

EDEN PRIMARY SCHOOL INSPECTION REPORT

Local Authority: Haringey

Inspected under the auspices of Pikuach

Inspection dates: 18th & 19th December 2023

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

Type of school: Primary

School category: Free School

Age range of children: 4-11

Mixed /Single sex: Mixed

Number on roll: 204

Chair of Trustees: Steve Miller

Headteacher: Helen Graff

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Inspection team

Lead Inspector: Liza Taitz
Team Inspector: Daniel Marcus

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. Inspectors, together with the Senior Leadership Team (SLT), visited all classes from Reception to Year 6. They observed 17 Jewish Studies (JS) lessons, *Ivrit* (Hebrew) lessons, assemblies, and *Tefillah* (Jewish prayer) sessions. They had detailed discussions with all school stakeholders, including pupils, teachers, and parents. In addition, inspectors evaluated the staff, pupil, and parent Pikuach questionnaires. Meetings were also held with the Chair of Governors and JS link governor, SLT, the Inclusion Lead, and the JS Lead. Furthermore, inspectors scrutinised relevant documentation including the school's JS Self Evaluation Form (SEF), the School Development Plan (SDP), curriculum documents and policies, pupils' work, floor books, and data.

Information about the school

- Eden is a one-form entry Jewish Primary school, founded in 2011 under the Free Schools Programme.
- A cross-communal school, Eden welcomes pupils from across the Jewish denominational spectrum - from unaffiliated to fully observant - and beyond, on an equal and inclusive basis. Approximately 10% of pupils are of other faiths or none.
- Jewish Education comprises approximately 15% of teaching time averaged out across the course of the year. It includes cross-curricular thematic learning, Hebrew, *Tefillah*, and discrete learning. Hebrew is taught as the school's modern foreign language from Reception. This feeds into the Jewish education programme, where Hebrew reading and understanding is required.
- The school's five core values are: excellence, responsibility, respect, community, and creativity.
- Eden aims for its graduates to leave the school with a strong sense of self, as knowledgeable, responsible, and communally active individuals, with the curiosity and skills to continue their Jewish learning.
- Currently there are five children with an EHCP (Education, Health and Care Plan). 26.5% of pupils have been identified as having Special Education Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND). The school has a dedicated Therapy Room, used by a number of therapists during the week so that pupils who need specific therapies can stay on the school site throughout the day. The Inclusion Lead has managed to secure some additional funding in order to enhance SEND provision across the school.

Inspection judgement

Grade

Quality of Jewish Education	1
Jewish Personal and Spiritual Development	1
Leadership and Management	1
Overall Effectiveness	1

What is it like to attend this Jewish school?

- Pupils at Eden are enthusiastic about learning and enjoy coming to school. A Year 2 pupil said, “Eden is a really fun school where we love learning.” A Year 6 pupil commented: “I think it is really important that I have the privilege to go to a school where I can do Jewish learning whilst enjoying it. Every time we do Jewish Studies I learn more about my religion and my teachers make it really fun and interesting.”
- Pupils enjoy and value the warm and friendly atmosphere. Year 6 pupils described Eden as a community and appreciated the welcoming nature of the school and the family feel. One pupil said: “This school is a community, and we all know each other’s names.” Another pupil commented: “This school is a welcoming place to be.” Pupils spoke animatedly about times when they have had the opportunity to work with children from other Year groups and how much they enjoy this. For example, Year 2 pupils spoke about how they had made *Chanukiot* (candelabras used during the Festival of Lights - *Chanukah*) with an older class during the previous week.
- Outdoor learning is a unique and effective part of Eden’s curriculum. Each class has half a day of designated learning time in the nearby Coldfall Woods every week. This builds on children’s natural curiosity, inspiring a love of nature and sense of wonder. Pupils spoke enthusiastically about the Jewish learning which they have enjoyed in the woods and how memorable this has been for them. For example, the pupils did *Tashlich* (a customary Jewish atonement ritual performed during the High Holy days) in the woods prior to *Rosh Hashanah* (Jewish New Year), and also built their own *Succot* (temporary huts used during the festival of *Succot* - Tabernacles) using a variety of natural materials.
- Pupils benefit from discrete Jewish Studies lessons, as well as from an integrated curriculum, with Jewish Studies brought into different curriculum areas in a meaningful way. One parent commented, “This is an outstanding school with a wonderful, dedicated staff providing high quality Jewish education with Jewish values woven into everything they do.” Another parent commented, “I like the way that the teaching about Jewish festivals and other aspects of Jewish life is taught across the curriculum, not just in a Jewish Studies class e.g. it will be incorporated into Literacy and Numeracy skills.” The school places a strong focus on Jewish values, and these values are highly visible and permeate the curriculum. In the pupils’ survey, 95% of pupils said that they understood the Jewish values at the school.

