

Gateshead Jewish Nursery School

Independent School

Inspection report

DfES Registration Number	390/6007
Unique Reference Number	108419
Inspection number	307213
Inspection dates	11-12 July 2007
Reporting inspector	Sheelagh Barnes AI

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 162A of the Education Act 2002 (as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005).

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Purpose and scope of the inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005, in order to advise the Secretary of State for Education and Skills about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Information about the school

Gateshead Jewish Nursery School is an independent nursery and reception school for 216 full-time equivalent boys and girls aged between two and a half and five years. Some children attend full time and some for part of the school day only. The school is located in Gateshead in single-storey, purpose-built premises with good disabled access. The school was previously inspected in 2004.

The school aims to provide Jewish and secular education for the children who attend. It plans to integrate all aspects of the curriculum in a balanced programme of free and directed play, supplemented with more formal instruction where this is felt to be beneficial. Children are taught to value the moral and cultural aspects of Judaism and to learn Hebrew and English. The secular curriculum follows the early learning goals as detailed in the National Foundation Stage Curriculum for three to five year-olds. An emphasis is placed on promoting the positive character traits of co-operation, kindness, politeness and responsibility.

It is one of the prides of the school that children of the Jewish faith are welcomed in the school regardless of ethnic origin or disability.

Evaluation of the school

Gateshead Jewish Nursery provides a good quality of education. It is successful in meeting its stated aims. All but one of the regulations are met. The headteacher and managers ensure that at the heart of the work of the school are the excellent promotion of children's personal and social development, their spiritual, moral and cultural development and their self-esteem and well-being. The curriculum is good, as is the quality of teaching which, on occasion, is excellent. Detailed and regular assessments monitor individual progress very effectively. As a result, the children, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities make good progress. There are strong links with the local Jewish community and appropriate links with other schools in the area. The school makes satisfactory provision for children's health, safety and welfare. It prepares them effectively for the next stage of their education. There is very good communication with parents and carers, who strongly support the school and are extremely appreciative of the work it does.

Quality of education

The quality of the curriculum is good. The school follows the early learning goals as detailed in the Foundation Stage Curriculum effectively and the children learn and make good progress. This progress is carefully monitored through Foundation Stage Profiling, Nursery Profiles and a commercial monitoring system. The *Kodesh* curriculum (Jewish studies) serves as the basis for all learning, especially in the Reception class. It has been carefully tailored to provide the children with good grounding in literacy, numeracy, and the scientific aspects of knowledge and understanding of the world, as well as, to a lesser extent, the historical and geographical aspects. Physical and creative development are also incorporated effectively. The school provides a very good personal, social and health education that reflects its aims and ethos well. The programmes of activities include outings, visits from outside guests and project work, and these are interesting, exciting and appropriate to the needs of all of the children who attend. The headteacher, who also serves as the special needs co-ordinator, ensures that all children with learning difficulties and disabilities are provided with a learning programme that matches their needs closely and that their progress is monitored regularly and effectively.

The quality of teaching is good and there are examples of excellent teaching. The knowledge that all staff have of each child underpins the good teaching and learning that take place. Children have access to specialist teaching in a number of areas, including Hebrew. Teachers have a good understanding of the needs of young children generally. They also have a good awareness of each child specifically, including the individual needs of those children with learning difficulties or disabilities. They modify the curriculum skilfully and plan tasks well to reflect children's interests. They use a wide range of teaching strategies, such as drama, to make learning enjoyable and help children maintain their concentration. Lessons promote children's learning effectively. As a result, children gain in confidence and acquire a good range of basic skills including speaking, listening, reading and writing in English, the use of number and reading and reciting in Hebrew.

Throughout the school, children's behaviour is managed skilfully. Routines and expectations are consistent so that they know what is acceptable. Lessons hold their interest well. This is because work is planned to be interesting and exciting and staff have a good understanding of what appeals to children of this age.

The teamwork of all adults who work in the classroom is good. Learning assistants and other staff work closely with teachers and make a valuable contribution to both the quality of teaching and children's learning. They have good relationships with the children and know them well. They are also effective in inspiring them to do their best.

The procedures for monitoring how well children are doing are good. The school carries out a detailed assessment of their attainment on admission. This provides the school with a clear baseline from which to set targets for improvement. Teachers

regularly and systematically assess how well each child is progressing in curriculum areas and in their personal and social development. Evaluations are recorded carefully and are used to plan lessons that meet children's needs well. Information is also used to provide internal reports, yearly reports and, for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, reviews. It clearly demonstrates the good progress children from all groups make. Records are well organised, and the annual review reports provide parents with a good overview of their children's achievements and progress in all areas of learning and development. Parents are very pleased with the progress their children make.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils

According to the school's prospectus, 'children are taught to value the moral and cultural aspects of Judaism'. This is very evident in practice in all areas of the curriculum and the general atmosphere in the school, as children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. The school promotes tolerance and harmony well. Children are taught to respect their neighbours regardless of their background or affiliation and access information of different cultures effectively, when appropriate.

