

Simon Marks Jewish Primary School

75 Cazenove Road, London, N16 6PD

Inspection dates

20–21 May 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Early years provision		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- The action taken by school leaders to improve teaching and deal with staff changes is not always timely or effective. Governors have not always questioned leaders carefully enough about the impact of steps being taken.
- Subject leaders are not always rigorous in checking that the guidance they provide their colleagues is implemented effectively.
- The quality of teaching has declined this year and is not leading to pupils making consistently good progress across the school. As a result, attainment has fallen in several year groups.
- Teachers do not always have high enough expectations of the pupils. The methods they use and the work they set does not enable all groups of pupils to learn well and make good progress. Work is sometimes too easy for the most able.
- There is inconsistency in practice between the Nursery and Reception, particularly in the accuracy and use of assessment. As a result, the children's progress in the early years is not consistently good.
- Teachers' marking does not always identify quickly enough what pupils need to do to eliminate mistakes and so improve their progress.
- Additional sports funding is not leaving a legacy of improved provision, teaching and pupil outcomes.
- Behaviour requires improvement. While most pupils behave well around the school, a small number become distracted in lessons when teaching does not capture their imaginations.
- Leaders are not rigorous enough in checking whether individuals or groups of pupils are making sufficient progress.
- Support staff are not always deployed in such a way that they can support good learning.

The school has the following strengths

- Local authority consultants stepped in quickly to support leaders in halting the decline in the school's performance this year following the departure of several teachers.
- All adults are vigilant in ensuring pupils are kept safe and secure. Pupils say how safe they feel and enjoy their time in school.
- Phonics (the sounds made by letters) teaching is good in the early years and at Key Stage 1. Skills are developed quickly and used by pupils to tackle unfamiliar words with confidence.
- Pupils make good progress in Year 1 and Year 6 because teaching is consistently good. A high degree of challenge is provided for more able pupils in mathematics in Year 6.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils' learning in 16 lessons, two of which were visited with the headteacher, and looked at work in pupils' books from the current academic year.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, school staff, and the Chair of the Governing Body and two other governors. A meeting was also held with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 45 responses to Ofsted's online, Parent View questionnaire.
- 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 22 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Martin Beale, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Andrew Rigby

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This Modern Jewish Orthodox school is below average in size compared with other primary schools.
- The majority of pupils are from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds.
- Two fifths of pupils speak English as an additional language. This figure is well above average and higher than in most primary schools.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by funding through the pupil premium is below average. This is additional government funding which, in this school, supports pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above average.
- An above average and fluctuating proportion of pupils join or leave part-way through their primary education.
- The Nursery caters for 19 children on a full-time and four on a part-time basis. Children attend the Reception class full time.
- The school provides a daily breakfast club. It also hosts a privately run after-school club, which is inspected separately.
- The school has experienced some staffing turbulence this year with three teachers leaving during the course of the year including the Assistant Headteacher, Leader of Learning.
- 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 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?

- Increase the rigour with which school leaders drive forward improvement by:
 - putting in place more effective support programmes for individual teachers
 - ensuring that subject leaders, including in the early years, check more carefully that the actions and guidance they provide are being implemented fully
 - making more effective use of additional sports funding to provide a lasting impact.
- Bring greater consistency to the impact of teaching on the pupils' learning and progress by ensuring that:
 - teachers have higher expectations of the pupils' behaviour and what they can achieve
 - teachers provide work that enables all pupils, whatever their ability, to make good progress
 - support staff are deployed to support learning more effectively
 - provision and practice are consistent across the early years particularly in the use of assessment to plan activities for children.
- Ensure that teachers use their marking to identify errors made and provide pupils with sharper feedback on how they can be eliminated.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management