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

Quality of Jewish Education

- The school's Jewish curriculum intent is clear and ensures progression from year to year. It is well established and understood by all stakeholders. The impact of the Jewish curriculum is strong; a number of Year 6 pupils told inspectors that whether or not they ultimately go to Jewish secondary schools, Eden has helped them to understand Jewish values and teachings. There is a very detailed curriculum map for Jewish Studies; the Jewish Studies Lead effectively supports staff with implementing it and gives regular CPD (Continued Professional Development) sessions.
- A significant number of the lessons observed were outstanding. Teachers know pupils well and design lessons which engage and motivate them. Pupils are given the opportunity to study authentic Jewish texts and then to apply the lessons they have learnt to the 21st Century world in a relevant and meaningful way. For example, in a Year 6 Jewish Studies lesson, pupils were learning about the 39 *Melachot* (categories of activity which Jewish law identifies as prohibited on *Shabbat* - Sabbath) and how we can apply them in a modern-day setting. Pupils asked relevant and articulate questions and engaged well with the text.
- The integration of Jewish Studies across the curriculum is highly effective and a real strength of the school. Teachers ensure that links are meaningful and that Jewish values underpin the curriculum. This was evident in an observation of a Year 4 lesson. The class had previously studied the *Middot* (good character traits) of key characters in the *Parasha* (Weekly *Torah* portion) of *Chayei Sarah* (the life of Sarah). The pupils then applied that Jewish knowledge in a Literacy lesson, when reading the book "Journey to Jo'burg", on the topic of apartheid. The pupils were able to evaluate and compare the relative *Middot* within the book, versus the *Middot* of the characters they had learnt about in Jewish Studies.
- Since the last inspection the school has been on a journey with regard to monitoring and assessment, although the most recent policy is not yet fully developed and embedded. Verbal feedback is currently a key aspect of the assessment policy. Although the benefits of verbal feedback are appreciated, the recommendation is that it is complemented by some written feedback and meaningful target setting. Most children the inspectors spoke to knew what they were doing well and what they needed to improve. However, many said they would find it useful to have more written reminders or symbols in their books.
- Classes send a weekly newsletter detailing the week's activities, homework, and ways in which parents can support learning at home. It includes details of the Jewish Studies learning covered during the week. However, it would be beneficial for the school to send information about the Hebrew literacy skills covered during the week; a number of parents expressed concern that they do not know always know what their child has covered in Hebrew literacy and therefore cannot effectively support them at home.

Jewish Personal and Spiritual Development

- Personal and spiritual development is a significant strength of the school. The school's ethos is visible and tangible, aided by high-quality displays. For example, there is a 3D "Eden Tree of Success" which celebrates children who have put great effort into their

work. Each half term, two children from each class who have made great progress, make a leaf for the tree, which stays up all year to celebrate their efforts. In addition, the school's values (excellence, responsibility, respect, community, and creativity) are displayed at the school's entrance, as well as in other displays in communal areas as a constant reminder of the school's expectations.

