered in Hebrew lessons makes a very positive contribution to the standards attained by pupils in English and mathematics. The study of the Hebrew language also contributes significantly to pupils' knowledge and understanding of their Jewish culture.

## **MATHEMATICS**

The provision in mathematics is good. Achievement is good and standards are well above average at the end of Years 2 and 6.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils attain high standards at the end of Years 2 and 6.
- Pupils develop particularly good skills in numeracy and mental arithmetic.
- Teaching is good.

### **Commentary**

53. Inspection evidence clearly shows that standards are above the national average and given the current rate of progress are on target to be well above average by the end of Year 2. This is mainly because pupils have very good numerical skills and are developing very good speed and accuracy when calculating mental arithmetic. This is a much higher standard than was indicated by the scores gained in the national tests administered by the school in 2003 and is due, at least in part, to the higher than average standard of this particular cohort. This is a similar, if slightly better standard to that found in the previous inspection.
54. The quality of the teaching observed in lessons in Years 1 and 2 was satisfactory overall, but achievement is often good because the pupils work so hard and get a lot done in the allotted time. This is mainly because the pupil teacher ratio is so low and they receive a lot of individual support. Although formal assessment procedures are no better than satisfactory, because the classes are so small and the teachers know the pupils so well, all pupils, including higher attaining pupils, those with special educational needs and those for whom English as an additional language are generally well supported and achieve well.
55. Standards are well above average at the end of Year 6. The same very good standards of numeracy and mental arithmetic found in Years 1 and 2 are evident throughout the key stage, but in Year 6 in particular this is matched by a thorough understanding of a wide range of mathematical concepts. This is a similar situation to that found in the last inspection.
56. Teaching is good overall throughout Years 3 to 6 and results in good achievement. This is mainly because the teaching groups are small and the pupils are given good individual support. The teaching in the Year 6 class is particularly good because the teacher has infectious enthusiasm for the subject and provides the pupils with a wide variety of different strategies for solving problems. The pupils thrive in the wonderful learning atmosphere that is created and try their very hardest to succeed. Teachers generally have good subject knowledge and because they know their pupils so well, the work is suitably matched to the individual needs of the pupils. This has a very positive impact on the achievement of the pupils.
57. The leadership of the subject is satisfactory overall and the subject manager has a realistic understanding of the strengths and areas for improvement that exist in the subject. She monitors outcomes but has not been given an opportunity to monitor quality and standards in other classes or share best practice.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

58. The use of mathematics across the curriculum is satisfactory overall, but many staff do not take full advantage of the opportunities available to them in other subjects. The work covered in Hebrew makes a very positive contribution to the pupils' achievements and many Hebrew lessons start with a rigorous mental arithmetic test.



## SCIENCE

The provision in science is **unsatisfactory** overall.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' achievement in Key Stage 2 is unsatisfactory overall.
- Throughout the school pupils have a good secure subject knowledge.
- Insufficient time is given to the subject, especially in Key Stage 2, and there are weaknesses in the pupils' ability to plan and carry out experiments and investigations.
- Pupils of all ages and abilities have very positive attitudes to science and enjoy the work.
- Teachers make insufficient use of assessment when planning the next stage of pupils' learning.
- Leadership and management are unsatisfactory.

