

Aim Habonim

Independent school inspection report

DCSF registration number	355/6056
Unique reference number	135633
Inspection number	345983
Inspection dates	9–10 December 2009
Reporting inspector	Michael Glickman

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended.

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Purpose and scope of the inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Section 162A¹ of the Education Act 2002, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005², the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Information about the school

Aim Habonim is a special school providing childcare and education for children with severe special educational needs and/or disabilities from the Jewish community in Salford and Bury. The school opened in September 2007 for children and pupils aged 1 – 11 years. There are six on roll. The school offers education which it describes as 'sensitive to pupils' and children's religious and cultural requirements'. The school has recently begun to provide in the Early Years Foundation Stage for an extremely small number of children who do not have special educational needs. As well as a curriculum that includes the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum, the school provides therapies and interventions specifically tailored to the needs of individual pupils. This approach is designed to meet its aim to enhance every child's academic, social, physical and emotional development to its full potential. The school's motto is All things grow with love. The childcare provision was inspected a week before this inspection. This is the school's first inspection.

Evaluation of the school

The overall quality of education is good. The school provides a warm and caring environment which effectively supports the individual needs of all children and pupils. Parents are unanimously positive about the school and staff are enthusiastic and committed. The school meets its aims. A good curriculum and effective teaching ensure that children and pupils make good progress. The spiritual, cultural, moral and social development of children and pupils is good. However, the school's policies and procedures for safeguarding are inadequate which means the provision for welfare, health and safety of pupils and children is inadequate. These inadequacies affect detrimentally the effectiveness of leadership and management of Early Years Foundation Stage and its overall effectiveness. The school does not meet all of the regulations required for registration as an independent school.

Quality of education

The overall quality of education is good. The school's curriculum is good and meets the needs of the pupils, and the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

¹ www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2002/ukpga_20020032_en_14#pt10-ch1-pb4-l1g162

² www.opsi.gov.uk/ACTS/acts2005/ukpga_20050018_en_15#sch8

Although in some sessions the activity remains the same for all pupils and children, planning is adapted appropriately for the different ability and age levels including those with significant disabilities, which ensures that they all achieve well. The school has good resources to support the development of basic skills in language, literacy and numeracy. An effective communication system for each of the individual pupils with special educational needs underpins all that the school does. The school has introduced and trained staff in the use of the Picture Exchange Communication System and Makaton signing to support individual pupils. The school displays a visual timetable to support pupils' understanding of what will be happening in the curriculum. Children with physical disabilities use the hydrotherapy pool at a local authority special school which enhances their curriculum and impacts very positively on their physical development. The school invests in advice and support from specialist professionals such as speech and occupational therapists, which contribute very effectively to good progress in pupils' and children's academic development and well-being; their holistic development is promoted very well.

The quality of teaching and assessment is good and results in good progress for pupils and children. Staff have high expectations of what all pupils and children can achieve and work hard to ensure that they are promoting their learning and progress at all times. In the best lessons, staff work together with specialists to promote pupils' physical and intellectual development by setting challenging targets and encouraging pupils to achieve them. Group activities including singing in Hebrew and Yiddish develop both linguistic and social skills. Staff have a good understanding of the pupils' individual needs and as a result, they make adaptations to planning on an on-going basis. Session plans cover activities for the week and staff work very effectively with the children to teach these activities. Lessons are assessed and evaluated by all staff involved; they use written notes, photographs and videos to record achievement. Staff meet weekly to share this information so that there is good evidence of progress; these evaluations inform future planning and are shared with parents. Individual Education Plans are reviewed half-termly with outside professionals.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils

The provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is good. All pupils, the high majority of whom have special educational needs, are very well supported to develop their independence. They are encouraged to carry out small tasks for themselves, for example putting tissues in the bin, putting on their own coats and replacing equipment. They are supported to gain knowledge and skills which they will need in future educational settings and which promote their well-being as members of their community. A good use of praise develops pupils' self-esteem. The school takes effective steps to introduce multicultural elements into the classroom, including toys, pictures and food which reflect other countries and cultures. The curriculum includes a unit on 'people who help us' at an appropriate level to familiarise pupils with public institutions and services. Pupils are encouraged

to develop a sense of community by sharing snacks at break time and by assisting their less able classmates.

