

The Moriah Jewish Day School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	131229
Local Authority	Harrow
Inspection number	328568
Inspection dates	16-17 March 2009
Reporting inspector	David Whatson

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 (total)	216
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Doreen Samuels
Headteacher	Mr Alan Shaw
Date of previous school inspection	11 January 2006
School address	Cannon Lane Pinner HA5 1JF
Telephone number	020 8868 2001
Fax number	020 8429 8419

Age group	3-11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The Moriah Jewish Day School is slightly smaller than most primary schools. There are 55 children in the Early Years Foundation Stage, of which 26 attend the Nursery. The vast majority of pupils have a White British heritage and most pupils speak English as their first language. All pupils who attend the school are Jewish. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is much lower than usual, as is the number with statements of special educational needs. Most of these pupils have specific learning difficulties and a few have behavioural difficulties.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The Moriah Jewish Day School provides a good quality of education for its pupils. There are some outstanding elements in its provision, such as the curriculum, and care, guidance and support. These have a marked impact on pupils' personal development and, increasingly, on their academic learning. This view is endorsed by pupils and parents. One parent's comment echoed those of many when writing, 'The school has many positive attributes - most notably a warm and nurturing environment.'

Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding, and this makes a strong contribution to their learning. A particular strength is pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, which is exceptional. Pupils are proud of their school and comment positively about its strong community and faith. The very wide range of opportunities in the outstanding curriculum adds much to pupils' personal development and their academic success. Pupils clearly enjoy school, a view confirmed by their parents and by their children's good attendance. Pupils are fully aware of how they should conduct themselves to ensure their safety and that of others. Their behaviour is good. There is an excellent range of highly popular clubs that encourage pupils' physical fitness. Pupils are very aware of their responsibilities and make considerable contributions to the school, local and international communities through the school's extensive links with other schools and organisations.

From their higher than expected starting points, pupils achieve well. Standards at the end of Year 2 in 2008 in reading, writing and mathematics were well above the national average. In relation to their starting points and capabilities, pupils continue to make good progress in Years 3 to 6. In the past, standards were above those of other schools. But in 2008, because of improved provision and better progress, they were for the first time much higher than in most other schools. In mathematics they were exceptional. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve well, and the few pupils learning English as an additional language often make exceptional progress. All pupils are therefore very well prepared for their future.

Pupils build up their basic skills well because of the good quality of teaching and learning. Teachers are very caring and supportive, and know their pupils extremely well. In lessons, they often provide challenging activities, manage behaviour well, and organise their lessons so that little time is wasted. In the best lessons, where teachers encourage pupils to share their ideas and encourage them to work independently in practical activities, pupils make the best progress.

Pupils are making better progress than in the past because of improvements in assessment. Their progress is carefully tracked in a range of subjects, so that targeted support is given by experienced teaching assistants. In addition, focus groups are used well to alleviate identified gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding. The school is particularly good at supporting vulnerable pupils or those with particular difficulties, such as behaviour, so that they can achieve well.

Under the strong leadership of the headteacher, all staff share the same commitment and vision to providing the highest quality of education. The governors provide excellent support and guidance on how this can be achieved. However, the school's evaluation of its provision and effectiveness is sometime a little generous because the monitoring, especially of teaching and learning, is not sufficiently robust. Leaders and managers have done much to improve the quality of care and provision in the last few years, and this has resulted in the improved standards in 2008. The school is therefore well poised to develop in the future and has a good capacity to improve.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

From children's higher than expected starting points they make good progress, because adults help them to learn new things quickly. Standards in all areas of learning by the end of the Reception Year are well above those expected. The very close partnership with parents enhances the high level of care given and, as a result, children settle quickly and happily to their new routines. Children learn speedily because activities are meaningful and they are encouraged to be independent. This was evident in the work on the story of Pesach in the Nursery. The outside learning area enhances

children's skills and enjoyment, and is often used very well to support their physical development. The high-quality teaching of phonics (letters and sounds) in Reception makes an appreciable contribution to children's progress in reading and writing. However, due to some inconsistencies in planning across the Early Years Foundation Stage, children are not always challenged to achieve their very best. Leadership is good, and staff clearly recognise that there is still more to do to ensure that children's progress is tracked systematically from their arrival into Nursery through to the end of Reception.

