

Nancy Reuben Primary School

Finchley Lane, Hendon, London NW4 1DJ

Inspection dates

17–19 October 2017

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leadership is good. The headteacher has led rapid improvement in the quality of teaching. His actions have ensured that all the independent school standards are met and the school continues to improve.
- The governing body has a secure understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and provides effective support and scrutiny.
- The curriculum is broad and engaging and provides pupils with a wide range of opportunities to learn.
- Teaching is good overall. Pupils, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, also benefit from high-quality individual teaching that meets their needs.
- Pupils make good progress across a range of subjects, including in English and mathematics.
- Parents and staff are supportive of the school's leadership. Staff morale is high. The majority of parents speak positively about the school.
- Pupils' behaviour is good and they feel safe and well cared for. They enjoy coming to school and their attendance is above average.
- The school is effective in promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and preparing them for life in modern Britain.
- Subject leaders, some of whom are new to their roles, are not yet fully effective in driving improvements in the quality of teaching.
- Pupils do not routinely write at length in English and across other subjects to improve their writing skills.
- The teaching of phonics is not consistently strong to help pupils acquire the skills to read difficult or unfamiliar words.
- The most able pupils are not consistently challenged to help them make the progress of which they are capable.
- Children in the early years do not make consistently good progress, particularly in literacy. Leaders do not routinely check children's progress to help them improve their outcomes, particularly for girls.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by ensuring that:
 - there are more opportunities for pupils to write at length for them to improve their writing in English and other subjects
 - the most able pupils are consistently challenged so that they make the progress of which they are capable
 - staff’s skills in the teaching of phonics are enhanced to help pupils read difficult or unfamiliar words to improve their reading.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management by strengthening the role of subject leaders so that they have a positive impact on improving the quality of teaching further.
- Improve the early years provision by ensuring that:
 - leaders check children’s progress carefully to identify those falling behind and provide them with timely support so that they make good progress, especially girls
 - teaching consistently helps children improve their reading and writing skills.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leadership of the school over time is good. The headteacher, ably supported by the deputy headteacher, has worked effectively with leaders, staff and parents to bring about rapid improvements. As a result, all of the independent school standards are met and the school is improving.
- The headteacher has high expectations and leaders, governors and staff share his ambition for pupils.
- Senior leaders have an accurate view of the school's performance, including its strengths and areas for improvement. They have clear plans in place to bring about swift further improvements.
- Leaders' actions have improved the quality of teaching through effective training and staff development. The quality of teaching is now good. Senior leaders carry out checks on the quality of teaching and learning, including on work in pupils' books, and provide useful feedback to teachers to support them in improving their teaching skills and classroom practice.
- Leaders check pupils' progress well and those falling behind, including pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, are provided with effective support to ensure that they make good progress.
- Leaders have created a strong sense of teamwork in the school that unites staff, parents and pupils. Staff morale is high.
- The broad and balanced curriculum engages pupils and captures their interests. The range of subjects, extra-curricular activities and visits help pupils to acquire knowledge, understanding and skills. The curriculum covers all the required areas of learning and ensures that pupils make good progress.
- The Kodesh curriculum (Jewish studies) is strong and promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Pupils learn about, for example, respecting and valuing people and the difference between right and wrong. Pupils make good progress with their learning of Hebrew and there is a good sense of community when they recite verses together from the Torah.
- British values are actively promoted. Pupils know about democracy, the rule of law and elections. They are involved in electing pupils for the school council and running mock election campaigns.
- Pupils learn about different cultures and religions and show respect for diversity, including those people with protected characteristics. Year 6 pupils, for example, discussed and debated gender-neutral toilets in their personal, social and health education lesson and Year 3 pupils discussed the different types of families. Pupils know about equality and justice through learning about Rosa Parks. Pupils are prepared well for life in modern Britain.
- Subject leaders contribute to the school's improvement plan through producing action plans for their subjects. However, they have limited opportunities to check the quality of teaching and hold teachers to account for the progress pupils make in their subject areas.

