



Hertsmere Jewish Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 131955
LEA HERTFORDSHIRE LEA
Inspection number 282278
Inspection dates 22 February 2006 to 23 February 2006
Reporting inspector Mr. Peter Lewis LI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Watling Street
School category	Voluntary aided		WD7 7LQ
Age range of pupils	3 to 11		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01923855857
Number on roll	480	Fax number	01923853399
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs. Rebecca Hilsenrath
Date of previous inspection	15 January 2001	Headteacher	Mrs. E Bazak

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This popular and modern-Orthodox Jewish primary school is located on a purpose-built site close to Radlett. The school opened in 1999 and has grown since then to its current above average size. Parents are generally very supportive and, although there is a broad range of attainment on entry, the majority of the children start the school with standards that are close to average. Pupils come from a range of social and economic backgrounds. There are few pupils from minority ethnic groups and almost all speak English at home. The school's population is very stable. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is similar to the majority of schools nationally. A broadly average proportion of the pupils have learning or physical difficulties.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school that gives very good value for money, as is recognised by the staff and governors. A particular strength is the degree to which every child really matters and all are highly valued as individuals. Because of this, all pupils achieve exceptionally well. Children get an excellent start in the Nursery and Reception classes and make great strides with their learning and personal development. Standards at Year 2 have been well above the national averages in the tests for reading, writing and mathematics for many years, and continue to be so. Last year was the first time that Year 6 pupils had taken the national tests and their results were also well above average in English, mathematics and science reflecting the school's assessments of the progress that they had made. Pupils are happy, very confident and thoroughly enjoy contributing to the smooth running of the school through their roles as monitors and school councillors. They, and their parents, have very positive views of the school. Standards of behaviour are exemplary. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the children is exceptional and, as a result, personal development is outstanding since children are constantly encouraged to care for each other. Teaching is outstanding because of the high levels of challenge and enjoyment that are provided. The school has made a very good start in developing its assessments to take account of those lessons where more than one subject is taught at the same time. As it has grown, the school has made many improvements. Current planning is perceptive in identifying the opportunity to develop further the role of subject leaders, particularly in taking a greater accountability in planning for improvement. The leadership and management of the headteacher are exceptionally clear and focused upon achieving the best for all pupils. With the unstinting support of the deputy and assistant headteachers, she has inspired the school community with her enthusiasm. The headteacher, staff and governors share a common vision for the future of the school and work exceedingly well as a team to turn that vision into reality. The school is very well placed to continue improving.

What the school should do to improve further

- Implement the plans to further develop the role of subject leaders so that they are accountable for leading and evaluating developments in the subjects for which they are responsible.
- Ensure that the very good assessment procedures are consistently applied in planning teaching to match the full range of ability, and especially through subjects taught in a cross-curricular way

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Achievement and standards are outstanding. Attainment on entry to the school varies but is broadly in line with that typically found for children of a similar age. They make very good progress throughout the Nursery and Reception classes, and the majority exceed the expected levels by the time they reach the end of the Reception year. The

progress made throughout the school continues to build on these firm foundations and results in outstanding achievement. Pupils are set and achieve very challenging targets, and this supports their learning very effectively. Progress continues to be excellent through Years 1 and 2 so that standards in the national tests are regularly well above average. This is because teachers expect children to do well and give them the support and guidance they need to develop their writing and numerical skills across most subjects. The test results in 2005 for the end of Year 6, the first year in which results are available, showed that pupils reach very high standards in English, mathematics and, particularly, in science. This demonstrated the exceptionally rapid progress that these pupils had made. The school's rigorous assessments demonstrate that this rate of progress is being maintained and, although there is a high proportion of pupils with learning or physical difficulties in the current Year 6 classes, all are achieving very highly as a result of the school's commitment to helping all pupils to do their best, which ensures that no groups underachieve.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development is outstanding and highly effective in creating a friendly school. Attendance is well above average. Excellent behaviour and a real enthusiasm for learning help pupils enjoy school. They say, 'When we walk in, we get a nice feeling'. They are very polite and considerate of the needs of others. Pupils say that bullying is not a problem and they know what to do should it occur. They know that they are treated fairly. They make an excellent contribution to the community through participation in local events, including fund-raising for many charities, both locally and further afield. Pupils know how to lead safe and healthy lives, choosing from the wide range of healthy meals at lunchtime. There are good opportunities for exercise and sport. They know that their views are taken seriously because the school council asked if the toilets could be redecorated in certain colours and this has happened. The strong emphasis on literacy, numeracy and computer skills provides a very strong basis for their future economic development. Provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding and reflects the very strong Jewish ethos of the school. Pupils have excellent opportunities to understand their own culture and they also have the opportunity to meet visitors from cultures other than their own.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Teachers plan their lessons well, and set clear learning objectives. They make very good use of resources, particularly the new interactive whiteboards, to enhance teaching and make learning relevant and exciting. Teachers have particularly good rapport with the pupils, and a particular strength of the very best lessons is the degree to which teachers challenge pupils' thinking through good question and answer sessions and have exceptionally high

