

The Noam Primary School

8-10 Forty Avenue, London, HA9 8JW

Inspection dates	4-6 June 2013	
Overall effectiveness	Good	2
Pupils' achievement	Good	2
Pupils' behaviour and personal development	Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching	Good	2
Quality of curriculum	Good	2
Pupils' welfare, health and safety	Good	2
Leadership and management	Good	2

Summary of key findings

This school is good because

- Pupils' achievement is good; pupils enjoy learning and are consistently engaged in lessons. As a result, they achieve well and make good progress. Particularly impressive is the progress made in English reading and *chumash* (Torah studies).
- The integrated curriculum, which embraces both *Kodesh* (religious studies) and *Chol* (secular studies), is good. It provides all pupils, including those with special educational needs, with a rich education.
- Teaching is good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and know their pupils very well, and lesson planning is good.
- Pupils' behaviour and their personal development are outstanding, as is their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Leadership and management are good and have had a positive impact on improving the quality of teaching, the curriculum and pupils' achievement. Senior leaders and governors are highly committed to securing the welfare, health and safety of pupils and to developing and maintaining high standards. The school has continued to improve since the last inspection.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Teaching does not always challenge the most able pupils. In addition, the quality of marking is not consistently good in giving feedback to pupils in their books, and they are given too few opportunities to respond to written comments.
- The management of staff performance to evaluate all staff is not yet embedded and the procedures for the observation of teaching are not rigorous enough.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets schedule 1 of the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2012, as amended by the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out with one day's notice.
- The inspectors observed 16 lessons taught by 14 different teachers.
- The inspectors looked at pupils' work and held meetings with the headteacher, members of the senior leadership team, staff, the Chair of Governors, and pupils.
- The inspectors took account of the views of parents and carers from 40 questionnaires and Parent View responses and the views of 13 members of staff.
- The inspectors looked at the school's documentation, including schemes of work and teachers' planning and read with Year 2 pupils.

Inspection team

Jonathan Yodaiken, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Mike Gaunt	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The Noam Primary School is a school for orthodox Jewish boys and girls, aged from three to 11 years, in North West London.
- The school was founded in 1999 to accommodate the rising demand from within the local community, for a high quality religious and secular education.
- The aim of the school is 'to provide excellence in primary school education that is founded upon Jewish laws, heritage and culture'.
- The school is located in the grounds of Wembley Synagogue, with pupils attending the school mainly living in Edgware, Hendon and Golders Green. It does not use additional provision.
- The school is registered for 121 pupils. Currently there are 176 pupils on roll, one of whom has a statement of special educational needs.
- There are 54 children in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- The school was last inspected in February 2010.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Enhance the quality of teaching so that all pupils make accelerated progress by:
 - ensuring that all lessons provide challenge for the very high achievers
 - further improving the quality of marking, so that pupils are consistently given constructive feedback in their books and given ample opportunities to respond.
- Further improve leadership and management by:
 - extending and embedding the system for the management of staff performance, so that all teachers are given targets, both personal and whole-school, which are evaluated over time
 - establishing a more formal and systematic approach to lesson observations, which gives due focus to how the quality of teaching can be improved and is linked to follow-up observations.

Inspection judgements

Pupils' achievement

Good

Pupils' achievement is good, enabling them to make good progress. Pupils join the school in Nursery with skills and knowledge broadly in line with expectations for their age, and they reach above average standards by the time they leave the school in Year 6.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, on-going assessments are used effectively to plan teaching. Accurate record-keeping highlights children's progress and areas upon which to focus teaching for further improvement. Particularly impressive is the outstanding level of attainment achieved in reading comprehension throughout the school. Pupils are able to read with great expression and use inference with great effect. Progress in numeracy and all other subjects is good, supported by effective teaching. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, including pupils with a statement of special educational needs, make accelerated progress because of the expert support they receive in lessons and within individual sessions. However, a very few pupils who are of a very high level of attainment make slower progress because their needs are not fully matched and they are not challenged enough. Pupils make at least good and sometimes outstanding progress in their *Kodesh* studies. Progress in *chumash* (Torah) is outstanding and by the time pupils reach Year 6, they are able to work out unseen *pesukim* (sentences) with great accuracy. In all other *Kodesh* subjects, progress is good.

