

Mathilda Marks-Kennedy Jewish Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101376
Local Authority	Barnet
Inspection number	286046
Inspection dates	28–29 June 2007
Reporting inspector	Malcolm Johnstone

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	218
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr David Gallick
Headteacher	Mrs Suzanne Kushner
Date of previous school inspection	19 March 2001
School address	68 Hale Lane London NW7 3RT
Telephone number	020 8959 6089
Fax number	020 8906 2353

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is similar in size to most other primary schools. It serves the local Jewish Community which consists of mainly owner-occupied housing. The majority of pupils are White-British. There are a few pupils from a variety of minority ethnic backgrounds, mainly of Asian or African heritage. Very few of these pupils are at the early stages of English language acquisition. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and those who have a statement of special educational needs is broadly average. The school is highly over-subscribed.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Inspirational and dedicated leadership by the headteacher and excellent teaching are the key factors in the school's outstanding success in providing a high quality education. Consistently well above average standards have been maintained over a number of years. National test results and value added data for 2006 put the school among the highest performing schools in the country. Early indications of results in 2007 and the work in pupils' books show these standards are likely to be maintained. Children are taught consistently well in the Foundation Stage and this enables them to get off to a flying start to their education. Outstanding teaching through Key Stages 1 and 2 builds well on this very good base and whatever their abilities and backgrounds pupils make excellent progress. Well above average numbers of pupils reach the highest level in national tests. High quality support and provision for pupils with learning difficulties enables them to make very rapid progress. The school recognises that this excellent overall picture could be enhanced still further if more was done to extend pupils' writing skills and they were given more opportunities to use these skills to support their learning across all subjects.

At all levels, there is no complacent acceptance of high academic standards. This and the school's track record of success, means that the school has excellent capacity to improve further. The school has improved significantly since the previous inspection. The curriculum is vibrant and relevant to the needs and interests of the pupils. As one member of staff commented 'there is never a dull day here.' More time is now devoted to physical education and standards are high in information and communication technology (ICT), music, geography and design and technology. Pupils speak enthusiastically about work in these subjects. Teachers use assessment very effectively to plan work that matches pupils' needs and to ensure that pupils of all abilities are challenged effectively. Teachers have high expectations and mirror the very high aspirations of the headteacher. Self-evaluation is very good. Highly effective use of a wide range of performance data, has given the school an accurate picture of how well it is doing and what can be improved.

Pupils' personal development and well being are outstanding. From the Foundation Stage onwards, pupils develop into enthusiastic learners who enjoy and benefit from all that the school provides. Behaviour is excellent and pupils say that bullying is rare. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. As a result, pupils develop into sensible and mature pupils who are prepared very well for life in a multi-cultural society and for their future economic well being. Pastoral care, guidance and support are excellent. This helps to ensure a secure and safe environment. Academic guidance is very good and pupils know what they need to do to improve their learning. The school has effective links with outside agencies and most parents are very happy with all that the school provides. Despite the generally poor accommodation inside and out, the school has made the very best of the conditions and pupils' work and achievements across all subjects are displayed prominently throughout the school.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in writing to the very high level of those in reading and provide more opportunities for pupils to write at length in all subjects.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Attainment on entry to the Nursery is broadly average with a full range of ability present. When most children leave the Reception class they have achieved the goals expected for their age and about a third exceed them. This reflects the consistently good and sometimes outstanding teaching they receive in the Nursery and Reception classes. Achievement is excellent in Years 1 to 6 and standards in reading, writing and mathematics are consistently above average at the end of Year 2. A good proportion of the pupils reach the higher level 3. For pupils from all backgrounds, standards are well above average in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6 with many pupils reaching the higher level 5. Challenging targets are almost always achieved and sometimes surpassed. Within this excellent picture of standards, pupils tend to do better in reading than in writing and more can still be done to raise standards in writing even further. There is outstanding support for pupils with learning difficulties and this enables them to make outstanding progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. They look after one another very well and most form excellent relationships with their teachers and one another. Pupils greatly enjoy school which is exemplified by their above average attendance. They have excellent attitudes to their work, are keen to contribute to class discussions and willingly cooperate in paired and group learning. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe and have a very good understanding of healthy life styles. They are very aware of the wider world and participate enthusiastically in a variety of fund raising and charity events. Older pupils develop their social and personal skills very well through music and drama productions and residential visits. They develop personal responsibility very well, for example, when acting as head boy and girl, playground mediators and prefects. All pupils have a say in school council decisions and are able to stand for election. They have a very good understanding that people express their beliefs in different ways gained from carefully planned assemblies, religious education and personal and social lessons. Pupils develop excellent skills for their future lives.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Standards are very high and pupils of all abilities make excellent progress because teaching is highly effective at all stages. Lessons are imaginative, enjoyable and capture pupils' interest and enjoyment. Planning is consistently very good and activities are matched well to pupils' needs. This is the result of highly effective use of day-to-day assessment to plan subsequent learning. Pupils particularly enjoy the challenges they are asked to meet when working on investigations in mathematics and science. Teachers are beginning to work on providing more opportunities for pupils to extend their good writing skills across all subjects. There is scope to extend this aspect of learning in English still further. Teachers have very high expectations of behaviour and pupils' involvement in lessons and as a result, learning proceeds at a good pace. Excellent use is made of resources such as interactive whiteboards to further stimulate the pupils. Teaching assistants are highly valued members of staff and make a significant

