

# King David Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Local authority</b>	Liverpool
<b>Inspected under the auspices of</b>	Pikuach
<b>Inspection dates</b>	12–13 December 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Selwyn Ward

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 48 of the Education Act 2005.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	426
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Lauren Lesin-Davis
<b>Headteacher</b>	Rachel Rick
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	6–7 October 2010
<b>School address</b>	114 Childwall Road Liverpool L15 6WU
<b>Telephone number</b>	0151 235 1420
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## Introduction

Inspection team

Selwyn Ward

Lead inspector

Sharon Raphael

Team inspector

This inspection was carried out with two day's notice. Because the inspection coincided with Chanukah, pupils were involved in various special events and activities at the time of the inspection and so there were fewer ordinarily timetabled lessons than in a typical week. The inspectors visited 10 lessons taught by four teachers, focusing on Jewish Studies and the teaching of Hebrew (*Ivrit*) as a modern foreign language. The inspectors looked at pupils' work. They visited assemblies, and morning and lunchtime prayers, listened to pupils read in Hebrew, and spoke with pupils, staff, and the Chair of the Governing Body. Inspectors looked at school planning and policies, school self-evaluation, leaders' monitoring and the online questionnaire responses of parents.

## Information about the school

King David Primary is sponsored by the United Synagogue. Originally founded in 1841, it is the only Jewish primary school in Liverpool. It works in close partnership with the King David Kindergarten, King David High School and the Harold House Community Centre. All of these organisations are linked with the King David Foundation. The proportion of Jewish pupils on roll has fallen over the years. Currently, around 20% of the pupils are Jewish.

In September 2011, the school relocated to new buildings, sharing a campus with King David High School, the King David Kindergarten and the community centre.

Hebrew (*Ivrit*) is taught as a modern foreign language.

## Inspection judgements

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The achievement of pupils in their Jewish education</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The quality of teaching and assessment</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which the Jewish Education curriculum meets pupils' needs</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development including the duty to fulfill the daily act of collective worship</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management of Jewish Education, including through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>

## Key findings

- King David Primary provides a good standard of Jewish Education for its pupils. Jewish pupils are taught Jewish Studies while pupils of other faiths are taught a parallel course of religious education from a Jewish perspective. Both groups are helped to make good progress. All pupils learn *Ivrit* from the start of Reception. They enjoy learning the language and develop a growing vocabulary over their time at the school.
- Pupils do well because the teaching is good. Pupils settle quickly and work hard because they like their teachers and are eager to please them. Pupils are also well motivated because teachers succeed in making learning interesting, relevant and fun. There is much joyous celebration of Jewish festivals and *Shabbat*. Although, the festivals come around each year, teachers have designed the curriculum so that pupils add cumulatively to their knowledge and understanding over their time at school rather than merely repeating basic facts about *Pesach*, *Purim*, *Chanukah* and other festivals.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The behaviour seen during the inspection was exemplary, and the good relationships between pupils from different backgrounds show what a friendly, cohesive community has been built at this school. Pupils learn to appreciate and respect Jewish culture and traditions. However, Jewish custom is not followed in requiring all boys to cover their heads during prayers. Pupils from all faiths recite the *Shema* and other Hebrew prayers in assembly, but only Jewish boys are expected to respect custom and wear a *kippa*. Arrangements for *Shacharit* (morning prayer), daily assemblies and for pupils to *bensch* (pray at mealtimes) meet the requirements for collective worship.

- Though there have been improvements in the way that work is matched to ability, leaders recognise that they have further to go. Still, on occasion, pupils of different abilities are tasked with similar work. When this happens, work can be too easy for some, while, for others, it can be too hard. Much of the marking gives pupils helpful guidance on how to do better, but this is not universally the case. Pupils sometimes make careless errors in their written work because they have not taken responsibility for checking it. Pupils are not routinely expected to check each other's work in Jewish Studies or religious education.
- In this well-run school, leaders' efforts have brought the quality of Jewish Studies and religious education a long way since the last inspection. Leaders and governors are keen to continue this improvement. Changes this year to the arrangements for keeping track of each pupil's progress in Jewish Studies and the parallel course are already giving staff a much clearer picture of how well each pupil is doing and enabling them to quickly identify any pupil who falls behind. Teachers have been encouraged to make more everyday use of *Ivrit* in Jewish Studies lessons. There is scope for further extending opportunities for all pupils to use their *Ivrit*, for example, by re-establishing and building on the links the school has had in the past with schools in Israel, so that pupils can use their *Ivrit* to videoconference and chat with their peers.

### **What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Further accelerate pupils' progress in Jewish Studies, religious education and *Ivrit* by:
  - ensuring that work is always tailored to pupils' different abilities
  - giving pupils more practical opportunities to use their *Ivrit*, including through links with partner schools in Israel
  - extending opportunities for pupils to check their own and each other's work in Jewish Studies and religious education.
- Reviewing the arrangements whereby currently only Jewish boys wear *kipot* to cover their heads during prayers.

## **Main report**

### **The achievement of pupils in their Jewish education**

Pupils make good progress in both Jewish Studies and the parallel course. They have a good understanding of Jewish beliefs and celebrations because the curriculum is well thought-out so that they build steadily on what they have learnt before. Pupils have individual targets in Jewish Studies and they take pride in achieving them. They are also proud of the good progress they make in *Ivrit*. Beginning with basic activities recognising letters and spelling out their names in Reception, they develop confidence with reading and spoken Hebrew, learning to write block letters in the infant years and Hebrew script in Key Stage 2. Pupils do well because they have the confidence to have a go without being frightened of making a mistake.