expectations for their pupils' independent learning. Because of this, pupils are well motivated and complete their tasks enthusiastically. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities learn very well and make progress in line with their peers because of the very high quality support that they receive. Assessment is robust. Rigorous target setting as an aid to pupils' progress is now becoming a strong feature of teaching and learning. Teachers set targets to help pupils understand the standards they are expected to attain and, through marking and discussion, ensure that pupils know what they need to do in order to improve. The school has correctly identified the need to develop these assessments further so that they can help teachers even more in planning cross-curricular work that is accurately matched to the needs of all pupils.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is an exemplary outcome of a fusion of the requirements of the National Curriculum and the underpinning faith values of the school, which very effectively meets the needs and interests of all its pupils. It is planned very well to develop pupils' skills in literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology. It places strong emphasis on the use of these skills throughout all aspects of the curriculum. Personal, social and emotional development is a very strong feature of the school. The Jewish ethos of care and respect for others permeates the entire curriculum, which is not only broad, and balanced, but also includes a strong multi-cultural element. The curriculum has an expanding range of enrichment activities, such as 'The Mad Science' after school club, which is further enhanced by a wide range of educational visits, such as the visit to Sayers Croft. The school offers excellent provision for encouraging pupils to recognize the importance of healthy living.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school provides outstanding care and support for all its pupils. They feel safe in the school and know that there are adults to turn to if they need help. All adults know their pupils very well. If a pupil is hurt or upset, their needs are swiftly and sensitively met. The school shows a very high commitment to the pupils and their families and links between home and school are very strong. The school shows exceptional concern for the safety of its pupils, as demonstrated by the fact that all teaching and support staff have undertaken training for child protection. Risk assessments are carried out very thoroughly. The school has made a good start in helping pupils assess their own progress. Pupils have their own targets to work towards. They know what these are and when they have achieved success. Those with learning difficulties are given very thorough guidance to help them make excellent progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Leadership and management are outstanding. The headteacher provides dynamic leadership, having successfully guided the school through its continuing growth since the last inspection. She is very well supported by her deputy and assistant headteachers, whose clear and insightful leadership have helped build an exceptionally committed staff team who work hard to make sure that the best interests of the children are at the forefront of their work. Her exceptional commitment and keen sense of humour help to encourage an excellent ethos for children's learning. The school knows itself exceedingly well and what it needs to do to carry on improving. It regularly consults the governors, staff, children and parents to take account of their views. The school has rightly identified the need to expect even more of its subject leaders in leading developments and evaluating the impact on children's learning. The governors take a full and active role in setting the long term direction. As regular visitors, they know the school exceptionally well, contribute energetically to its life and work and are constantly seeking new ways of improving. The extensive school development plan is used rigorously to highlight the school's priorities for improvement, and the governors have successfully dealt with the issues arising from the previous inspection. Given the improvements made over recent years, the continuing high standards in the national tests, the outstanding teamwork and superb focus on children's learning, the school is in an excellent position to go on improving further.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	1	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	1	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	1	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	1	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	1	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	1	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Dear Children Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school recently. You told us that you go to a very good school and we agree with you. Your teachers, teaching assistants and lunchtime staff look after you very well. You always have someone to go to if you are upset. The older children do a very good job of helping to look after the younger ones, and take very seriously the responsibilities that they are given. We also agree with you when you told us you have very good teachers who help you with your learning. They help you to do well in lessons and in the tests you take, which helps you to enjoy your learning so much. Most of the teaching and learning in the school is excellent. Your behaviour is really good and we were very impressed by your politeness and your confidence. We also thoroughly enjoyed hearing about all the exciting things that you do at your school. We think that your headteacher does a very good job of running the school. Your teachers also work extremely hard to make sure that you enjoy your lessons. We have asked those with responsibility for the different subjects to find even more ways of making learning exciting so that you always learn as much as you can. We know that they will continue to work hard to make sure that your school stays as special as it is now. We hope you continue to enjoy life in your school and we wish you well for the future. Yours sincerely