### Commentary

59. The 2003 national test results show that pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is well below the national average, and average when compared with pupils in similar schools. Teacher assessments, completed in Year 2, suggest that standards are exceptionally high, but this is not the case. Inspection findings show that pupils attain above national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1, and achieve satisfactorily. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment is below national expectations overall because of weaknesses in the pupils' ability to plan and carry out investigations. The achievement of pupils in Key Stage 2 is unsatisfactory because insufficient emphasis and time is given to the subject.
60. Pupils of all abilities throughout the school have a good scientific knowledge. They absorb facts enthusiastically, and remember them well. However, in both key stages, pupils find it difficult to apply their knowledge to new situations. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have regular opportunities to take part in investigative activities, but activities are sometimes over-directed, leaving little opportunity for higher attaining pupils to go beyond the set parameters or to pursue their own ideas. Year 2 pupils use scientific vocabulary well when explaining their ideas, and are very keen to find things out for themselves. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 are not given enough opportunities to learn through practical experience. Their knowledge of living things, materials and their properties and physical processes is good. As pupils move through Key Stage 2, they make good gains in terms of their scientific knowledge, and achieve satisfactorily in this aspect of their learning. However, their ability to carry out investigations, and to record their ideas in a variety of ways, is poor, due to their lack of practical experience. Standards at Key Stage 2 are not as good as those reported in the previous inspection.
61. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. The school has recently adopted a commercial scheme of work to support teachers in their planning, and this is giving greater continuity to pupils' learning as they move through the school. Teachers are beginning to place more emphasis on pupils learning through first-hand experience, and some good examples of teaching were seen during the inspection, in both key stages. Teachers use discussion sessions well to recap on pupils' previous learning, and to introduce new ideas. There are times when these discussions are overlong however. Factual information is clearly presented, so that pupils' have a clear understanding, and their knowledge is accurate. Teachers use scientific language well, and this provides a good model for the pupils. Pupils of all ages and abilities have very positive attitudes to science and are very keen to learn. They use their literacy skills very well to find information from books, but there are currently too few opportunities for pupils to use information and communication technology to support their learning. In discussion, pupils talk with high levels of enthusiasm about the activities they have undertaken.

62. The leadership and management of the subject are unsatisfactory overall. Although the subject manager has made a good start in promoting science by purchasing a commercial scheme of work, not enough time is given to the subject and practical activities are often rushed. Teachers make too little use of assessment information when planning the next stage of pupils' learning, and as a result, activities are not always sufficiently closely matched to the pupils' needs.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is **satisfactory**

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school has a brand new, well-equipped computer suite.
- The computers in some classes need replacing.
- The subject manager has good subject knowledge and has a realistic understanding of the challenges that still exist.

### **Commentary**

63. Pupils make satisfactory progress as they move through the school and the majority of them attain broadly average standards by the time they reach the end of Year 2. Standards are satisfactory overall throughout Years 3 to 5 but are not yet at the required standard in Year 6. This is a significant improvement on the situation reported in the previous inspection when standards were judged to be below average. Achievement is satisfactory overall, but pupils in the upper years of Key Stage 2 are not yet achieving to their full potential because this quality of provision has only been available to them for the last 18 months. The main reasons for this big improvement in the school's provision is that the staff are now properly trained, the ICT suite has been laid out in a much more sympathetic way and the subject manager has a realistic understanding of the challenges that still exist.
64. The teaching of ICT is always at least satisfactory and is good in Years 3 and 4 where the staff have particular subject expertise. The two teachers in these classes share their expertise well and are timetabled to support other classes during the non-contact time that is available when their classes are being taught Hebrew and Jewish Studies. The subject manager has an interactive white board in her classroom that is used very effectively. This is having a very positive impact on the teaching and learning in that class. The school plans to purchase more of these resources as funds allow. The curriculum is broad and balanced and since it contains all of the required elements it fully meets statutory requirements. Pupils are very enthusiastic about their work in the subject and apply themselves very well when they are working in the computer suite.

### **Information and communication technology across the curriculum**

65. The use of ICT across the curriculum is satisfactory and is improving rapidly as more good quality computers are made available. There will be several new computers available to all pupils in the newly refurbished resource area outside the Key Stage 2 classrooms.

## HUMANITIES

The provision for history and geography is **unsatisfactory**.

### Strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are below average.
- Management is unsatisfactory.
- The quality of teaching in individual lessons is satisfactory.

