

MOSAIC JEWISH PRIMARY SCHOOL

INSPECTION REPORT

Local Authority: Wandsworth

Inspected under the auspices of Pikuach

Inspection dates: 9th and 10th January 2023

This inspection of the school was conducted under section 48 of the Education Act 2005

Type of school: Free School

School category: Primary

Age range of children: 4 to 11

Mixed /Single sex: Mixed

Number on roll: 227

Chair of Governors: Diana Muallem

Headteacher: Ms Jo Gordon

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Inspection team

Lead Inspector: Ruth Wilkinson

Team Inspector: Susy Stone

Introduction

Inspectors make judgements on the following three Key Areas:

- The Quality of the Jewish Education
- Jewish Personal and Spiritual Development
- Leadership and Management

The inspection was conducted over two days by two inspectors. The inspectors were only able to observe lessons in some year groups as others did not have Jewish Learning lessons on the days of the inspection. No lessons were observed in Years 2, 4 & 5. The inspectors attended *Tefillah* (prayer) in Year six (Y6) which was observed jointly with the Headteacher as well as *Birkat Hamazon* (Grace after meals). The inspectors were also present at the *Havdalah* (Ceremony separating *Shabbat* from weekdays) assembly. Meetings were held with school governors, the Senior Leadership Team, the Jewish Learning Lead, and other key members of the school community. A meeting was also held with an education consultant who has been supporting the school for the past few years. Recently she has been giving some advice to the Jewish Learning Lead. The inspectors looked at class work together with small groups of pupils from a range of year groups and spent time speaking to them about the attributes of their school.

Information about the school

- After opening in temporary accommodation at Wimbledon Synagogue in September 2013, the school moved to its current location in September 2015. As a designated faith school, 50% of places need to be open to children of members of the wider community.
- Mosaic Jewish Primary School is a cross-community, mixed school with pupils coming from the Jewish community together with local children of all faiths, beliefs and none. Families represent a broad range of religious backgrounds. There are currently 227 pupils in the school which has an overall capacity of 420, of these, only twenty-six pupils are Jewish. In September 2023 it will become a 30 place - one form entry school.
- There are a wide range of languages spoken in the pupils' homes other than English. Hebrew is spoken by nine pupils, and Yiddish is spoken by one.
- The importance of respecting all members of the Jewish community and those of other faiths, beliefs and none, is central to the ethos and vision of Mosaic. As an inclusive, Progressive, Jewish school, the curriculum and approach to Judaism reflects the school's values.
- The Mosaic ethos is summed up in the ancient Jewish hope: "May our children be our builders" and is based on the following three aspirations: to inspire, to respect, and to encourage excellence. The school is inclusive, welcoming children of all backgrounds on a non-selective basis.
- Eight pupils have an EHCP (Education Health Care Plan), and other pupils are in the process of being assessed.
- Forty-eight pupils are eligible for Free School Meals and thirty-seven pupils are eligible for Pupil Premium funding.
- The current Headteacher has been in position since September 2022.
- The school's last *Pikuach* inspection was in November 2015, two years after its opening. At

that time the school only catered for children aged four to seven and had 79 pupils on role.

Inspection judgement	Grade
Quality of Jewish Education	3
Jewish Personal and Spiritual Development	2
Leadership and management	2
Overall effectiveness	2

What it is like to attend this Jewish school?

- There is a strong and immediate sense of welcome and inclusion. Visitors are greeted with a wall hanging quilt representing the school's diversity as well as brightly painted welcome chairs and welcome messages in different languages. The Headteacher is present to welcome the pupils as they line up in the playground at the start of the school day.
- Inclusion is an overarching quality of Mosaic School. This can be seen not only in its curriculum and all school activities but also in the relationships between staff members and pupils, and in the pupils' attitude to each other. This creates a caring and calm environment.
- Within a non-judgemental environment, pupils have the opportunity of learning about the diverse faiths represented in the school's population,
- As some class sizes are small, there are plenty of spaces available for provision of small group and one-to-one sessions.
- The clean and tidy school premises are enhanced by stimulating and appropriate classroom and corridor displays. Pupils clearly appreciated this aspect of their school and explained how the displays linked to their classwork, personal development and well-being.

What does the school do well what does it need to do better?

