



Rosh Pinah Primary School

Inspection Report

Local authority	London Borough of Barnet
Inspected under the auspices of	Pikuach
Inspection dates	24th and 25 th March
Lead inspector	Rabbi Yaakov Heimann

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 48 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	486
Appropriate authority	The Governing Body
Chair	Andrew Rotenberg
Headteacher	Angela Gartland
Date of previous school inspection	30 November – 1 st December 2009
School address	Glengall Road, Edgware, Middlesex, HA8 8ET
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Introduction

Inspection Team

Rabbi Yaakov Heimann

Lead inspector

Esther Colman

Team inspector

Information about the inspection

The inspection was carried out over two days about a week before the end of term and many of the Jewish Studies lessons were about *Pesach* (Passover). Inspectors held meetings with the Honorary Principal, Chair of the Governing Body, head teacher, deputy head teacher, Head of Jewish Studies, senior leadership team, teachers and pupils.

Inspectors observed 12 lessons, many of them jointly with a member of the senior leadership team. They observed *Tefillah* (prayer), assemblies, *matza* baking, and model *Sedarim* (Passover meals). They also scrutinised pupils' books and the curriculum, and tested Year 2 and Year 6 pupils on reading, *Chumash*, general knowledge and *Chagim*.

Ivrit (Modern Hebrew) lessons were not inspected at the request of the school as the subject was included in the recent Ofsted inspection. However, inspectors were able to assess the impact made by *Ivrit* lessons on general Jewish education by scrutinising pupils' work, hearing pupils read, discussing their Jewish learning and finally through comments made by the parents who responded to the parental survey.

The previous inspection (2009) made three recommendations:

The school needs to re-evaluate its aims in Jewish Studies and *Ivrit* to ensure that they are realistic and fully achievable.

The school should consider as a matter of urgency the place of *Ivrit* within the whole school curriculum.

Governors need to reconsider the time allocated to Jewish Studies and *Ivrit* to ensure aims agreed upon are feasible.

It is hoped that the new leadership team and governing body will re-examine these in light of the findings of this report.

Information about the school

- Rosh Pinah is a modern orthodox Zionist school serving the communities in and around Edgware, North-West London and South-West Hertfordshire. It was established in 1956 and accepts the authority of the Chief Rabbi.

- Pupils come from a range of Jewish family backgrounds in terms of religious knowledge, ethos and practice.
- The school has two classes in most year groups, with an average of thirty pupils in a class. However, there are more pupils in the current Year 3.
- During the previous academic year, the Head of Jewish Studies and most of the Jewish Studies teachers left the school and the Jewish Studies lessons and extra-curricular activities diminished.
- A new deputy headteacher/Head of Jewish Studies and a mostly new team of teachers were appointed in September 2014.

The Inspectors looked in detail at the following:

- The overall effectiveness and efficiency of the provision of Jewish education in the school.
- The quality of leadership, management and governance of Jewish education in the school.
- The achievement and progress over time of pupils in their Jewish education in the school.
- The quality of teaching and learning in delivering the Jewish curriculum of the school, including standards of behaviour and the quality of assessment of pupils’ progress affecting it.
- The quality of the Jewish curriculum itself, including meeting the statutory requirement for a daily act of collective worship.
- The quality of provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils, including its impact on the whole school community.

Inspection Judgements

Overall effectiveness	3
The achievement of children in their Jewish education	3
The quality of teaching and assessment in Jewish education	3
The extent to which the Jewish education curriculum meets children’s needs	3
The extent of children’s spiritual, moral, social and cultural development including the duty to fulfil the daily act of collective worship	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of Jewish education, including through partnerships	2

Key findings

Overall Effectiveness

The quality of Jewish Learning provided in Rosh Pinah Primary School is satisfactory but requires improvement because:

- Although teaching has improved in the several months since the appointment of the new deputy headteacher/Head of Jewish Studies, there has been insufficient time to raise it to an overall good.
- Pupils do not yet make as much progress as they should in lessons.
- Not all pupils are fully prepared by the end of Year 6 for their next steps, with some pupils being held back by an inability to read Hebrew accurately and fluently.
- The updating of the curriculum to reflect what is being taught and what can realistically be achieved in the time allocated is still in process and needs to be completed.

However:

- The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, as are the arrangements for collective worship.
- The new headteacher and deputy teacher/Head of Jewish Studies work very well together and have effectively put into place new initiatives that will lead to an improvement in Jewish Studies teaching and learning.

It is not yet good because:

- A greater majority of teaching could be good or better.
- Pupils are not yet making the progress they should.
- The level of Hebrew reading needs to improve by the time pupils reach Year 6.
- Some of the curriculum goals are overly ambitious within the time allocated to Jewish Studies.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise achievement by prioritising subjects to be taught effectively in the time allocated.
- Although there has been some improvement in teaching there is still the need to raise the overall standard of teaching to good or better through continued training and rigorous lesson observations.
- Continue to evaluate the curriculum and develop it into a progressive programme of learning.
- Continue to develop accurate assessment data across all subjects in the Jewish Studies curriculum.