- Staff are supportive of the school's leaders and are of the view that the school has markedly improved since the previous inspection.
- The majority of parents who responded to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, are supportive of the school's leaders and agree that the school has improved since the last inspection. Some of the many supportive comments that parents made to describe the school included, 'a truly lovely school', 'the school has changed dramatically', 'warm and nurturing environment' and 'caring and responsive'.
- Nearly all staff who responded to the staff questionnaire stated that they are proud to be a member of staff at the school.

Governance

- Governance is effective.
- Governors are committed and ambitious for the school and its pupils. Governors know the school well, including its strengths and weaknesses. They are involved in the production of the school's improvement plan, including the monitoring and evaluation of the priorities identified.
- Governors have created committee structures to enhance their role in supporting and challenging senior leaders in the work they do to bring about improvements.
- The chair of the governing body works closely with the proprietor and the board of trustees to ensure the smooth running of the school. The proprietor and the board of trustees ensure that funding is available to improve the classrooms and the learning environment for pupils. For example, during the inspection the outdoor learning area for the early years was being refurbished to improve children's experience.
- Some of the governors visit the school regularly to see how well pupils are learning and to ensure that pupils are safe and well cared for. Governors have completed an appropriate level of safeguarding training and ensure that pupils are kept safe at school.
- Governors commission external reviews on the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes so that they are well informed about school improvement issues. They carry out the performance management of the headteacher with the involvement of an external consultant to set challenging targets.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders have successfully created a culture of vigilance to ensure that pupils are kept safe.
- All staff have received recent training on safeguarding and child protection procedures based on current statutory guidance. Staff are aware of the correct procedures to follow if they have concerns in relation to a child's safety.
- The school's vetting systems for checking and recording the suitability of staff are robust.
- Record-keeping is precise and files are well maintained. Leaders work well with external agencies and parents to ensure that pupils whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable are effectively supported and kept safe.

- Comprehensive risk assessments are in place to ensure pupils' safety within the school and when attending off-site visits and trips. Leaders ensure that any potential risks are minimised for pupils and staff.
- The school has updated the school policy on safeguarding, which meets the requirements of the government's latest guidance, 'Keeping children safe in education' (September 2016). The safeguarding policy is available to parents on the school's website.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Improvements in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment have resulted in improved progress for pupils. The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good and pupils make good progress in a range of subjects, including English and mathematics.
- There are strong working relationships between staff and pupils, which creates a positive atmosphere of trust and confidence. This helps to engage pupils and motivate them to learn and do their best.
- Teachers and teaching assistants use questioning well to engage pupils and to test and strengthen their understanding.
- Teachers' subject knowledge in the Kodesh curriculum is particularly strong. This engages pupils well overall and gives them much confidence in their learning.
- Teaching in mathematics is strong and teachers use their subject knowledge well to reinforce learning. Pupils use their skills well to solve a range of mathematical problems. In a mathematics lesson, for example, pupils multiplied numbers successfully drawing on their knowledge of mental mathematics well to support their learning.
- Pupils in most classes reflect on their work and respond to teachers' advice on how to improve their work to deepen their understanding. For example, in an English lesson pupils were encouraged to check and improve their work.
- Teachers ensure that there are sufficient opportunities for pupils to enhance their speaking and listening skills. This particularly helps pupils who speak English as an additional language to make good progress, including in English. Bilingual staff use their knowledge of Hebrew effectively to support pupils' learning.
- Teaching assistants contribute well to pupils' progress when they lead small groups or provide individual support to pupils, including for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. As a result, these pupils make good progress.
- Pupils benefit greatly from specialist teaching in subjects such as physical education, art, music and Hebrew to strengthen their understanding.
- In line with the school's policy, teachers provide pupils with regular, challenging homework to reinforce their learning.
- Sometimes, the most able pupils are not challenged enough through tasks that enable them to think hard and deepen their understanding.