### Commentary

66. Pupils fail to build upon the good start that is made in the Foundation Stage where pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of the world. This is because insufficient emphasis and time is given to the teaching of either history or geography. Achievement is unsatisfactory throughout the school and by the time they reach the end of Year 2 standards, which had exceeded expectations at the beginning of Year 1, are now only in line with expectations. Standards continue to decline throughout Key Stage 2 and by the end of Year 6, whilst pupils have an appropriate factual knowledge, they have failed to develop the range of skills and concepts that are particular to either subject. Despite the lack of time spent on these subjects, the oldest pupils are knowledgeable about the countries involved in the Second World War and could use an atlas competently to locate these countries on a blank photocopied map of Europe. Pupils confirmed to inspectors that they enjoyed their study of these subjects and would like to spend more time developing their knowledge and skills.
67. In the one geography lesson and three history lessons observed during the inspection the teaching spanned the range from good to poor, with most lessons being satisfactory. There are some weaknesses, however, within the satisfactory teaching. In lessons for pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 planning lacks sufficient detail, the pace of work is slow and time is not used efficiently. Frequently, introductions are too long and pupils do not have time to complete the tasks set. In lessons for older pupils they are often asked to complete activities that have little relevance to the content of the lesson and which do not extend either their knowledge or their skills. In contrast, pupils in the Year 3 class were very well prepared for their visit to look at the local environment. They used mathematics well in this geography lesson as each group made a tally chart of the people, shops and traffic seen.
68. The management of humanities is currently unsatisfactory. The newly appointed subject manager teaches in the Foundation Stage and has not yet been given the opportunity to use her knowledge and expertise to lead these subjects effectively. The school has adopted the national guidelines, but has not adapted them to meet the needs of pupils in this school. There are no effective assessment procedures.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

### MUSIC

Provision in music is **very good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards exceed expectations at the end of Years 2 and 6.
- The subject is allocated an appropriate amount of time and is awarded high status in the curriculum.
- A skilled subject specialist teaches the subject very effectively, throughout the school.

- A range of extra-curricular activities effectively supports standards in the subject.

### **Commentary**

69. Pupils are given many very good opportunities to gain a love of music and to develop a full range of skills in the subject. As a result they achieve well and the majority attain standards that exceed the national expectation in all areas of the subject by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils sing very well and whilst the voices have passion and enthusiasm, singing is controlled and has an admirable quality. Words are articulated with great care and work in the subject makes a very positive contribution to pupils' skills in English and Hebrew. This is a much higher standard than that found in the previous inspection when standards were judged to meet national expectations overall and to be good in singing. Standards in music are supported very effectively by the work of the school choir and various instrumental groups that are available to pupils throughout the school. The school choir is highly regarded in the community and is currently rehearsing for a concert that will be broadcast on BBC Radio 4.
70. The quality of teaching is very good because not only does the teacher have very good subject knowledge, since she teaches the subject throughout the school, she has a very good knowledge of the progress being made by each pupil. Her expectations of performance are very high and pupils are encouraged to stand up straight, articulate clearly and sing with gusto and enthusiasm in almost equal parts. The leadership and management of the subject is very effective and the clear direction provided by the co-ordinator has a very positive impact on the standards achieved. The subject is well resourced and there is a specialist teaching room where pupils can practice without disturbing others. The subject makes a very positive contribution to the cultural development of the pupils and much of the music has a distinctive Jewish flavour.

## **ART AND DESIGN, DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

Provision in art and design, design and technology and physical education is **unsatisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Achievement is unsatisfactory throughout the school.
- Standards do not generally meet expectations by the end of Year 2 and Year 6.
- The curriculum for all three subjects is poor because insufficient emphasis and time is given to developing the required programmes of study.

### **Commentary**

71. Pupils make unsatisfactory achievement throughout the school and the majority of pupils attain standards in all three subjects that are below the national expectation both at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils interviewed during the inspection expressed their disappointment that they had such limited opportunities to develop skills in these subjects.