Main Report

The achievement of pupils in their Jewish education requires improvement.

- The inspectors concur with the school's judgement that achievement of pupils in Jewish Studies requires improvement. The school has highlighted Hebrew reading and writing as areas where pupils are not yet achieving well.
- Pupils enjoy their Jewish studies, in particular learning about the *Chagim* and general knowledge. They say, 'we learn a lot of interesting new things.' Nevertheless, by the end of Year 6, not all pupils are able to read accurately nor have the necessary skills required to translate *Chumash* (*Torah* texts)
- Pupils' achievement in one or more areas of the Jewish curriculum shows weaknesses. As a result they are not acquiring knowledge, understanding and skills including the ability to read, write and understand Hebrew and an ability to formulate and communicate their ideas verbally and in writing across the Jewish curriculum. The new Senior Leadership Team with the support of teaching staff is addressing this and pupils are acquiring knowledge, skills and understanding in their Jewish Studies but at this early stage it is too soon to see a marked improvement.
- The special educational needs coordinator and Head of Jewish Studies work together for the benefit of all children with special educational needs. The special educational needs coordinator meets with class and Jewish Studies teachers together to set targets for the pupils. Consequently, pupils with special educational needs make good progress.

The quality of teaching and assessment in Jewish Education requires improvement because:

- Although teaching has improved, since the appointment of the new Head of Jewish Studies, it is not yet good overall. Some lessons were teacher-led which caused pupils to sometimes lose focus and some activities were not challenging enough. Consequently, pupils are not making the progress they should. The inspectors did however observe some outstanding parts of lessons where active learning, open questions or varied activities were used effectively and gained pupils' interest and attention.
- Leaders are aware that they need to continue training the teachers and re-inforce the training already given. There is a change for the better in pupils' attitude and behaviour towards Jewish Studies. Pupils are positive about them saying, 'I like Jewish studies lessons; they are fun.'

- The current form of assessment in Hebrew reading and writing began in September 2014 and consequently there is limited data, in the current form, available at the present time. Ensuring that learning levels for each age group are clear in other parts of the Jewish Studies curriculum will lead to more accurate assessment data being made available to Jewish Studies teachers.
- Whilst actual *Ivrit* (Modern Hebrew) lessons were not inspected, inspectors were made aware through scrutinising pupils' work, discussion with pupils and hearing them read that *Ivrit* remains an area for development. This was confirmed through comments made by the parents/carers in response to the parental survey.
- There was limited evidence of homework, which could be used effectively to reinforce what pupils' have learnt in class as well as involve parents/carers to a greater degree. A number of parents commented about this in the survey.
- The relationship between pupils and their Jewish Studies teachers is good.
- The lack of challenge in some lessons means that the pace drops and pupils sometimes lose interest.
- Marking in Jewish Studies needs to improve by becoming more incisive and informative so that pupils know what they need to do to improve.

The extent to which the Jewish Education curriculum meets pupils' needs is satisfactory but requires further improvement because:

- Although the school is in the process of re-evaluating the curriculum it needs monitoring and changing to match what the pupils actually learn. Some areas, such as *chagim* for example, are being regularly updated.
- Some of the curriculum goals are overly ambitious within the time frame allocated to Jewish Studies. The school needs to prioritise what is most important for the pupils to learn within the allocated time.

In addition:

- The school uses the Jewish Curriculum Partnership for *Chumash* and *Parsha*.
- During the past two terms, the deputy headteacher/Head of Jewish Studies, together with the senior leadership team, have worked to secure improvements to the Jewish Studies curriculum. They have reintroduced activities and added new ones too; for example, a *Shabbaton* (weekend event) for pupils in Year 5 together with Tribe (youth arm of the United Synagogue) and Hebrew reading classes for parents, given by the Honorary Principal. They have also introduced clear learning levels and assessments in Hebrew reading and writing.
- While much has been achieved in this short time, the school is aware that it still has some way to go to improve its Jewish Studies provision. The changes need to be embedded to show clear evidence of progress and the initiatives should be expanded into other Jewish curriculum areas. As the school's senior leaders say,

‘The school is just at the beginning of new initiatives.’

- The school has made alterations to its school day so that *tefillah* can be longer. Approximately 18% of the school day is now allocated to Jewish Studies, to include *Ivrit*, up from 15%.