What the school should do to improve further

- Increase the amount of outstanding teaching and learning, by extending the practice of some teachers in providing opportunities in lessons for pupils to express their own ideas and to work independently and practically.
- Sharpen the accuracy of self-evaluation by undertaking more rigorous monitoring, especially of teaching and learning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Given their better than expected starting points and capabilities, all pupils achieve well. Standards in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2 in 2008, as in previous years, were well above the national average. In 2008, they were the highest in the school's history. As pupils move through Key Stage 2, they build well on these high standards. In 2008, because of focused support and high-quality teaching, pupils' progress was good, especially in mathematics, and standards were much higher than those found in other schools, and higher than the previous year. In English, standards were well above that expected, in science they were above, and in mathematics they were exceptional. The school's assessments indicate that pupils are on track to attain similarly high levels in the future. These same assessments indicate that although all pupils make at least the expected progress, older pupils make faster progress.

Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress because of the early intervention and focused support they receive. The vast majority achieve the expected level in national tests. The few pupils learning English as an additional language often make exceptional progress and achieve the higher levels expected of pupils in Year 6.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils very much enjoy all that the school has to offer. Almost all parents who responded to the questionnaire said that their children enjoy school. Pupils' Jewish faith is central to the school's ethos. A good example of this is the superb sensory garden being sown with plants mentioned in the Bible. Pupils also have a good knowledge of other faiths and cultures. They are very spiritual, as evident when the whole school repeated the Benschung (grace) after lunch. Pupils contribute greatly to the school, local and global communities through links with other schools, fundraising and environmental projects. They love physical activities and spoke enthusiastically about the daily 'Take ten' exercises, which, they said, are 'really weird exercises which make you wake up and give you lots of energy for learning'. Pupils have a very strong sense of what is right and wrong. Their behaviour in lessons and around school is almost always good, and in assembly it is impeccable. However, a very few pupils with challenging behaviour at lunchtimes have caused some disquiet among a few pupils and parents. Pupils say that teachers are very supportive and caring, and most pupils are very aware of how to look after themselves in and around school. Because of pupils' outstanding personal development and their excellent basic skills, they are very well equipped for their future lives and long-term future economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

As teachers know their pupils well, and are caring and supportive, relationships are particularly strong and pupils behave well. Teacher's classroom management skills are good, lessons are orderly, and time is well used. Lessons are well planned and are often clearly targeted to meet the needs of pupils of different abilities. Most teachers make their expectations explicit, but on the rare occasion when this does not happen, pupils' learning slows. Teaching assistants are well deployed to support pupils' learning. In the best lessons, for example in a lesson on forces, teachers ask pupils to contribute their own ideas, engage them in discussions, and encourage them to work independently on practical and relevant activities. In these lessons, pupils made rapid progress, but this high-quality learning is not consistent across the school.

Teachers' marking is increasingly directing pupils as to how to improve their work, and pupils are regularly given the time to read and respond to the comments.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The school offers a very high-quality range of activities, which pupils enjoy and which enable them to thrive in their wider personal development. Pupils spoke enthusiastically about the activities available, noting such things as 'We get to do so many things, such as chess and archery, which are fun.' Physical fitness has a high priority, and the school holds both the Healthy School Award and the Activemark. The superb range of very popular sporting activities helps pupils to gain fitness. Residential trips to Bournemouth, as well as sports leader training, help pupils to gain leadership skills and understand the importance of teamwork. Excellent links with local schools that represent different faiths and cultures, and international days, contribute greatly to pupils' understanding and respect of others. The links between different subjects are often very clear and help to make learning meaningful to pupils. In science and mathematics, high-quality investigations contribute much to pupils' learning. The good curriculum in English is currently being strengthened with the incorporation of recent national guidance.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

