

Simon Marks Jewish Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100275
Local Authority	Hackney
Inspection number	276282
Inspection dates	30 November –1 December 2005
Reporting inspector	Andrew Marfleet

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Jo-Ann Myers Mr Laurie Rosenberg
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	75 Cazenove Road London N16 6PD
Telephone number	020 8806 6048
Fax number	020 8442 4722

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

Description of the school

This smaller than average voluntary aided school takes children from Jewish backgrounds, and is supported by the Scopus Educational Trust. The number on roll is increasing after several years of decline, with pupils now coming from a wider area of North London. The nursery in particular is growing fast. An above average number of pupils have a first language other than English, usually Hebrew. Many of these are supported through specific funding, although only three are at an early stage of learning English. A wide range of social backgrounds is represented, with many being entitled to free school meals. A number of pupils have special educational needs, including five with statements. The attainment of pupils on entry is broadly average, but there are significant variations from year to year. The previous inspection found serious weaknesses in the school, but significant improvements since then mean these are no longer there.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade:

What the school should do to improve further

* Develop the curriculum in order to provide for better progression and continuity across subjects.* Ensure that the good assessment procedures have more impact on lesson planning and thus improve further the quality of teaching and learning through more focused tasks.

Achievement and standards

Grade:

Personal development and well-being

Grade:

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade:

The inspectors judge teaching and learning to be good. Pupils are diligent, keen and attentive learners as a result of well planned and interesting lessons which meet their needs. Teachers value pupils' opinions and their ideas. In the best lessons, the pace is brisk and teachers ask probing questions. They manage time, behaviour and resources, including information and communication technology effectively, enjoying very good relationships with the pupils. This all contributes to good learning. Individual learning plans for all pupils successfully identify individual needs and, overall, pupils make good progress in relation to their capabilities. There is good provision for those with special educational needs. Funded support ensures that those for whom English is an additional language achieve as well as others. However, teachers could make better use of their good assessment procedures to improve learning even further, by setting more focused tasks. In the Foundation Stage teaching is good overall with some outstanding teaching in the nursery. The variety of exciting activities inspires young children to be creative and independent. The exceptionally good partnership with parents ensures all children are very secure and that parents are very aware of what their children are learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade:

The curriculum, a weakness when the school was last inspected, is now satisfactory, both in the Foundation Stage and the main school. It meets statutory requirements and draws on a variety of schemes and national guidelines. Hebrew is taught as a modern foreign language and Jewish studies add further breadth. Music plays an important part in the school, from the nursery onwards. The school curriculum lacks some cohesion, however, and the school has wisely begun to review the links between subjects and to develop more investigative activities. The improved use of these activities in science is now quite striking and has already had an impact on standards. Citizenship and personal, social and health education are taught through Jewish studies, where pupils learn the value of healthy living, hygiene, and exercise; sex and drugs awareness is also addressed. The curriculum is enriched well by a wide range of well-attended, extra-curricular activities.

Care, guidance and support

Grade:

The quality of care, guidance and support is good. This is because the adults in the school know the pupils very well and care for them effectively. It has had a significant impact on pupils' behaviour and personal development. Child protection arrangements and procedures to ensure pupils' safety and welfare are good. The school deals effectively with rare incidents of bullying and provides a calm environment where pupils feel safe. Assessment and recording systems include thorough details of pupils' progress. Older pupils know their targets and are aware of what they need to do to reach them. Pupils with special educational needs are clearly identified and given good support. Those who speak English as an additional language receive appropriate support, often because many of the staff speak their first language, Hebrew; they are also helped by being paired with bilingual peer pupils in lessons.

Leadership and management

Grade:

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Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Pupils

I want to thank you for the very friendly welcome you gave us when we visited your school. We enjoyed talking to you and seeing your work. We also enjoyed talking to your teachers and watching an assembly.

What we liked most about your school* you are well looked after and enjoy going to school* you are making good progress and getting good results, * your teachers and others who help them work hard to make your lessons interesting and enjoyable* you are given useful things to learn and to do in lessons and in other school activities* you behave very well and are developing extremely well as young people* your school has a very good headteacher; he and the other senior teachers understand well how the school works and are doing the right things to make it even better* your parents are very happy with the school.

What we have asked your school to do now* try to link up the things you learn in different lessons, to make them even more interesting and useful* now that teachers are clear about how well you are doing, they should plan lessons that will help everyone to learn even more. We hope that you will continue to do your best and wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Marfleet,

Lead Inspector