Pupils' behaviour and personal development

Outstanding

Pupils' behaviour and personal development are outstanding. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is also outstanding. Excellent relationships between staff and pupils ensure that all pupils are valued as individuals. Staff are extremely caring and attentive to pupils' needs. As a result, pupils state that they feel very safe and well cared for. Attendance is good, as pupils enjoy school life. Pupils' behaviour is outstanding both in lessons and around the school. They develop their confidence well, as demonstrated by the way they eagerly sing in the school choir and perform in the school show in front of a large audience. They demonstrate a high level of responsibility in the way Year 6 pupils act as big buddies to younger pupils and participate actively on the school council. Pupils play a productive part in the community through visits to local residential homes and by fundraising for charities. Spirituality is the foundation of everything that happens at school. Pupils pray every day, learn Torah in depth and perform kind deeds. All staff are skilful in the ways that they convey an understanding of morality to pupils so that they have a keen sense of what is right and wrong.

Pupils learn about other cultures through a focus on different cultural traditions within their studies about the forefathers, Greeks with regard to Chanukah (festival of lights) and Persians with regard to the festival of Purim. In addition, Year 5 pupils take part in the three faith forum, whereby pupils from the school meet up monthly with pupils from other faiths. They learn about tolerance and respect for all pupils as a basic tenet of the Jewish faith and through interactions with visitors and members of the community. Pupils learn about the legal system and public services through English and history and are offered a balanced presentation of opposing political views when such issues are discussed. They learn about aspects of British culture as well as significant institutions and services in England. For example, they mark events such as the Queen's Jubilee and Remembrance Day, as well as learning about democracy and elections, and the work of magistrates and the police force.

Quality of teaching

Good

The quality of teaching is good and sometimes outstanding, which results in good achievement overall. Teachers know their pupils very well and provide well-judged care and support.

Relationships between staff and pupils are very positive and teachers are generous with praise. Lesson planning in the vast majority of lessons takes good account of individual needs, with the exception of the very high achievers who are not always challenged enough. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, the children's starting points have been accurately identified and continuous assessment helps them to progress well. The pace of lessons is good and they are presented in an interesting way which encourages pupils to reflect and analyse. This is exemplified in a Year 1 *Kodesh* lesson where pupils were encouraged to reflect upon and to describe with clarity the holiness of the *Shabbos* (Sabbath), and in a Year 6 literacy lesson when pupils reflected upon and identified the difference between the written form of *Oliver Twist* and that of the film clip version. Teachers ask good, probing questions and pupils work collaboratively in groups and pairs to solve problems. The teaching of literacy and *chumash* is outstanding, which results in outstanding progress in these subjects. Reading is a priority and pupils read every day, both individually and through guided reading. *Chumash* is taught in a very innovative way, with skill-building being at the forefront of all *chumash* lessons. By the time pupils reach Year 6, they can work out *pesukim* from the Torah themselves. In the very few lessons which are only satisfactory, high achievers are not challenged sufficiently and teachers do not take adequate account of the different learning styles of pupils.

Although the quality of marking of pupils' work has improved since the last inspection, it is still not consistent enough across all year groups and subjects in giving them advice on next steps for improvement. In addition, pupils are not given sufficient opportunities to respond to the next steps identified in their books, in order to feed into a cycle of assessment for learning. This is one reason why teaching and achievement are not outstanding.

Assessment outcomes are kept in individual pupil files and are accurate. These detailed records show whether each pupil is working towards a target or has achieved it. Particularly impressive is the use of agreed criteria in the assessment for writing, linked to targets and the assessment of *kriah* (reading). Although there is a tracking system for *chumash*, it is not as effective, as it does not demonstrate the *chumash* skills of pupils but rather their results in tests. Older pupils are aware of their targets and can explain them.

Quality of curriculum

Good

The curriculum, which embraces both *Kodesh* and *Chol*, is good. It is broad and balanced and promotes pupils' understanding of Jewish religious practices, history and culture, in conjunction with meaningful experiences of secular areas of learning. The *Chol* curriculum broadly follows National Curriculum guidelines for science, technology, art and design, physical education, history, geography and music, in addition to the core subjects of literacy and numeracy. All *Kodesh* lessons, including traditional religious studies such as *gemoro* (Talmudic studies) and *chumash*, are fully integrated with a wide range of topics and subject matter, including *middos* (good character) building. Careful thought and planning ensure that teachers take every opportunity to enrich the curriculum for pupils to acquire new knowledge. For example, the Generation Sinai activity, wherein parents learn with their children in school during the summer term, has a most enriching impact on pupils.