Attendance is good. Pupils clearly enjoy their education and participate fully. There is a very happy ethos to the school and throughout the inspection children were seen enjoying the range of activities. Those who are articulate explain clearly what they know and can do and pupils with special educational needs clearly demonstrate their enjoyment by participating in all activities. Adaptations to the curriculum are made for pupils with special educational needs to enable them to achieve goals appropriate to their abilities. Staff know the pupils very well and are able to assess their engagement and interest. Behaviour is good; this is promoted throughout the day and there are clear policies and procedures in place. Staffing ratios ensure that pupils and children working together are well-supervised and that any potential behavioural issues are quickly resolved. The integration of the very small number of pupils who do not have special educational needs with those who do has fostered the development of social skills. Pupils are encouraged to share with one another, for example at snack time.

Welfare, health and safety of the pupils

The provision for welfare, health and safety of pupils and children is inadequate due to deficiencies within the child protection policy and failure to carry out and record the required checks on all staff before confirmation of their appointment. Although all staff have received appropriate child protection training, the school's child protection policy has a number of omissions; most significantly, it does not specify that any allegation of abuse must be referred to the relevant authority in a timely manner, the intervals at which staff must refresh their training or the requirement for the proprietor to annually review and report on the effectiveness of child protection procedures. The admission register fails to record the date of admission and the primary carer for all pupils, although it does for those with special educational needs. Although one pupil recently left the school, there is no record of their leaving date or of the school to which they transferred. A number of late arrivals have been left blank in the attendance register, which also fails to record the reasons for authorised absences.

All staff have received paediatric first aid training and a list of medications and emergency contacts for pupils with special educational needs is available in the classroom. Precautions are taken to prevent infection, for example, toys are regularly cleaned and tables are disinfected before food is served. Staff wear overalls and change out of their street shoes. All other health and safety policies are in place and are adequate. Regular fire drills are carried out and fire alarms and extinguishers are professionally maintained. The school fulfils its statutory duties under the Disability Discrimination Act. The school has a healthy eating policy and healthy snacks are promoted through liaison with parents and as part of a food project. Staff care well

for pupils and there is a high staff-pupil ratio, ensuring that pupils are safely supervised at all times, both in the classroom and in the playground.

Suitability of the proprietor and staff

The school has carried out the required checks on all teaching staff, on the governors and on the secretary. However, no checks have been carried out on the newly-appointed administrator. Although the school maintains a single central register, there are a number of omissions. The register does not indicate when and by whom checks were carried out and certain items of information have not been recorded for some members of staff. The school obtained written confirmation from the agency supplying cleaners that they had carried out appropriate checks but this was not recorded in the register. Appropriate checks were carried out on the governors, but this was not recorded.

School's premises and accommodation

The school occupies a small number of rooms on the ground floor of a Victorian terrace which has been converted into office accommodation. Although other users share the common entrance, all classrooms are protected by individual locks. The rooms are large and have been converted appropriately to provide a sizeable classroom, along with a well-equipped sensory room, occupational therapy room and other teaching facilities. Wall and ceiling displays are used effectively to enhance the setting.

The outdoor play area at the rear is reached by a ramp. The area is tarmac surfaced and rather basic, although a good range of appropriate toys and equipment is provided; pupils were observed playing happily with the toys and other stimulating materials. The school plans to develop the area to provide a more child-friendly environment. The washroom facilities for pupils are shared with adult users of the premises. Because of the children's and pupils' young age and/or special educational needs, the school ensures that they are always accompanied by a teacher. However, this is inadequate. The school has a designated room for pupils who are unwell, but this does not include a washbasin.

Provision of information for parents, carers and others

The school provides parents and carers with the required information except with regard to the number of complaints received in the previous year. All parents returned questionnaires: they were unanimously positive in their support for the school.

Procedures for handling complaints

The school's complaints procedure meets the requirements. There have been no complaints since the school opened.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

The nursery promotes children's welfare and learning in an inspiring way. Children are happily engaged and they make good progress in their learning and development. Inclusion is extremely well promoted and activities provided are exciting, and capture and sustain the interest of the children. The nursery has a successful partnership with parents; they are consulted and involved and kept well informed of their children's daily routines, care and learning. Also, excellent links with others promote continuity of education and care. The setting demonstrates a good capacity for continuous improvement and self-evaluation is effective to monitor the service.