require improvement

- The action taken by school leaders this year has not maintained the previous good quality of teaching. Support programmes for individual teachers have not been effective enough to improve practice rapidly. Teachers are set targets linked closely to salary progression but these have not acted as sufficient incentive for some teachers to improve.
 - Subject leaders have recently been through an intensive programme of training to develop their expertise. They now check performance more closely and support colleagues but do not always make sure their guidance is taken up fully so that teaching can improve quickly.
 - Action to tackle the dip in the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement has arrested the decline in part because of the close and effective link with the local authority. By quickly spotting that staff changes were causing concern, local authority consultants have been able to provide intensive individual support to start to eliminate weaknesses. This has provided intensive support for school leadership and the quality of teaching since the school started causing concern.
 - School leaders had steadily improved the school's performance since its last inspection until staffing difficulties this year. They have established a very harmonious atmosphere around the school but not all teachers share high expectations of the pupils' behaviour in lessons.
 - The impact of spending of additional sports funding has not been evaluated sharply enough. Teachers do not have sufficient expertise to develop the pupils' skills or promote more healthy lifestyles.
 - Leaders are not always effective in promoting equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination. They do not always spot patterns of performance by different groups of pupils quickly enough for action to be swift and effective. The use of the pupil premium requires improvement. It is enabling eligible pupils to make progress expected of them through individual and small group support but is not always leading to more rapid progress.
 - The school has a clear rationale for helping pupils understand life in modern Britain based on how school values complement and support these ideals. Pupils have gained a greater insight into the democratic process by some presenting their manifestos for the greatest British invention for others to vote on. They also elect school council representatives and have visited parliament.
 - Curriculum changes are helping to halt the fall in achievement in reading and mathematics. Teaching of phonics (the sounds letters represent) has improved and a new programme promoting greater enjoyment of reading introduced. The school has also adopted a new local authority mathematics programme to tackle changes to the National Curriculum.
 - The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well through the school's deeply held values. Pupils learn about diversity through inter-faith links, staff talking in assembly about their different faiths and celebrating the cultural backgrounds of pupils.
 - Safeguarding arrangements are robust and implemented rigorously. Policies are carefully reviewed and regular training for staff means they know how to spot warning signs and remain vigilant.
 - Parents are provided with guidance through workshops on how to support their children's learning such as in mathematics and involve them fully in school celebrations. Some parents have concerns that staff turbulence is having an adverse effect on their children's progress. There is some validity to this view.
- The governance of the school:**
- Having seen the school improve steadily governors did not spot quickly enough that its performance was starting to decline. Subsequently, the governing body has become increasingly vigilant and sharpened its procedures for holding the school to account. Governors now have a clear understanding of assessment data and its implications for school performance and the quality of teaching which they recognise require improvement. They are aware of the action being taken by the headteacher to tackle this and how teacher performance is being managed. The Chair works closely with the local authority monitoring group to check the school's progress and establish further actions to secure improvements. Governors keep a close and watchful eye on school finances and are looking at ways in which the pupil premium can accelerate the progress of eligible pupils more rapidly.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

require improvement

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Behaviour in lessons is not as consistently good as it is around the school. Most pupils try hard and are

interested in their learning, but a small number lose concentration when work is not interesting or challenging. Some low-level disruption can slow learning particularly when a teacher has to stop lessons to call for order.

- Pupils are typically polite, courteous, and greet visitors by happily welcoming them and explaining their work. They play happily together and take responsibility for resolving any falling-out amicably. Their roles as representatives on the school council are undertaken with pride. Relationships are friendly and constructive.
- Pupils respect other religions and customs and are strongly of the view that any intolerance is wrong, unacceptable and needs to be challenged.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Parents are very much in agreement that their children are safe in school. Pupils are taught how to identify risks they might face outside school and how to deal with them. This is promoted through regular e-safety training, including for parents, and raising awareness of how to stay safe when walking in the local area.
- Pupils are very aware of different forms of bullying. They say incidents are rare and dealt with quickly by staff. Their parents agree. Pupils say there is always an adult they can turn to if they have a concern who they know will deal with them sensitively.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The impact of teaching on the pupils' learning has declined this year. Variable practice has emerged. Some teachers do not have high enough expectations of the pupils' work and behaviour. This results in work set being too easy for many pupils and taking them over work they have already secured. Support staff are not always sufficiently skilled or deployed effectively to make a significant contribution to learning.
- The most effective teaching in Year 1 and Year 6 is leading to pupils making good progress. Teaching methods, resources used and activities set are stimulating and challenging. This, and skilled management of behaviour, means pupils are interested in lessons, concentrate well and enjoy learning. Teachers have high expectations of what the pupils can achieve and adapt their teaching quickly in response to their learning and answers to their questions.
- The understanding of letters and sounds is taught well in the early years and at Key Stage 1. Teaching to small groups at similar skill levels is sharply focused on consolidating understanding of new sounds through a variety of interesting activities. Well-established routines mean pupils know what to expect in each session so learning moves forward smoothly.
- Mathematics teaching is not leading to consistently good learning across the school. Work set is too often repetitive practice of calculations. This limits the pupils' opportunity to sharpen their understanding and mastery of number quickly. By contrast, the most able pupils in Year 6 are made to think deeply, apply their mathematical skills and develop their reasoning by undertaking complex problems.
- Teachers' marking is not providing enough guidance for pupils on how to improve their work. Teachers do not always pick up where pupils have made mistakes and what they need to do to make more rapid progress in securing basic skills. This means errors go uncorrected and are repeated.