The curriculum is supported by detailed schemes of work geared to support pupils with a wide range of abilities, although it is somewhat less effective for the very high achievers. It is devised to provide clear progression so that pupils make good progress. It meets the needs of all pupils and enables them to make excellent progress in reading and *chumash* and good progress in all other areas. Pupils with special educational needs are provided with an exceptionally impressive curriculum. The new writing assessment tool, which is linked to targets, is now providing pupils with a good opportunity to make accelerated progress in writing.

Pupils' welfare, health and safety**Good**

The quality of provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety is good and all of the independent school standards are met. Staff recruitment procedures are effective and the results of checks on staff and others are correctly recorded in a single central register. The designated person responsible for safeguarding has been trained to the higher level and all other staff to the required level. The school has devised and implemented the required range of policies which meet the latest guidance. These include policies for child protection, anti-bullying, behaviour, and health and safety. Procedures are in place to record any accidents or incidents and detailed risk assessments are conducted. Checks on electrical appliances, and procedures to prevent fire, are fully implemented, including checks on fire safety equipment and regular fire drills. A suitable policy for educational visits ensures that appropriate steps are taken to keep pupils safe when on school trips. Pupils are well supervised and the admissions and attendance registers are properly maintained and meet the regulations.

Effective policies are in place for promoting good behaviour and these are consistently applied by staff. Discussions with pupils indicated that behaviour is typically outstanding and that bullying is rare, but if it does occur, they are confident that staff deal with it well. Pupils say they feel safe and parents and carers indicate strongly that their children are kept safe. The school promotes healthy lifestyles, particularly healthy eating; however, opportunities to participate in sport and exercise are adequate but limited due to the lack of playing area at the school and the fact that at present there are few after school sports clubs.

Leadership and management**Good**

The quality of leadership and management is good. Leaders and managers work extremely well together to ensure that pupils are well supported. As a result, teaching is good and pupils with a wide range of ability make good progress. Leaders and managers have a shared vision and communicate a desire for excellence that is well received by teachers. They are constantly looking for ways to support staff and to make the best use of the resources that are available.

Leaders and managers are clear about the school's strengths and areas that still need to be developed, although self-evaluation is not formulated in writing. The school has robust policies to ensure the welfare, health and safety of the pupils, including safeguarding. The experienced governing body, with wide expertise in education, policy and procedures, has worked hard to improve the quality of provision through accurate monitoring and the provision of training.

The headteacher, head of Kodesh and deputy headteacher have a clear and determined approach. They are visible in and around the school and take an active role in classroom activities, with the deputy headteacher teaching Year 4. The school's actions since the last inspection have brought about improvements in the quality of teaching and learning. A newly introduced system for the management of staff performance is not yet applied to all staff and embedded. Procedures for the improvement of teaching are not linked sufficiently to a systematic and formal approach to lesson observation, or to targets and areas for development. Nevertheless, newly qualified teachers have been particularly well supported within the school's robust induction procedure.

The school works well with parents and carers who fully support the work of the school, as demonstrated by the very positive outcomes of the Parent View survey, where 100% of parents and carers responded that they would recommend the school to other parents and carers. Parents and carers receive all the required information, including annual reports on their children's progress and they have the opportunity to attend consultation meetings twice a year. The school's procedures for handling complaints are appropriate, clear and concise. The accommodation meets requirements. The proprietor has ensured that all the independent school regulations are met.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	A school which provides an exceptional quality of education and significantly exceeds minimum requirements.
Grade 2	Good	A school which provides a high quality of education that exceeds minimum requirements.
Grade 3	Adequate	A school which meets minimum requirements but needs to improve the quality of education it provides.
Grade 4	Inadequate	A school where minimum requirements are not met and/or the quality of education has serious weaknesses.

School details

Unique reference number	131952
Inspection number	420184
DfE registration number	304/6112

This inspection was carried out under section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Type of school	Orthodox Jewish Primary
School status	Independent School
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	176
Number of part time pupils	0
Proprietor	Mrs T Weisz
Chair	Dr J Rees
Headteacher	Mrs S Simmonds
Date of previous school inspection	1 February 2010
Annual fees (day pupils)	£4,414.50
Telephone number	0208 908 9491
Fax number	0208 908 5071
Email address	office@noamprimary.org

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store St
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2013