Just as phonics (linking letters and the sounds that they make) is used to teach early reading skills in English, teachers make use of letters and sounds to introduce Reception children to the Hebrew alphabet, combining consonants and vowels.

### **The quality of teaching and assessment**

The good relationships that staff have with their pupils contributes to pupils' enjoyment of school and their good progress. Teachers succeed in making Jewish Studies and the parallel course interesting and fun. Year 6 pupils on the Jewish Studies course increased their knowledge and understanding of the celebration of Chanukah because the teacher turned a relatively straightforward multiple-choice quiz into a lively competition as pupils vied with each other to volunteer ever more detailed answers that went beyond those on the basic quiz sheet. In the parallel course, pupils in Year 4 were encouraged to link their work on Chanukah with activities on poetry studied in literacy, as they compiled their own apt and amusing additional verses for a song about making a *dreidel* (spinning toy).

Teaching is not outstanding because work is not tailored as closely as it could be for the range of abilities in each class. Marking generally shows pupils what they need to do to do better. Pupils are not given enough responsibility, however, for checking their own and each other's work in *Ivrit*, Jewish Studies or religious education.

### **The extent to which the Jewish Education curriculum meets pupils' needs**

The Jewish Studies course is compulsory for the Jewish pupils at the school. It teaches children about Jewish traditions, laws, customs and history. For non-Jewish pupils, a multi-faith, multi-cultural course is taught in parallel. This is based on the local authority's agreed religious education syllabus but places an emphasis on the Jewish perspective. This means that pupils of all faiths learn about Jewish festivals and beliefs in much more depth than in non-denominational or other-faith schools.

All pupils learn *Ivrit* throughout their time at King David Primary. They are proud of their achievements in the language, although non-Jewish children, in particular, have few opportunities to give practical application to what they have learnt and so develop their linguistic skills and competence. Although the school is well equipped with desktop and tablet computers, and cameras and projection screens, it has not yet been able to find a way of using this equipment to capitalise on its historic links with schools in Israel so that pupils use their *Ivrit* to speak to pupils there.

The everyday curriculum is supplemented with relevant clubs, including *Ivrit* singing and Hebrew Reading Quest. The school has also instituted a series of 'Ask the Rabbi' events, where the new rabbi visits regularly to answer questions posed by the pupils.

### **The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, including the duty to fulfill the daily act of collective worship**

'This is a good school because it respects all cultures and faiths, and we all learn together.' This thoughtful comment from a pupil in Year 6 summed up the views of many. Pupils from all backgrounds greatly enjoy the opportunity they get at King

David Primary to explore and learn about Jewish culture and its relationship with other beliefs and ways of life. As an Orthodox Jewish school, this means that Jewish children learn how to uphold traditions, but other pupils also learn about the richness of Jewish faith and culture.

Pupils have a keenly developed sense of right and wrong, helped not least by the weekly focus on *mitzvot* (good deeds). Pupils learn to empathise with others, including those less fortunate than themselves. They realise the importance of *Tzedakah* (acts of charity), and pupils take part in fundraising for a range of local, national and international Jewish and secular charities. The school has been innovative in linking this to work in other subjects, including literacy. Pupils in Year 5 have drawn on their persuasive writing skills to escalate their campaign in support of the Oliver King Foundation, which aims to put a defibrillator in every public building.

Pupils quickly learn the school's orderly routines, which mean they settle to work without fuss and their behaviour is of a consistently high standard. They know about and respect the school's agreed rules, but they behave well actually because they know it is the right thing to do.

*Tephilla* (worship) is a well-established feature of the school day. Pupils have the option of attending *Shacharit* (morning prayer) in the school's Beth Knesset prayer room. Boys and girls eagerly volunteer to *bensch* (say Grace after Meals) at lunchtime. In assemblies, non-Jewish pupils are equally keen to join in in both Hebrew and English prayers, although the school has not followed tradition in expecting all boys to cover their heads during prayers.

### **The effectiveness of leadership and management of Jewish Education, including through partnerships**

Jewish Education is led and managed well. Leaders have driven through some important improvements to the curriculum, teaching and standards, so that these are all now a grade better than at the time of the last Pikuach inspection. There is now greater continuity in pupils' learning because daily lessons are timetabled, as recommended in the last Pikuach inspection. Recent improvements to the way in which teachers keep track of pupils' progress show that leaders are far from complacent and are keen to see provision improve still further.

Leaders monitor teaching and pupils' work, with the Head of Jewish Studies taking a greater role than previously in observing colleagues' lessons. Leaders' lesson observations are based around a *pro forma* that highlights the features of teaching. Although this includes prompts relating to pupils' engagement and progress, this approach does not place enough direct emphasis on assessing how well all pupils are learning and adding to what they already know and can do.

The move to new buildings has been managed very effectively. The Jewish Studies teaching area bridges the primary school and the adjacent High School. This bridge is metaphoric as well as literal. The two schools are working in close partnership so that the primary school Jewish Studies curriculum is built upon when pupils transfer to the High School at the end of Year 6. Governors from the two schools are working closely together and have plans to form a soft federation in 2013, which will mean

King David Primary and King David High School sharing a governing body.

Parents are supportive of the school, and the school works hard to involve them and keep them informed. Reports give clear detail to parents on their child's progress, including in Jewish Studies and religious education. The school has been proactive in establishing a regular Parents' Forum and a Jewish Education Forum to better engage and consult with parents.



## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Judgement</b>	<b>Description</b>
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils.

## **Common terminology used by inspectors**

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.