The children attend regularly, enjoy their education and are very enthusiastic during lessons. Their behaviour is good. There is a very happy and caring atmosphere in the school that is conducive to learning. The teachers have developed warm relationships with the children, and, as a result, the children are at ease in the school environment and have opportunities to grow in their learning. Children are prepared effectively for their future economic well-being through a well-structured *Kodesh* curriculum that emphasises honesty, co-operation and sharing.

Children are taught well to appreciate the value of money and about the importance of giving charity. They make a positive contribution to the school community by taking responsibility for themselves and their actions and are taught to make positive contributions at home and within the community by being encouraged to do acts of kindness and to respect their elders.

The school encourages the children to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence exceptionally well. It ensures that boys and girls are all given equal opportunities to participate in all school activities, are given positive reinforcement through reward systems and have plentiful experiences of such experiences as performing for classmates and parents. The *Kodesh* curriculum emphasises the importance of distinguishing between right and wrong and of respecting the law, and visits from other agencies, such as the police and *Hazolo* (Jewish Emergency First Aid Services), and trips to the local fire station are major and very enjoyable features of school life.

Welfare, health and safety of the pupils

The school has made appropriate and satisfactory arrangements for the welfare, health and safety of pupils. It is generally a safe place for children to work and learn in. Good care is taken to implement the sound policies for child protection, prevention of bullying, and visits outside school. Children are given the opportunity for regular exercise. The teaching of healthy eating and hygiene is particularly good and children have a good knowledge of how to make wise choices, such as in their diet, as a result. Supervision in the classrooms and the playground is good. Children are happy and confident and know that they can turn to their teachers and other helpers if they need comfort or support. Parents are glowing in their praise of the care provided for children with learning difficulties and disabilities. The school fulfils its duties effectively with regard to the Disability Discrimination Act 2002.

Suitability of the proprietor and staff

All staff have been subject to appropriate police checks from the Criminal Records Bureau that confirm that they are suitable to work with children. Appropriate checks are also carried out prior to the appointment of staff to confirm their identity, medical fitness, previous employment history and character references. There are good arrangements for staff training and the good staffing levels ensure that children are supervised appropriately in lessons.

School's premises and accommodation

The school premises consist of an older building and two extensions that have been added recently. The general up-keep of the premises is satisfactory and virtually all areas meet the requirements of the Education (School Premises) Regulations. Lighting, heating and ventilation are adequate. Some minor concerns regarding health and safety issues, such as the monitoring of children's movements around the premises, were brought to the attention of the headteacher, however. The school acknowledges these and is considering ways of improving the current situation.

The whole school is on ground level and this provides for easy access to pupils and visitors with physical or learning disabilities and for effective evacuation if necessary. The classrooms are of adequate sizes, are airy and suitably decorated. The furniture in the classrooms is appropriate in size and the washrooms for both pupils and staff are adequate. There are appropriate facilities for pupils who become ill.

The outdoor play area is large and well equipped and affords the children plenty of space and activities during play time.

Provision of information for parents, carers and others

The school provides a good range of information for parents and carers through detailed reports yearly, weekly written reviews of work covered and a suitably informative prospectus. Parents also have very good opportunities to attend regular celebrations of their children's progress, such as the parties to celebrate learning the Hebrew alphabet. Parents say that they feel comfortable to approach staff as they bring their children into school or collect them. They are also invited to attend a range of social functions and say that the information they are given is regular and good and that they are very happy with the welcome they receive and the way school involves them.

Procedures for handling complaints

The school has a complaints policy, which sets out appropriate procedures, responsibilities and time-scales for dealing with complaints. Its procedures fully meet the requirements.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school meets all of the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2003 as amended January 2005, with the exception of those listed below.

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of the premises and accommodation (standard 5) and must:

- ensure that all requirements are fully met.

What the school could do to improve further

While not required by the regulations, the school might wish to consider the following point for development:

- attend to some minor issues with regard to health and safety which were brought to the attention of the headteacher.

School details

Name of school	Gateshead Jewish Nursery School		
DfES number	390/6007		
Unique reference number	108419		
Type of school	Nursery school		
Status	Independent		
Date school opened	1990		
Age range of pupils	2-6		
Gender of pupils	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 70	Girls: 83	Total: 153
Number on roll (part-time pupils)	Boys: 63	Girls: 50	Total: 13
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational need	Boys: 2	Girls: 2	Total: 4
Number of pupils who are looked after	Boys: 1	Girls:	Total: 1
Fees (day pupils)	£16.75 per week mornings only for first child, £14.75 for subsequent children. £9 per week for four afternoon sessions.		
Address of school	Alexandra Road Gateshead Tyne and Wear NE8 1RB		
Telephone number	01914 783723		
Email address	office@gatesheadkinder.co.uk		
Headteacher	Mrs Ruth Ehrentreu		
Proprietor	Gateshead Jewish Nursery School Trust		
Reporting inspector	Sheelagh Barnes AI		
Dates of inspection	11-12 July 2007		