



**Office for Standards  
in Education**

**Inspection report**  
**Ilford Jewish Primary School**

**Redbridge Education Authority**

Dates of inspection: 9-10 March 2004

This inspection was carried out under section 3 of the School Inspections Act 1996 and was deemed a section 10 inspection under the same Act

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## Basic information about the school

Name of school:	Ilford Jewish Primary School
Type of school:	Primary
Status:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11 years
Headteacher:	Mrs R Levin
Address of school:	Carlton Drive Barkingside Ilford Essex IG6 1LZ
Telephone:	020 8551 1431
Name and address of appropriate authority:	The governing body, address as above
Chair of governors:	Mr H Kemp
Local education authority area:	Redbridge
Unique reference number:	102847
Name of reporting inspector:	Mr I A Rodger
Dates of inspection:	9-10 March 2004

## Introduction

1. Ilford Jewish Primary School is situated in the Barkingside area of Ilford and serves the Jewish community of Ilford and the surrounding areas. There are 404 pupils on roll, including 31 who attend part-time in the nursery. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals, at 5.4 per cent, is well below average. There are 68 pupils identified by the school as having special educational needs, including ten with a Statement of Special Educational Need.
2. The school was inspected in July 2002. The inspection was critical of many aspects of the work of the school and the school was made subject to special measures because it was failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education.
3. The governors drew up an action plan to address the key issues from the inspection of July 2002. The school was visited by Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools (HMI) on three occasions to monitor the progress being made.
4. In March 2004, two Additional Inspectors inspected the school, assessing the standard of education provided and the progress the school has made, in particular in relation to the main findings and key issues in the inspection report of July 2002.

## Main findings

5. In accordance with section 14 of the School Inspections Act 1996, I am of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures, since it is now providing an acceptable standard of education for its pupils. The main findings of the inspection are:
    - current standards in English and mathematics are generally below average although the higher attaining pupils are working at or above the expected level. There is some underachievement throughout the school that the headteacher and senior staff are working hard to eradicate. The pupils are generally making satisfactory progress but this is often insufficient to enable them to attain the expected standards;
    - the personal development of the pupils is good. They are polite and articulate, and always willing to discuss their work. Their spiritual development is fostered well both through Jewish studies and through the experiences of discovery they encounter through subjects such as science and geography. Their moral development is good and they have a sense of fairness and of what is right and wrong. Their social development is enhanced by activities such as residential visits and team activities. Their cultural development is good. They receive a thorough grounding in the customs and beliefs of Judaism and also study the cultures and faiths of modern Britain;
    - the pupils' behaviour is generally good both in lessons and around the school. Occasionally, in lessons where the teacher's management is less effective, shouting-out occurs but this is the result of enthusiasm rather than to challenge the teacher's authority. There have been no recent exclusions;
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- attendance is satisfactory and in line with national figures. Punctuality is good;
  - the quality of education provided is satisfactory. The quality of teaching has improved since the inspection of July 2002 although there are still occasional lessons where the teaching is unsatisfactory;
  - the curriculum is appropriately broad. As a faith school, Jewish studies takes up a considerable amount of curriculum time and the teaching day is extended to accommodate this. During the winter months, the school ends at Friday lunchtime for religious observation purposes. The staff make efforts to integrate the secular and the religious curricula so that essential skills can be taught in both aspects of the provision. Further development work on this is in hand. More attention needs to be paid to promoting the skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) throughout the curriculum. The Foundation Stage curriculum is appropriately broad and based on national recommendations. Good emphasis is placed on developing the pupils' oral skills;
  - the provision for pupils who have special educational needs is well managed and effective;
  - the school is well led and managed. The new headteacher has brought a sense of drive and purpose to the school. She has a clear view of where it needs to go. The senior teachers provide valuable support and organise the work of their phases effectively. Subject management is of variable quality. The headteacher and governing body are managing a large deficit in the budget they inherited well and most of the shortfall should be eliminated in the foreseeable future. Despite the limitations this situation has placed on the school, a programme of staff training and enhancement of the school environment has been maintained;
  - assessment procedures are satisfactory and the school is able to track and measure the progress made by individual pupils. All teachers have this information for their classes and most make use of it to group pupils and to target some for extra support. The setting and specialist teaching arrangements for mathematics and English in the junior classes are generally effective;
  - the governing body and local education authority (LEA) have provided consistent and well directed support for the school during a period of some turbulence and uncertainty about its future. The school is now in a much more stable condition and has the potential to move forward rapidly.