At the core of this school lies their outstandingly strong pastoral care. Leaders have taken clear action to ensure that pupils are helped to learn about how to be safe at school and in the wider world around them. Effective links with outside agencies are used well to support pupils who show more challenging behaviour or have specific learning difficulties. In response to the concerns of a few pupils and parents, the school is taking effective action to deal with any incidences of bullying and raise awareness of the difference between bullying and bad behaviour. The care for vulnerable and needy pupils is very impressive. Pupils' progress is carefully assessed and monitored, although termly tracking is not always very precise. Those pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities are quickly identified, and sensitively supported by experienced adults in a good variety of intervention groups. Where gaps in a pupil's knowledge are identified, these are quickly filled by the use of focus groups.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The strong leadership of the headteacher, ably supported by his senior team, have worked hard to build on the school's strengths. The school's Jewish ethos underpins the school's high-quality care, and this has built a very strong sense of community. The school's focus on community cohesion is good. Leaders are outward-looking, and have developed

strong links at both local and international level to develop pupils' understanding of different faiths and cultures. All stakeholders are closely involved in school self-evaluation. However, the judgements drawn from this have at times been generous, because the monitoring has not always been rigorous enough. Nevertheless, the school is fully aware of what needs to develop in order to become outstanding, and has rightly prioritised the need to improve teaching and learning. This is clearly reflected in the three-year improvement plan. However, this plan's success criteria are sometimes based on activities, and therefore the impact is difficult to evaluate. The use of well-founded and challenging targets is helping to drive up standards. The school promotes equality opportunities well and works hard to reduce discrimination. The governing body has provided excellent support and guidance. The governors are very knowledgeable and play an important role in guiding the school and helping it move forward.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	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?	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are the children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	1
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	2

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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	2
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

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.

All white boxes must be completed. The grey boxes are used wherever the inspection team has sufficient evidence to come to a secure judgement.

² IE - denotes that insufficient evidence was available to inspectors for a judgement to be made.

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interest of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
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

Annex B



Letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection.

31 March 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of The Moriah Jewish Day School, Pinner, HA5 1JF

It was great to meet you when we came to inspect your school. Thank you to those of you who talked to us. We agree with you and your parents that Moriah is a good school with good teachers, but there are some very good bits as well.

You told us that you especially enjoy and appreciate the excellent range of exciting activities provided by the school. Because teachers are good at helping you learn, you make good progress. Standards in standards in English, science, and particularly mathematics, at the end of Year 6 are much higher than those in most schools. Congratulations! You really enjoy taking exercise and make sensible healthy eating choices. The school is very effective at helping you develop as spiritual, moral and social young people. We were impressed by the way you work well together. You are very aware of and have a great sense of community and responsibility. You are growing up into very sensible, caring and confident young people. The links you have with other cultures and faiths impressed us a lot. These are giving you a real understanding of how different people live. Your teachers are very careful to make sure that every one of you is happy, safe and learning well. The school is in good hands. Adults, especially your headteacher and governors, work well together as a team. Because of this, they have improved the school and are keen to make it even better.

A few of you said that at lunchtimes some pupils behave badly and upset you. The school's leaders and managers are aware of this, and are working hard to make lunchtimes a more interesting and pleasant experience.

Before we left, we talked to your teachers about how the school could do even better. We agreed on two things. First, in order to increase your rate of learning, they will provide more opportunities in lessons for you to be independent, undertake practical work, and contribute your own ideas. Second, they will look more carefully at the school so that they can gain a more accurate view of how good it is.

We would like to wish you and your school every success for the future.

Yours faithfully

David Watson
Lead Inspector