The school follows the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum, which is matched well to the individual special educational needs of the children. Outcomes for children are good. Each child has an assigned key worker. Profiles are maintained for all children and achievement is clearly evidenced. Progress is monitored at weekly staff meetings. A contact book is sent home daily. The integration of the very small number of children who do not have special educational needs with those who do has proved successful, for example, developing the caring skills of some whilst giving those with special educational needs additional support and role models. The quality of provision is good. There is a good range of equipment and materials available for both indoor and outside activities. Activities are appropriately adapted to the abilities of children with special educational needs. The nature of the setting makes it impracticable for children to have free access to the outdoor area, but they all have at least one outdoor play session per day.

Leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are inadequate. Although the staff have appropriate qualifications and there are robust educational planning and monitoring procedures in place, there are failures in the school's child protection policy and procedures, as detailed above. As a result, the overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage is inadequate.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school meets all of the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2003 as amended ('the Regulations'), with the exception of those listed below.³

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety (standard 3) and must:

- prepare and implement written policies to safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are pupils at the school in compliance with DCSF guidance Safeguarding children and safer recruitment in education (DCSF-04217-2006) (paragraph 3(2)(b))
- maintain an admission register and an attendance register in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (paragraph 3(9)).

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of suitability of proprietor and staff (standard 4) and must:

- prior to the confirmation of the appointment of all staff carry out all necessary checks (paragraph 4(2)(a))
- carry out an enhanced Criminal Record Bureau check in respect of any member of staff appointed to a position at the school (paragraph 4(2)(b))
- ensure that the single central register contains details of all the checks on each member of staff and indicates the date of the check and by whom it was carried out (paragraph 4C(2) and (3))
- in relation to staff not directly employed by the school, ensure that the single central register shows whether written notification has been received from the employment business that it has carried out the checks referred to in 4C(2): identity, List 99, qualifications where appropriate, appropriate checks if the person lived outside the UK and right to work in the UK where appropriate and that it or another employment business has carried out an enhanced CRB check and it has obtained an enhanced CRB certificate together with the date when the written notification that each check was completed or certificate obtained was received and that the register shows that a check has been made in relation to 4A(8) and the date the check was completed (paragraph 4C(4))
- in relation to each member of a body of persons named as the proprietor in post on or after 1 September 2003, ensure that the register shows whether a check was made of his/her identity and whether an enhanced CRB check was carried out and certificate obtained, in relation to each member of a body of persons named as the proprietor in post on or after 1 May 2007 ensure that it also shows the checks made to confirm their right to work in the United Kingdom and also that it shows the date on which any check was completed or certificate obtained (paragraph 4C(6) and (7)).

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

- provide sufficient washrooms for pupils, including facilities for pupils with special needs, which take account of the Education (School Premises) Regulations 1999 (paragraph 5(k))
- provide appropriate facilities for pupils who are ill, in accordance with the Education (School Premises) Regulations 1999 (paragraph 5(l)).

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of the provision of information for parents, carers and others (standard 6) and must make available to parents of pupils and of prospective pupils:

- details of the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year(paragraph 6(3)(f)).

Inspection judgement recording form

outstanding	good	satisfactory	inadequate
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The quality of education

Overall quality of education		✓		
How well the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of pupils		✓		
How effective teaching and assessment are in meeting the full range of pupils' needs		✓		
How well pupils make progress in their learning		✓		

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Quality of provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development		✓		
The behaviour of pupils		✓		

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The overall welfare, health and safety of pupils				✓
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The quality of the Early Years Foundation Stage provision

How good are the outcomes for children in the EYFS?		✓		
What is the quality of provision in the EYFS?		✓		
How effectively is the EYFS led and managed?				✓
Overall effectiveness: how well does the school meet the needs of children in the EYFS?				✓

School details

Name of school	Aim Habonim		
DCSF number	355/6056		
Unique reference number	135633		
EY URN (for registered childcare only)	EY392053		
Type of school	Jewish		
Status	Independent		
Date school opened	July 2008		
Age range of pupils	1-11		
Gender of pupils	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 3	Girls: 3	Total: 6
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational need	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
Annual fees (day pupils)	£18,000 - £23,000		
Address of school	401 Bury Road Salford M7 2BT		
Telephone number	0161 705 0020		
Fax number	0161 708 2056		
Email address	info@aimhabonim.com		
Headteacher	Mrs H Harris		
Proprietor	Mr D Leaman		
Reporting inspector	Michael Glickman		
Dates of inspection	9 – 10 December 2009		