

# Hasmonean Primary School

8–10 Shirehall Lane, Hendon, London, NW4 2PD

**Inspection dates** 11–12 March 2015

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- The school is well led and managed. Following a dip in the school's performance since its last inspection, there have been considerable improvements over the last 18 months under the headteacher's strong and experienced leadership. Leaders at all levels are effective in moving the school forward.
- Governors have supported the new headteacher effectively as he seeks to improve the school's performance. They are increasingly probing and well informed in their questioning.
- Teaching is good and improving as teachers respond to the challenges placed before them by the headteacher. This is leading to pupils making good and improving progress, and to their attainment rising.
- Pupils behave well around the school, on the playground and in the dining hall. This makes for a calm and orderly atmosphere.
- The good Nursery and Reception have a wide range of well-resourced activities that hold the children's attention. As a result, children are enthusiastic learners and make good progress in all areas.
- Pupils work with great interest and enthusiasm, particularly when teaching is lively and stimulates their imaginations.
- Pupils report how safe they feel in school and can name an adult they have confidence in whom they can turn to if they are worried or have a problem. Behaviour is good.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not all teaching extends the thinking of all pupils or sufficiently deepens their understanding, especially of number.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunity to extend their writing in subjects other than English.
- Pupils respect others but do not always have enough opportunity to learn about customs and cultures.
- The requirement to teach swimming to pupils at Key Stage 2 is not currently being met, although it has been in the recent past.
- Attendance has risen but remains below average. The school has not always successfully enlisted the support of all parents in ensuring the regular attendance of their children.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 15 lessons, three of which were visited with the headteacher or deputy headteacher. Inspectors also looked at work in pupils’ books from this current academic year.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, school staff, the Chair of the Governing Body and three other governors. Two further telephone conversations took place with representatives of the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 70 responses to Ofsted’s online parent questionnaire, Parent View.
- Inspectors observed the school’s work and looked at a number of documents, including the school’s own information on pupils’ current progress, planning and monitoring documentation, records relating to behaviour and attendance, and documents relating to safeguarding.
- Inspectors also took account of the 13 responses to the staff questionnaire.

## Inspection team

Martin Beale, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Mobolade Soneye-Thomas

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This Jewish Orthodox school is average in size when compared to other primary schools.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged and so eligible for additional funding, known as the pupil premium, is well below average. This additional government funding is used to support pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is below average.
- The Nursery caters for 30 children on a full-time basis. Children attend the Reception class full-time.
- The school has experienced a number of staff changes over the last 18 months, including at senior leadership level. The headteacher was appointed from September 2013 and the deputy headteacher from September 2014.
- The school provides a daily breakfast club for pupils. It also hosts a privately run pre-Nursery which is inspected separately.
- The section 48 inspection of religious education did not take place at the same time as the inspection. The school has been notified that this will take place sometime in the near future.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching and its impact on the pupils' learning by ensuring that:
  - teachers provide greater opportunities for pupils to deepen their understanding of number
  - lessons provide challenge so that all groups of pupils can make consistently good progress.
- Redesign the curriculum at Key Stages 1 and 2 in order that:
  - opportunities are provided for pupils to develop and extend their writing and number skills in other subjects
  - the school meets requirements for teaching swimming
  - pupils have much greater opportunity to appreciate the culture and traditions of those different from themselves.
- Work more closely with families to improve the attendance of their children.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are good

- The school's performance had declined since its last inspection. When first appointed, the headteacher quickly identified where action was needed and put in sharply focused actions to improve teaching and pull the staff team together to share his vision for the school. This has quickly led to increased rates of pupils' progress and rising attainment.
- The headteacher and new deputy headteacher work closely together to focus staff on how their teaching can have a greater impact on the pupils' learning. They are supported in this work by well-trained and skilled subject leaders. Targets they set teachers are challenging and actions to meet them are linked to further training. There is a very tight link between good classroom performance and salary increases.
- The local authority has worked closely and effectively with leadership to provide additional support, guidance and challenge. Regular reviews of the school's performance enable careful targeting of resources such as consultant support for the development of the mathematics curriculum.
- The school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination well. The pupil premium is used effectively to enhance the progress of eligible pupils through small group and individual tuition and subsidising places on trips and at breakfast club.
- The school's values such as 'love thy neighbour as yourself' permeate daily life and support well the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils find out about democracy by voting for class representatives on the school council and through visits to the Houses of Parliament. Pupils are taught to respect others and their views, but they do not consistently learn enough about the faiths and customs of others. This limits their understanding of life in modern Britain.
- The school places much emphasis on English, mathematics and Jewish studies. This limits time for other subjects to contribute to developing literacy and numeracy. The school does not meet the requirement to teach swimming to pupils at Key Stage 2.
- Additional sports funding is used effectively. Pupil participation in clubs and competitions with other schools has increased. The skilled sports coach provides good quality teaching, but teachers are not routinely working alongside him in order to improve their skills.
- Safeguarding arrangements are effective in keeping pupils safe, since policies and practice have been updated to meet changes in requirements. Staff are usually vigilant in implementing procedures to protect children.
- The school works closely with parents to make them aware of how they can support their children's learning, through workshops explaining how they are taught and information on the website.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors' understanding of assessment data highlighted that achievement had been declining along with the quality of teaching. They are now well informed about both, and are increasingly challenging in their expectations of the school. They are aware of the headteacher's action to improve teaching to its current good level and how this has been helped by local authority support. Governors have also required that targets for teachers are linked tightly to pay progression. Governors are aware of how the pupil premium is spent and that it is enabling eligible pupils to make good progress. Governors are in the process of adjusting the criteria for school admissions in the light of recent requirements from the school's adjudicator.