The quality of students’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good because:

- The school meets legal requirements for collective worship through daily *tefillah* and assemblies. The pupils take part in these with enthusiasm, singing and reciting the daily prayers and following the good role models set by staff. For example, in a Year 3 class, the class teacher introduced the morning blessings by saying: ‘We have lots to thank *Hashem* for today – and the sun is shining.’
- Daily *tefillah* makes a good contribution to pupils’ reading skills, as they follow and point to the Hebrew text while reading the prayers. Children from Year 3 upwards recite blessings from the *Amidah* with confidence.
- Pupils show respect to each other and to staff at all times, demonstrating good behaviour throughout the day.
- Teaching and support staff are good role models, demonstrating the values and behaviour expected of the pupils to each other. There is a shared respect among all members of staff, and this is mirrored by the pupils.
- Jewish displays across the whole school, both in classrooms and in public areas, are varied, interesting and appropriate. They fully integrate the whole secular and Jewish Studies learning environment and ethos, and include displays about bullying, respect for other faiths and living in a multi-cultural environment. A bullying prevention oath, signed by everyone in the school, including by staff, shows the school’s commitment.
- The inspectors had the pleasure of attending the Nursery’s *Model Seder*, to which families had been invited. This was a true family learning experience and demonstrated the school’s commitment to Jewish learning and its ethos. The pupils confidently sang a mixture of English and Hebrew songs while acting out the story of *Pesach*.
- The Big Thinkers Club gives pupils the opportunity to develop their thinking skills. This is a voluntary club before school begins and is attended by the more-able pupils. It features discussion on philosophy for children and exploring moral dilemmas.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of Jewish Education is good because:

- Key leaders and managers, including governors, are clear and focused and they communicate high ambition and expectation on improving the school’s provision of Jewish Studies. They have the capacity to continue to improve the school.
- Members of staff feel appreciated, morale is good and teachers are motivated.
- The school’s self-evaluation and development plan clearly demonstrates that the school knows itself well, both in terms of its strengths and areas for development.
- The school’s Honorary Principal is a rabbi of a local *shul* (synagogue) where many school families are members. This provides an important link between school and the synagogue. The rabbi regularly spends time in school, is part of the governing educational committee, and is actively involved in school life.

- Teaching has improved as a result of effective monitoring, performance management and professional development. However, leaders are aware that further improvement is required. Jewish Studies teachers are offered professional development opportunities together with their colleagues; for example, they have been included in the Lilac School Outstanding Teacher's Diploma.
- Governors support and challenge the school, which is helping to raise the quality of teaching and achievement.
- The school provides a broad range of experiences that contribute well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Views of Parents and Carers:

Pikuach invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils at Rosh Pinah Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school. Responses were received from 126 parents and carers. The comments below encapsulate their views:

There were many positive comments about the improvement of Jewish Studies:

My children's favourite subject is Jewish Studies.

There has been great improvement in the Jewish Studies department over the last year and we have been very impressed.

Our son is progressing rapidly in his understanding and knowledge as well as his Hebrew reading. We are really pleased with his progress and his abilities at school.

The amount of information my child has learned in terms of festivals, Hebrew, *tefillah*, and general songs is astounding. I am very happy and I believe she has loved this strong connection she has now with Hebrew and the *Chagim*.

I'm very impressed with the way my daughter is being taught in the early years. The events put on around each of the festivals are lovely and the children enjoy learning the songs and stories behind each festival. The Hebrew letters are taught well and in a fun, engaging way.

I am very happy with the Jewish Studies and Hebrew at the School. My two children enjoy it and are always willing to participate at home.

My child loves Jewish Studies, loves learning Hebrew and is constantly stimulated by the teachers.

There were a number of comments about *Ivrit* (Modern Hebrew)

I feel it's a shame they don't have more *Ivrit* lessons to help encourage better understanding of the Hebrew language which will help with the spoken language skills and will help them when they have to decode words to find the root when studying the *Chumash*. I feel they should go hand in hand to better enhance their knowledge.

I feel that my child, who has been able to read from a young age, has not really improved over the years. I also feel that it would have been great if my child would be leaving the school actually speaking *Ivrit*/Hebrew as opposed to only knowing a few words.

I feel that the *Ivrit* reading is not fully supported. My child has not progressed since Reception.

Very poor level of *Ivrit* has been taught over the last seven years.

A number of parents commented about Jewish Studies homework:

I feel that my son isn't set 'proper' Jewish Studies homework each week. I would prefer a worksheet to come home so he can practise reading and writing.

I would like there to be homework just to cement learning that has taken place in the classroom. I think the children would enjoy it if it was a short worksheet.

General comments:

Our son enjoys going to the lunchtime *Anim Zemirot* club. He is now confident enough to recite this for the main adult service at our *Shul*.

It is not uncommon at all for my child to sing Hebrew songs, parts of *Tefillah* or *Birkat Hamazon* around the house or with friends.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
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. Pikuach inspectors may make further visits until it improves.

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.