- The school employs a *Tefillah* and song leader who delivers two *Tefillah* lessons to each class every week. The *Tefillah* leader skilfully teaches new *Tefillot* (Jewish prayers) and ensures that pupils understand the meaning and significance of *Tefillot* before they learn to sing them. She supports pupils in acknowledging the Divine and her use of the guitar adds spirit and energy to *Tefillah* sessions.
- Pupils engage in a wide range of meaningful and creative activities which foster their personal and spiritual development. For example, a group of 10 children from Year 1 visit a Jewish Care Home each week for drama, dance, and storytelling with the residents. This helps pupils to gain an awareness of the spiritual in all humankind and to actively demonstrate the *Middah* (good character trait) of *Chessed* (loving-kindness) which they have learnt about in class. Each class also has its own *Rosh Chodesh* (start of new Jewish month) ritual, which is a highlight of the month, and helps them to mark significant dates in a creative way. For example, in Reception, the pupils complete a self-portrait every *Rosh Chodesh*. This was observed by an inspector; the pupils were able to explain why they did their self-portraits and show the inspector where they are displayed in the classroom. Pupils greatly value their weekly lessons in Coldfall Woods. They spoke animatedly about the way their learning in the Woods linked with the Jewish festivals, and how much they enjoyed learning outside and using natural materials as part of their project work. These lessons help pupils to experience spiritual awe and wonder (*Morah*) at the world around them and are a unique aspect of life at Eden.
- Jewish values permeate the curriculum, and inspectors witnessed a number of lessons in which pupils were given the opportunity to engage in high level discussions about Jewish values linked with both Jewish and secular texts. Each class has a floor book with pictures and some comments from the children about the practical and exciting activities which they have done to celebrate Jewish festivals and Jewish learning throughout the year. These books also contain information about *Tzedakah* (charity) projects which the pupils have taken part in. These projects help pupils to actively engage in social action and to contribute to society in a practical and meaningful manner. For example, pupils baked *Challah* (Sabbath bread) which was then distributed to homeless people. Pupils regularly contribute to both Jewish and national fundraising initiatives. For example, they recently donated toys to the Camp Simcha Toy Drive and also raised funds for Comic and Sports Relief. The school uses 'Torah, Wellbeing and Me' (A PaJeS programme linked to the weekly *Parasha*) in order to further develop *Parasha* subject knowledge and *Middot* understanding in a thematic and structured manner.
- This year the aim has been to bring more song and spirit to the school. The Headteacher and Jewish Studies Lead have introduced a weekly *Kabbalat Shabbat* (bringing in the Sabbath) *assembly* which the pupils and parents spoke about with enthusiasm. Pupils who have demonstrated great effort during the previous week are chosen to be on the 'Shabbat Table'. The school has also introduced the recitation of *Bircat Hamazon* (Grace After Meals) after lunch in order to infuse the day with *Kedushah* (holiness) and spiritual energy.

Quality of Leadership and Management:

- The leadership team is passionate about Jewish Studies and is very focused on safeguarding the unique values and ethos of the school. The leadership of the school, including governors, has a very strong commitment to pupils' Jewish development and wellbeing. Although the school is no longer in its infancy, it has managed to maintain its family feel and warmth in this next stage of its development, and this is to be celebrated.
- One of the school's leadership strengths is that leaders are able to recognise strengths as well as the key areas for development. Leaders are keen to make the school the best it can be and are honest about what could be even better. For example, the SLT is aware that Hebrew Literacy is an area for focused development, and shared their plans with inspectors about how they are intending to address this area. The new Headteacher leads by example. She knows the school well and has high expectations for Jewish Studies. She ensures that staff receive high quality and focused professional development.
- Staff feel well supported in delivering the Jewish Studies curriculum. Less experienced staff are tactically paired with experienced and knowledgeable peers to give them 1:1 support and guidance. One member of staff said: "If I have an issue or want to know more, there are lots of members of staff ready to help and they have excellent knowledge.... I have learned so much about Jewish education during my time here and every week I learn more." Another member of staff commented: "Leaders are very supportive and provide assistance, resources and ideas for teaching Jewish Studies."
- Parents are very supportive of the school leadership and appreciate the efforts which staff go to in order to ensure that children thrive and are proud of their Jewish heritage and traditions. One parent commented: "My children even organised their own *Tu bishvat Seder* (Meal to celebrate the Jewish New Year for trees) at home. They want to celebrate every festival with joy, and this is thanks to the school."

What does the school need to do to improve?

- The school now needs to create a more formal system for target setting, tracking, and monitoring pupil progress over time in Jewish Studies. This should be accessible and meaningful for all stakeholders, whilst not putting an unnecessary burden on staff.
- The school needs to focus on the standard of Hebrew literacy in order to ensure that all graduates have the necessary skills to participate fully in Jewish life, and to continue on a journey of Jewish learning beyond the school.

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 Eden Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school. 112 people responded to the survey.

Pikuach invited pupils at Eden Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school. 56 pupils responded to the survey.

Pikuach invited members of staff at Eden Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school. 7 out of 17 members of staff responded to the survey.

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.