### The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

#### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They are polite and kind and show great consideration for others. They take their responsibilities seriously, such as when Year 6 pupils help Key Stage 1 pupils play games at playtimes or when representing others on the school council. Pupils make a significant contribution to charity through their many fundraising activities.
- Pupils greatly enjoy learning from and with each other. Collaboration with others, either sharing ideas in discussion or when working on tasks, is a major feature from the early years onwards. This contributes significantly to the pupils' good achievement.
- Parents do not always support the school's drive to reduce their children's absence. This is in spite of the school's action to make them aware of the importance of regular attendance and its link to their children's achievement.

## Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Pupils are trained well in how to identify risks and stay safe. They are quite aware of the dangers from drugs and risks they might face when using the internet.
- Pupils are quite clear about what might constitute bullying, but say incidents are very rare and dealt with firmly. Most parents agree and feel the school takes care of their children well.

## The quality of teaching is good

- English teaching is good and has the greatest impact on the pupils' learning over time in Years 5 and 6. Teaching in these classes is based on high expectations, questioning that makes pupils think and teachers who skilfully adapt any follow-up in the light of pupils' responses. Activities set are challenging and encourage the pupils to use their imagination. This leads to pupils making rapid progress in a range of writing styles, using increasingly adventurous vocabulary, structure and grammar.
- Most teachers manage the behaviour of pupils well by making their expectations clear and learning interesting. They mostly keep pupils fully involved through their enthusiasm and the interesting tasks they set. Homework set extends the pupils' learning and supports their progress in reading well. A small amount of less effective teaching does not always ensure that all groups of pupils are challenged by the work set so that they can make good progress.
- The most effective teaching assistants are skilled at making sure pupils think for themselves while giving them guidance if they become stuck. This enables pupils who need additional support with their learning to make good gains in their skills and understanding.
- Good teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters in words represent) starts with the introduction of Nursery children to letter sounds. This continues through a carefully structured programme in Reception and Key Stage 1. Teachers make the sessions lively and enjoyable so pupils quickly learn new sounds and how to apply them.
- Mathematics teaching focuses well on developing key skills. Adaptations made to teaching programmes to meet new National Curriculum requirements enable teachers to fill in quickly any gaps caused by these changes. However, teachers do not always provide opportunities for pupils to deepen their understanding or develop their reasoning by applying their skills to practical activities, solving problems or undertaking investigations.

## The achievement of pupils is good

- Progress is good and rising as teaching becomes more consistently good and better. Attainment is well above average in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6. Most pupils are prepared well for secondary school.
- Year 6 test results rose in 2014. They were significantly higher than the national average in all subjects and particularly impressive in the grammar, punctuation and spelling test. The proportion of pupils exceeding levels expected for their age was high in each subject.
- Children make good progress from their starting points in both the Nursery and Reception. This ensures that they are prepared well for Key Stage 1. A higher proportion of children than seen nationally reached a good level of development by the end of Reception in 2014. Children in the current cohort are on track to match this performance.
- Pupils make good progress in their understanding of letters and sounds. Results of the phonics screening check for Year 1 pupils were above average in 2014 and slightly higher than the year before.
- The school caters well for the most able pupils in lessons. They make similarly good progress as other pupils in each year group. A significant number of them work at levels much higher than expected for their age in mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The small numbers of disadvantaged pupils in the school also make good progress. The number is too small to make valid comparisons between their attainment and that of others in each year group or nationally.
- Most disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make similarly good rates of progress in reading, writing and mathematics as other pupils in their classes. This is particularly the case in lessons where they benefit from the close attention of support staff.

**The early years provision is good**

- Teaching is good in the early years, which accounts for the children's good achievement. Teachers and support staff are skilled at helping children to address any weaknesses in their skills when they join the classes. This is because assessment is rigorous and used to provide tasks and direct teaching to fill any gaps in their understanding and skills.
- The Nursery outside classroom is particularly exciting and used well by staff to extend the children's learning from inside. Children behave well. Most explore ideas themselves or work constructively with others on tasks, such as when two boys in the Nursery patiently constructed 'Noah's Ark' together out of wooden blocks. A small amount of less effective learning occurs in Reception when staff do not pick up quickly enough that activities are not holding the children's attention.
- Specially designed challenge activities require the children to think hard. They can be seen engrossed for long periods. Adults are skilled at knowing when to intervene as children are working and when to stand back to let them explore ideas themselves. They use thoughtfully constructed questions to check the children's understanding, and move their learning forward well through their suggestions. Children are happy and the strong relationships formed with adults help to make them feel safe and secure.
- Effective leadership of the early years is based on a clear understanding of the strengths of the phase by carefully checking performance of children and the quality of provision. There is a continual search for improvement. The setting uses external guidance well to help identify areas for development and to support the implementation of any actions, including those to make teaching more effective.

## What inspection judgements mean

School	Grade	Judgement	Description
	Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
	Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	130998
<b>Local authority</b>	Barnet
<b>Inspection number</b>	453239

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	240
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Neil Nachshen
<b>Headteacher</b>	Alan Shaw
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	21 May 2008
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8202 7704
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