### **Key issues**

6. In order to improve the pupils' quality of education further, the governors, headteacher, senior managers and staff need to:

- maintain their efforts to raise standards in English and mathematics;

- sustain and accelerate the improvements in the quality of teaching by continuing with monitoring and evaluation programmes and by providing appropriate training where necessary;
- put in operation plans to broaden and deepen the curriculum and develop key skills across and within the subjects.

## Inspection findings

### Standards achieved by the pupils

7. Pupils' standards in English in Year 2 and Year 6 are below those expected nationally. Speaking and listening skills are generally satisfactory and many of the pupils are articulate and can form reasoned arguments and analyses. Reading skills are variable, but many pupils read willingly for pleasure and read aloud with expression and obvious understanding. Their ability to draw inferences from different texts is generally underdeveloped.

8. In their written work, narratives are often developed in interesting, sometimes amusing ways, but the quality of pupils' presentation and spelling is unsatisfactory. Letters are too frequently at inconsistent heights and, especially at Year 6, incorrectly formed. Common words are misspelt because basic patterns are not known. Year 2 pupils punctuate satisfactorily but at Year 6 punctuation is often weak with, for example, insecure demarcation of sentences and use of internal punctuation such as commas and apostrophes. Potentially higher attaining pupils are not attaining the standards they should although there are a few examples of the effective use of vivid language in Year 6 classes. Pupils' use of adventurous vocabulary to enrich their writing remains underdeveloped.

9. In mathematics, although standards are overall below average, pupils in higher attaining groups generally reach the expected or higher levels. For example, pupils in Year 6 calculate using four operations with four-digit numbers. Data-handling skills and knowledge of shapes and measurement are all at the expected level. Most pupils find solving problems, particularly related to time or money, difficult although the older, more able pupils are able to add and multiply fractions and percentages. The most able have a reasonable understanding of simple algebraic formulae. At Year 2 most pupils are able to add numbers with two digits and carry out simple multiplication and money calculations accurately. However, their speed of recall of number facts is not as quick as it should be and their knowledge of place value is often insecure.

10. In science, pupils demonstrate generally sound levels of understanding of the investigative process. They know about hypotheses and how to control variables when making a fair test. Good emphasis is placed on the appropriate vocabulary. In Year 6, pupils have studied forces and materials and have a satisfactory knowledge of what living things need in order to develop. At Year 2, pupils have studied healthy lifestyles and hygiene and have observed what happens to materials when they change. For example, when making *hamantaschen*, a kind of pastry, they learned not only what happens to ingredients when they are mixed but also features of Jewish festivals and dietary laws.

11. Pupils' capability in ICT is generally satisfactory. They are able to use computers for word processing and simple data handling and staff are beginning to compile records

showing where pupils might develop their ICT skills across the curriculum. More needs to be done to encourage the use of new technology in personal research and in aspects of control technology.

### **The pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

12. The pupils' personal development is good. They are interested in their work and are polite and articulate. They willingly discuss their work and take a lively interest in all that is presented to them. Their spiritual development is fostered well through their Jewish studies and also through some of the investigations they conduct in subjects such as science and geography. Their moral development is good and they have a sense of fairness and right and wrong. Pupils willingly take on any responsibilities they are given. The pupils' cultural development is also good; they receive a thorough grounding in the Jewish faith and also study cultures, customs, dress and festivals of other religions. For example, during the inspection Year 5 pupils made a presentation on the Hindu festival of Holi and later studied some similarities with aspects of their own faith.

13. Behaviour is generally good, both in lessons and around the school. Occasional shouting-out occurs in some lessons but this is due to over-enthusiasm and is not a challenge to the teacher's authority. There have been no recent exclusions. Attendance is satisfactory and in line with national figures. The pupils' punctuality is good.

### **The quality of education**

14. The quality of education provided is satisfactory. The quality of teaching has improved significantly since the inspection of July 2002, and although there is still an occasional lesson where the teaching is unsatisfactory, there is much more teaching that is good and very good than previously. The best teaching makes use of individual teachers' subject expertise and enthusiasm and offers rigorous intellectual challenge to the pupils. Questioning skills are generally good and much more use is being made of assessment information to plan work appropriate to pupils with different attainments. Where teaching is weak, this usually reflects insecure subject knowledge and lesson content which does not sufficiently enable learning to take place.