contribution to pupils' learning at all stages. In the Foundation Stage, teachers plan an effective balance between teacher-directed and free choice activities. This makes learning exciting and prepares children well for work on the National Curriculum.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is outstanding with a strong creative focus in art, music, dance and ICT. Provision in these areas has improved significantly since the previous inspection and contributes well to pupils' enjoyment of school. Well organised intervention strategies ensure that the needs of all pupils are met very well. Pupils participate in a wide range of extra curricular activities, including inter-school sports competitions, music, and drama and learning foreign languages. The school provides outstanding enrichment for pupils through a wide range of visits and specialist visitors. ICT is used very well across the curriculum to engage and aid pupils' learning. The Foundation Stage curriculum is very good and based securely on the areas of learning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Pupils are cared for very well. They say that there is always an adult to help if they have any concerns or problems. This helps them feel safe in school. Vulnerable pupils receive highly effective support in school, involving a wide range of outside agencies. There are effective whole-school agreed systems to modify any poor behaviour. The school takes the health, safety and protection of children very seriously and robust measures are in place to ensure this. Academic progress is tracked very well and data is used effectively to target support where it is needed most. Pupils have academic and personal targets that help them to improve their work and to assess how well they are doing. Support for pupils with learning difficulties is outstanding and highly inclusive. There are very effective partnerships with other schools to ensure the smooth transfer of pupils both in and out of the school.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Leadership and management are outstanding. Since her appointment just prior to the previous inspection, the headteacher has transformed the school in key aspects of its work. Her commitment and dedication to meeting the needs of all pupils has ensured that standards are higher, achievement is excellent across a wide range of subjects and pupils' personal development is outstanding. She has created a team of teachers and support staff who work very well together, and like her, are ambitious for the pupils' success. They speak highly of the encouragement and support they receive. All subject leaders and managers provide very good leadership. Through very effective monitoring and analysis of performance data they have a highly developed overview of their areas of responsibility and how further improvements can be made. Governors play their part very well in supporting the school. They are fully involved in planning the school's strategic direction and have developed their role as critical friend and in holding the school accountable very effectively. Whilst most parents are very happy with all aspects of the school's work, there is a small minority who feel that their complaints are not dealt with effectively and their views are not taken into account. Inspectors found no evidence that this has any negative impact on pupils' academic progress and personal development.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall
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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
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

The quality of provision

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

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

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

9 July 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Mathilda Marks-Kennedy Jewish Primary School, London, NW7 3RT

I am writing to let you know what we found on our recent visit. Your school provides you with an excellent education. We really enjoyed talking to you about all the exciting things that happen. You say that you like school and that your lessons are enjoyable and interesting. We agree with you because we too enjoyed being in the lessons. You are taught very well and because you are very enthusiastic, you make outstanding progress.

Your headteacher and all the staff work very hard and successfully to provide you with an interesting and exciting range of subjects, clubs and visits and we know how proud they are of all that you achieve. Your behaviour is excellent and you are most polite and helpful. You tell us that the playground buddies help sort any problems you might have, and that if they can't, you know that there is always an adult you can go to if you are worried about anything. You know a great deal about how to stay healthy and you tell us how much you enjoy physical education and games.

You do exceptionally well in reading, mathematics and science. Although your writing is good, we have asked the headteacher and staff to help you improve this even more and give you more opportunities to write about what you learn in all subjects.

We know that you will continue to work hard and make the school and your parents proud of you

Good luck in the future

Mr M Johnstone Lead Inspector