Quality of Jewish Education

- The Jewish Learning Lead has recently reviewed the cross-curricular planning to ensure that it continues to deliver an integrated curriculum that best fits the diverse family backgrounds of the children in the school. The curriculum focuses on experiential learning through an integrated model, linking National Curriculum topics to Jewish knowledge and takes place during lessons such as Science, History and Geography. The time allocated to Jewish

Learning as a bespoke lesson, which is also linked to the National Curriculum, is usually one hour per week. The Jewish Learning lessons are taught by the class teacher. Not all parents are pleased with this approach voicing their opinion in the survey. For example, when commenting on the standard of Jewish Learning, “Most of what my child learns is from *Cheder* (Hebrew Classes) at the local synagogue”, “I think there should be a bit more emphasis on the Jewish learning and it could have been nice to incorporate a bit more of the Hebrew language”. Many examples were seen of experiential and curriculum linked learning in the pupils’ exercise books, class scrapbooks, through conversations and in lessons. These were engaging lessons but with some tenuous links to Judaism. The Y1 link to their topic of Transport is to look at what the Kindertransport was and what it looked like in relation to what the class had learnt about transport. The link to their topic about Mary Seacole asks pupils to ‘look at the health benefits of an etrog. Could it have been something that Mary Seacole could have used in her herbal medicines?’

- In discussions with pupils across the year groups little progress was evident of knowledge and understanding of Jewish practice and belief. These are the knowledge and skills that will enable them to comfortably participate in Jewish religious and communal life.
- A strong focus is celebrating through community and experiential learning. The diversity of religions and faiths is celebrated in the school, leading to a very inclusive curriculum where pupils are confident to talk about other religions. When looking at topic books about Greek gods with a group of pupils, inspectors discussed how it compared to Judaism. One pupil responded, “In Judaism we tend to believe in God.
- In one piece of work where they were learning about inheritance and genetics, pupils wrote about a hybrid animal that they had created. In response to the question, ‘from which people in the present and past did we acquire our genetics?’ one pupil said, “I look like most people in my family. It makes me feel like I actually belong, even when they get upset with me.”
- Daily communal worship consists of *Modeh Ani* (A prayer expressing gratitude to God for restoring one's soul each morning) and the first two lines of the *Shema* (One of Judaism’s fundamental prayers). There is no progression in the teaching and learning of morning prayers with the same prayers being said in all year groups up to Y6. The *Torah* Team have a rota of leading the communal worship over the school loudspeaker system. As Hebrew reading is not taught in the school, an English phonetic version of the prayers has been made available to show on the class’s interactive whiteboards. However, inspectors found some inaccuracies in the transliteration. They also noted in both *Havdalah* and morning prayer that many pupils were not pronouncing the Hebrew words correctly and they were not always supported with printouts or whiteboard presentations. While part of the role of the *Torah* team is described by the school as ‘to go around to the classes to ensure the children know the prayers’, members of the team were among those mispronouncing the prayers. Incorrect pronunciation was again heard the following day when the prayers were broadcast through the school over the loudspeaker. Although it is commendable that the prayers have been transliterated for the benefit of pupils and staff who are not familiar with the Hebrew alphabet, it is essential that all teaching material is scrutinised before use to ensure that it is correct and suitable for the age group.
- In the survey, some parents expressed their disappointment with the school’s decision to remove Hebrew reading and spoken Hebrew from the curriculum. “I wish they were teaching Hebrew reading at this age at least, even if not as a language, enough to read the Friday prayers in Hebrew rather than just transliteration”, “We send the kids to *Cheder* to learn to read and write Hebrew as they don’t do it in school.” “My child made great progress up until Y5 when suddenly, without any consultation or notice to parents, Hebrew stopped for the children.”
- In the vast majority of lessons observed, pupils were seen to be reaching the school development plan target of ‘pupils consistently having highly positive attitudes and commitment to education’. The classes settled quickly to focus on set tasks. When

participating in whole class discussion they listened respectfully to their classmates and to the adults in the class. The Pupil Survey showed that only 60.47% of pupils in Y5 & 6 thought that the behaviour was good in Jewish Learning lessons. During the two-day inspection the pupils displayed exemplary behaviour in Jewish Learning lessons. In some lessons, it could be seen that the teachers were working towards the target of “increasing the resilience of the pupils by reducing the level of teacher direction.” In these lessons pupils were given the opportunity to work collaboratively with each other, a skill that they were obviously used to employing in the lessons. The teacher played the role of a listener, intervening only if they thought it was necessary as a tool to deepen the pupils’ thinking or understanding. Classroom assistants played an essential role in keeping pupils focused on the task and encouraging and praising to give them confidence in their learning.

- Some cross-curricula links in the new Jewish Learning curriculum were sometimes a bit obscure or not always age appropriate. A Key Stage One (KS1) lesson focussing on how we can remember our loved ones, concentrated on Jewish people using rocks to remember loved ones and friends, as the rocks are hard, rough and tough and we want our memories to stay as strong as rocks. This demonstrated a misunderstanding of the Jewish ritual of placing a stone on a grave.

Jewish Personal and Spiritual Development .