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- The pupils' achievement has declined over the course of the year, particularly in classes affected by a change of teaching staff. Progress has slowed, except in Years 1 and 6, and requires improvement.
- Year 6 test results were average in each subject in 2014. The proportion of pupils reaching the expected Level 4 in mathematics, reading and writing was average and down from 2013. The proportion reaching Level 5 or higher also fell to an average level.
- Pupils currently in Year 6 have made good progress across Key Stage 2 and their attainment is above average. This is partly because more pupils are working at higher levels in each subject. Progress is also good in Year 1 where the demands of the new National Curriculum are being met well.
- Results of the Year 1 phonics screening check rose and were above average in 2014. Better teaching focused on the needs of pupils not reaching expected levels in Year 1 is enabling most of them to catch up in Year 2.
- The number of pupils eligible for support through the pupil premium is small in some year groups. Their

progress requires improvement because most make slower progress than other pupils nationally. In the 2014 Year 6 cohort, half of eligible pupils entered the school from abroad during Key Stage 2. This accounted for attainment gaps widening. Results for disadvantaged pupils were behind others in the cohort by five terms in writing and mathematics and four terms in reading. They were also behind other pupils nationally by four terms in writing and mathematics and three terms in reading.

- Attainment for pupils new to speaking English is lower than for others by Year 6. While they make similar progress, several enter late in Key Stage 2 from abroad and do not have enough time to reach levels expected for their age. The number of pupils in different minority ethnic groups is small and there is no pattern to any variations in achievement.
- Progress for the most able pupils also requires improvement. Not all pupils who reached Level 3 at Key Stage 1 had been reaching Level 5 or better by the end of Key Stage 2, particularly in reading. Changes in the way teachers focus on developing higher order reading skills mean these pupils are now making more rapid progress.
- The progress of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs requires improvement. Systems have recently been put in place to track more sharply the impact of programmes for these pupils and a more rigorous referral system has been introduced. These have not been in place for long enough to lead to more rapid progress for these pupils although their needs are now being better met

The early years provision

requires improvement

- The children's achievement in the early years requires improvement because teaching is not leading to consistently good learning. Most children make typical progress from their starting points, and their attainment was above average by the end of Reception in 2014.
- Leadership of the early years requires improvement. Leaders do not track children's learning precisely enough so assessment information is unreliable and provision not accurately evaluated. This is leading to variable practice across the two classes. Some aspects of weaker practice such as in assessment and its use to promote good learning are not improving fast enough.
- The children's learning is not recorded tightly enough, particularly in the Nursery. Adults do not have a clear picture of their progress and what is needed next to move their learning forward quickly. Journals of the children's work are untidy and do not show that adults have pride in the children's learning.
- The children's behaviour is generally good. Children mostly play safely and show good attitudes towards each other. Adults guide children well by asking questions which encourage their creativity. The Nursery areas are vibrant and full of attractive and well-resourced activities so children stay engaged for long periods. By contrast, Reception inside and outdoor areas are cramped and space is not always used well. Activities do not always hold the children's attention and their behaviour can deteriorate as a result.
- All adults take great care to ensure children are safe and any concerns identified quickly. As a result, children feel very safe and secure in both the Nursery and Reception. They have established warm and trusting relationships with each other and adults.

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	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.
		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.

School details

Unique reference number	100275
Local authority	Hackney
Inspection number	456070

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 of pupils on the school roll	208
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Howard Pallis
Headteacher	Gill Ross
Date of previous school inspection	24 January 2012
Telephone number	020 8806 6048
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