### **Art and Design**

72. The achievement of most pupils is unsatisfactory and, subsequently, the majority of pupils fail to reach the expected standard by the end of each key stage. This is not as good a situation as that reported in the previous inspection when standards were judged to be just in line with expectations. A thorough scrutiny of available work and discussion with pupils reveals that whilst they are taught isolated skills and techniques, they are not generally given sufficient opportunities to refine their skills and the quality of their work is not as good as is usually found. Pupils are given opportunities to visit art galleries and to study the work of famous artists, including Picasso, Van Gough and Clarice Cliff. The school is not currently making appropriate

use of its dedicated art room. The leadership and management is weak since the subject manager, who is a subject specialist, with a good understanding of what is required to improve matters, has not yet been given any opportunities to monitor and develop the subject, although this is now planned.

### **Design and Technology**

73. The evidence gained from three lesson observations, a careful scrutiny of available work and discussion with pupils reveals that achievement is unsatisfactory. Standards in design and technology are similar to those found in the previous inspection when the development of the subject was a key issue. Improvement since that time has been poor and whilst pupils do now construct a range of models, mainly associated with religious ceremonies, there are insufficient opportunities for either designing or evaluation. The quality of teaching observed was very variable, spanning the range from poor to good, and whilst some staff have good subject knowledge several staff lack confidence in their own ability to teach the subject effectively. In one good lesson pupils in the Year 2 class achieved well when constructing a waving hand wall using paper fasteners. The leadership and management is weak since the subject manager, who is a subject specialist, with a good understanding of what is required to improve matters, has not yet been given any opportunities to monitor and develop the subject, although this is now planned.

### **Physical Education**

74. Pupils in most classes are given insufficient opportunities to develop most of the required skills and the achievement of most pupils is unsatisfactory. As a result the majority fail to reach the expected standard by the end of each key stage. This is not as good a situation as that reported in the previous inspection when standards were judged to be in line with expectations. Improvement is therefore poor. On a positive note, however, the school has now arranged for its pupils to receive regular swimming tuition and there has been a significant improvement in the standards achieved in this aspect. The standards attained in dance and gymnastics at the end of Year 6 are poor. Many of the pupils find it tremendously difficult to move gracefully or to maintain a balance for more than a few seconds.
75. Five lessons were observed throughout the school. Whilst the quality seen spanned the range from good to unsatisfactory, the overall quality of teaching is unsatisfactory since most teachers lack sufficient subject knowledge. Insufficient attention is paid to factors of health and safety in many lessons and most of the staff fail to set a positive example by changing their shoes before the lesson. The school is aware of these weaknesses and has recently appointed a subject specialist to lead the development of the subject. She has very good personal skills and has a realistic understanding of the challenges that face her.

### **Personal, social and health education (PSHE) and citizenship**

Provision is **satisfactory**.

76. Pupils are truly valued members of the school community. The school council gives pupils a very effective forum to air their concerns and put forward numerous useful suggestions. A recent idea picked up from the school council is "The Box", into which pupils can put written comments and which the head teacher follows up quickly and personally. Lessons in personal, social and health education and assemblies give pupils good opportunities to have their say. Informally adults, and particularly the head teacher, always have "an ear to the ground" and soon identify any worries or problems. Pupils have access to an appropriate programme of sex and anti drugs education. Many pupils are self-assured and articulate, so are not lacking in confidence in finding an adult to give their ideas on school improvements. A good variety of jobs and responsibilities, such as buddies, table hosts and Year 6 monitors provide pupils with

valuable opportunities to be part of the smooth running of the school day. The full involvement of pupils in school decisions is contributing very well to the pupils' personal development and their awareness of the value of citizenship.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

### *Inspection judgement*

### **Grade**

<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>4</b>
How inclusive the school is	4
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	5
Value for money provided by the school	6

<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>4</b>
Pupils' achievement	4

<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>2</b>
Attendance	5
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>4</b>
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	5
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	5
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	4
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	4
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	4
The school's links with other schools and colleges	4

<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>4</b>
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	5
The effectiveness of management	4

*Inspectors make judgements on a scale: excellent (grade 1); very good (2); good (3); satisfactory (4); unsatisfactory (5); poor (6); very poor (7).*