- Pupils have opportunities to engage in daily prayer in the morning, and blessings before and after lunch. There is a general understanding of the two prayers that are said as their communal daily worship: *Modeh Ani* (a prayer said on waking up to a new day) and the first two lines of the *Shema* (prayer said in the morning and evening, expressing our love and commitment to God).
- *Kabbalat Shabbat* (Bringing in the Sabbath) is enjoyed by pupils as well as parents, who are invited to attend the service. *Havdalah* and *Kabbalat Shabbat* services are led by pupils.
- Hebrew reading is not taught in KS1 or KS2, therefore, Jewish prayer is supported with transliteration of the Hebrew. This is also helpful for non-Jewish members of the school community. One parent said, “We are not Jewish, but my daughter enjoys the prayers and says them at home.” A Jewish parent said, “He is more confident saying the blessings with us on *Shabbos*”.
- Zones of Regulation help the pupils to understand and express their feelings and emotions. In the Reception Class, the Zones were skilfully used to direct the children towards a deeper understanding of the story of Joseph. This was so effective, that when enacting the brothers telling Jacob their lie about Joseph, one child acting as a brother spontaneously said to Jacob, “It’s OK I’m here”.
- Pupils are given space for reflection and supported when necessary. There are designated areas in the school where support is provided by two members of staff trained as Emotional Literacy Support Assistants. Children said, “I love my learning at Mosaic. I feel protected. The teachers open up and let you learn new things about yourself.” “Jewish learning in my school is not just about learning about the wonderful Jewish faith and traditions, it’s also a time to reflect on your actions.”
- Lessons and visits, such as a *Mitzvah* Day visit to the Nightingale House Care Home, give the pupils an understanding of themselves as participants in a diverse local, national and global community. In a Y6 lesson on discrimination, pupils were able to give a wide range of

examples; from 'Black Lives Matter' to attitudes towards working women in Victorian times, and women in some cultures not being allowed to drive.

- Learning walls and class Learning Journey Scrapbooks give many examples of opportunities for pupils to experience and express awe and wonder in the world around them. At *Chanukah* time, pupils in a Y1 class responded in writing to a single light in darkness, "I love the light surrounding me like a warm blanket." "The light brightens up my heart and soul." Challenge questions on the learning walls encourage further reflection, such as 'What light do you bring to the world?'
- The school has other strategies to encourage stillness and reflection. Y2 is given the chance to regain focus after playtime through a calming activity such as colouring, which helps them to prepare for learning in the afternoon.
- Year Three have reading time as their moment of stillness and Y4 use meditation to centre themselves.
- Pupils, parents, staff and governors endorse the strong sense of community. A child in Y6 said, "We are a diverse school; we will respect everybody for who they are." A parent commented, "It is a warm, friendly and welcoming school with a strong sense of community and a positive and extremely inclusive ethos." Attractive displays give a consistent message about the school's ethos.
- Throughout the school, relationships are polite and respectful. Jewish learning and PSHE give opportunities for pupils to learn how to apologise and how to resolve conflict. One pupil explained, "We have had lessons on how to deal with friendships and if anything happens the teachers are there".
- The school has thought carefully about how it promotes a connection to Israel appropriate to its context. It uses opportunities throughout the year, with a multi-cultural celebration on *Yom Ha'atzmaut* (Israel's Independence Day). The school has good links with local faith communities and children have meaningful encounters to share their religion with children of other faiths. Members of staff of different faiths contribute their personal experiences to the children's learning. A parent said, "Being part of Mosaic has opened my eyes and helped me become a more culturally aware and sensitive person. It really is a very special place. Mosaic members of staff voiced their commitment to the pupils cultural, communal and ethical development, and the desire to ensure that they 'do not only receive an inward-looking education'. This is evident throughout the provision made for the pupils.

Quality of Leadership and management:

- The school feels like it is at the beginning of a new and exciting journey. There is great capacity for change under the new Headteacher and Senior Management Team, supported by an experienced Governing Board. In the short time that the school has been under the new leadership team, their enthusiasm has already resulted in some positive changes, as was expressed by a parent, "With the new Head Teacher, I am confident that non-Jewish teachers will be better supported and feel more confident in teaching the Jewish Learning Curriculum."
- With the support of the governors, school management continues to work hard to develop a programme of Jewish learning appropriate to the diverse school community, teaching Jewish knowledge and skills with a strong emphasis on universal Jewish values and ethical behaviour.

The School Development Plan clearly states these aims, 'to ensure the curriculum effectively addresses identified gaps' and that 'staff have excellent knowledge to deliver outstanding integrated Jewish learning into National Curriculum lessons.' The Development Plan also identifies the need 'to ensure children make good or outstanding progress in their learning' and 'ensure all pupils are appropriately challenged in all lessons'.