15. The curriculum is appropriately broad. Jewish studies takes up a considerable amount of curriculum time and the teaching day has to be extended to accommodate this. During the winter months, the school ends at Friday lunchtime for religious observation purposes. The headteacher is keen to develop links between the secular and the religious curricula and is actively seeking ways by which the essential skills and knowledge of the National Curriculum can be taught through religious studies. Considerable progress has been made in enlivening the curriculum and it now has a much more inclusive element with a good reflection of cultures and faiths other than Judaism. Some progress has been made with developing literacy, numeracy and ICT skills across National Curriculum subjects. Further development is possible in this area. The Foundation Stage curriculum is well conceived and appropriately based on national recommendations and the six nationally agreed areas of learning. Good emphasis is placed on the development and role of oral skills. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is well managed and the occasional pupil who comes to the school with English as an additional language is also provided for appropriately.

16. Assessment procedures are satisfactory and the school is able to track and measure the progress made by individual pupils. All teachers have this information for their classes

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and most make use of it to group pupils and to target some for extra support. The setting and specialist teaching arrangements for mathematics and English in the junior classes are generally effective.

### **Leadership and management**

17. The previous headteacher resigned in May 2003 and the then deputy headteacher took over, first as acting headteacher and then as the substantive headteacher from December 2003. The new headteacher has added considerable drive and determination to school improvement. She has brought a sense of unity of purpose and teamwork to the school and there is now considerable commitment to the raising of standards. There is still much to do but policies are in place and the staff understand what is required of them and how they are to discharge their various responsibilities. There is much more consistency in classroom practice and the use of information gained from assessment procedures is now being channelled towards target setting and tracking of pupils' progress. The school is much more aware of the value it adds to the pupils' learning and has developed strategies for accelerating this.

18. The headteacher receives good support from senior teachers who organise and co-ordinate the work of their phases effectively. Subject leadership is of variable quality, but some managers are effective and have a good understanding of strengths and weaknesses in their subjects. In English, leadership and management are less effective and more drive needs to be given to the raising of standards. This is an area which is now being addressed.

19. The governing body is very well led by a shrewd and informed chair who has the well being and improvement of the school as his highest priority. Consistent and well-directed support has been offered to the new headteacher and together they make a formidable team. They have prudently managed a large deficit budget that they inherited and funding should be in balance in the foreseeable future.

20. The LEA has provided considerable well-directed professional support to the school, and its consultants have been instrumental in bringing about significant improvements to the quality of the provision.

### **Implementation of the action plan**

21. The inspection report of July 2002 required the school to address five key and six minor issues. The key issues related to: raising standards in most subjects; improving the quality of teaching and learning; providing a broad and balanced curriculum; improving pupils' behaviour and attitudes; and improving the provision and progress of pupils who have special educational needs. Overall, reasonable progress has been made and most tasks have been completed but there is still work to do.

22. There are signs of improvement in all subjects although there is still some underachievement to be addressed. Pupils generally make satisfactory progress in lessons and over time but this needs to be accelerated if they are to attain the standards expected.

23. The quality of teaching has improved considerably although there are still some pockets of unsatisfactory practice. Teachers' knowledge has improved and appropriate training has been provided in most cases. Monitoring and evaluation by senior staff have

been influential in identifying weak practice and in some cases in remedying it. This programme of monitoring and evaluation needs to be sustained and training given where it is needed. The curriculum is now based on national requirements and teachers have a better understanding of what is required of them. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is much improved, well managed and follows the national code of practice. Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to work are both good and they gain much that stimulates and interests them from the curriculum.

24. The minor issues identified in the July 2002 inspection have all been tackled well; they relate to the quality of reports to parents; requirements over health and safety; child protection; use of the library; resources and the multicultural dimension to the curriculum.

## **Appendix – Information about the inspection**

The school was inspected under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996 by a Registered Inspector and a team of inspectors. The inspection was critical of many aspects of the work of the school and, in accordance with that Act, the school was made subject to special measures because it was failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education.

The school was visited by HMI in January, June and November 2003 to assess the progress it was making to implement its action plan and address the key issues in the inspection report of July 2002.

In March 2004, two Additional Inspectors returned to inspect the school for two days. The inspection was carried out under section 3 of the School Inspections Act 1996, which gives Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools the authority to cause any school to be inspected. The inspection was also deemed a section 10 inspection under the same Act.

Eighteen lessons or parts of lessons, a *tefilla*, or assembly, and two registration sessions were inspected. The pupils were observed at break and lunch times and samples of their work were inspected. Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior staff, chair of governors, representatives of the LEA and the Agency for Jewish Education. Informal discussions were held with other staff and pupils. A wide range of the school's documentation was scrutinised. Account was also taken of the evidence from previous monitoring inspections.

The inspection assessed the quality of education provided and the progress the school has made, in particular in relation to the main findings and key issues in the inspection report of July 2002 and the action plan prepared by the governing body to address those key issues.

**Notes**