- There is a feeling of camaraderie between staff members, and a passion for the school from the governors that we met during the inspection. The pupils speak very fondly of their school and teachers. "I think this school is a great school and everyone should come to learn here."
- The dedicated and forward-thinking governors recognised the benefits of having an experienced education consultant supporting the leadership team during this time of transition. This support can be particularly beneficial to the Jewish Learning Lead in evaluating and building on the New Jewish Learning Curriculum, which has been an enormous undertaking.

What does the school need to do to improve?

- Further develop the Quality of Jewish Education by ensuring there is progression through the school years, building on previous knowledge. For example, in morning collective worship where there is no expected progression from Y2 to Y6
- Consider avenues for enabling pupils to learn key skills to improve their Jewish education. If Hebrew reading and *Ivrit* as a spoken language are no longer part of the school's Jewish Learning Curriculum, alternative methods are necessary to ensure that the pupils and staff members are pronouncing the words of prayers correctly. Consider alternative ways of including Hebrew reading and spoken Hebrew as extra-curricular activities outside of the regular teaching day, as suggested by one parent, As a Free school, Mosaic could be creative and extend the school timetable by half an hour just to ensure that Hebrew is on the curriculum for the older age groups. I think there are solutions to be found."
- Ensure that all members of staff continue to have ample professional development opportunities to enable them to effectively teach the integrated Jewish Learning curriculum. Accessing knowledgeable people from the local community and wider afield for advice and training opportunities.
- Consideration also needs to be given to those pupils from a Jewish background, where the parents chose a Jewish school and had expectations for their children to gain skills to participate in synagogue and communal Jewish life. Many of the older Jewish pupils we spoke to attended Hebrew class outside of school as their parents were concerned that they would not leave Mosaic with an adequate Jewish education to be well-prepared for the next steps in their Jewish lives . This was also expressed in the Parent Survey, "In KS1, my child was definitely inspired with his Jewish learning. But KS2 has not offered my child the intellectual challenge that I believe is possible. KS2 learning is too basic and geared towards the younger years." "The school is also uniquely challenged as the majority of children are not Jewish. I think the school needs to set higher standards for the older year groups".
- Visit and share good practice with other schools which have a similar pupil and staff population to Mosaic School. For example, the Jewish schools in Liverpool and Birmingham.

Statutory requirement for a daily act of collective worship (tefillah)	Met
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Summary of Questionnaires

Pikuach invited parents and carers of pupils at Mosaic School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school. 56 people responded to the survey.

The comments below encapsulate their views:

- There are many things that I value and support regarding the Jewish ethos of the school, but I feel that this was certainly stronger when my first child started at the school.
- My child is not a Jew but enjoys learning a new language and the history.
- The school does a lovely Shabbat assembly every week and parents get to attend - it's brilliant and very inclusive.
- Both days of the major holidays are no longer days when school is closed, whereas they were when we joined Mosaic. I feel that it is appalling to change school closure days that are based around the Jewish holidays; specifically, it is excluding those who do celebrate both days of the holidays, which is the case in the diaspora.
- Even though not many children are Jewish my children have a strong sense of pride that what everybody learns about at school they actually practice at home.

Pikuach invited pupils at Mosaic School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school. 43 pupils responded to the survey.

The comments below encapsulate their views:

- When I do good work my teachers make me feel proud of it.
- Sometimes my teachers are not able to answer all my questions, but they do most of the time during Jewish learning lessons.
- I think that my teachers make me feel appreciated during every lesson.
- When we went to the Jewish care home to sing to the residents they were so happy we sang Jewish songs.
- I do not have a faith but respect all faith.
- I am a Muslim, so I have respect for the Jewish faith.
- I don't believe in God, but I am culturally Jewish.
- We go to synagogues; we donate money to charities, and we help less fortunate people.
- I am not Jewish, but I help my community. e.g. Giving food baskets to people.
- The activities are extremely fun they teach me everything even though I am not Jewish.
- I think that some teachers should have a deeper understanding of the Jewish faith. The teachers that do have good knowledge and are great to learn from.

Pikuach invited members of staff at Mosaic School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school. 10 out of 29 members of staff responded to the survey.

The comments below encapsulate their views:

- 100% responded they are proud to be a member of staff at mosaic school.
- 100% responded children are safe in this school
- Behaviour is good in this school always- 36.84%; usually – 63.84%
- Children sometimes need reminders but are then able to show they understand what is expected.
- Know what we are trying to achieve as a school in relation to pupils’ jewish personal and spiritual development strongly agree 66.67%; agree 33.33%.

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	Requires Improvement	A school requiring improvement is not 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.