- Pupils said that they enjoy reading and that they have access to a good range of books to capture their interests. However, staff do not consistently demonstrate a secure knowledge and understanding of phonics. Consequently, some of the pupils, particularly the lower-attaining pupils, do not have secure strategies to read difficult or unfamiliar words.
- In some classes, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to improve their writing by writing at length in English and other subjects.
- A very large majority of parents who contributed to Parent View, and almost all who inspectors spoke with, said that their children are taught well at the school.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are kind, courteous and friendly. They are respectful to each other and adults.
- Pupils have strong attitudes to their learning and are proud of their achievements. However, they sometimes lack concentration, particularly in Kodesh lessons, and their progress slows. Pupils said that occasionally in Kodesh lessons a few pupils talk when the teacher is talking and do not listen carefully.
- Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe in lessons and assemblies. For example, pupils know about fire safety and how to keep safe when using the internet. Older pupils know about the dangers associated with cyber bullying.
- Pupils said that they always feel safe in the school and that if they have any concerns or worries they would tell a member of staff, who they trust would deal with the matter. Pupils confirmed that behaviour is typically good. They believe that bullying or name-calling, including racist or homophobic language, are not an issue in the school.
- Leaders and staff promote pupils' physical fitness through sporting activities. Pupils know how to lead healthy lives.
- Pupils have a range of opportunities to develop their confidence through, for example, being school council members, classroom monitors and school ambassadors. This particularly prepares pupils in Year 6 well for the next stage of their education.
- A very large majority of parents who responded to Parent View and all those who inspectors spoke with said that their children are happy, safe and well looked after at school.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are courteous, respectful and behave well in lessons and throughout the school. However, occasionally they need to be reminded to listen and not chatter, especially in key stage 1.
- Pupils know the classroom rules on behaviour well and understand the school behaviour policy. They know that staff have high expectations of their behaviour.

- All of the pupils who spoke to inspectors said that incidents of poor behaviour are very rare. This is reflected by the very few incidents of poor behaviour recorded in the school's behaviour log.
- Pupils have good punctuality and their attendance is above national averages. There have been no exclusions since the last inspection.
- A large majority of parents who responded to Parent View and all those who inspectors spoke with said that pupils are well behaved. Nearly all staff who responded to the staff questionnaire agreed that pupils' behaviour is good.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Most pupils currently at the school are making good progress in a range of subjects, including in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The school's own information and pupils' work in their books show that pupils make good progress.
- National progress tests in English and mathematics for pupils from Years 1 to 6 show that the majority of pupils exceeded age-related expectations in 2016 and 2017. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- The proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in the national phonics screening check at the end of Year 1 was below the national average in 2017. Some pupils, especially the lower attainers, lack phonics skills to read unfamiliar or difficult words. This sometimes slows their progress in reading. However, pupils read widely and often overall, and have access to a range of books to engage them in their reading.
- Because of the high level of care and individual support, pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language benefit from bilingual support from staff and rich opportunities to develop their listening and speaking skills. Accordingly, they make similarly good progress to their classmates.
- Pupils make strong progress in mathematics. Pupils benefit from teachers' strong subject knowledge and the challenging work they are often set. Pupils are able to solve different mathematical problems using a range of methods and calculation skills.
- Pupils make good progress in science. Pupils' books show that most of them are able to apply their scientific knowledge well to carry out investigations. They generally use scientific vocabulary correctly.
- Pupils make good progress in Kodesh. Pupils are able to extend their vocabulary and show confidence in their use of Hebrew. Most of them successfully memorise extracts from the Torah.
- The most able pupils make good progress. However, sometimes they are not challenged sufficiently to help them deepen their understanding and apply their skills in different ways.
- Pupils are able to adapt their writing styles to a range of different tasks. However, there are sometimes insufficient opportunities for pupils to write at length in English and across different subjects to improve their writing.

■ Early years provision

Requires improvement

- The majority of children start in the early years with skills and abilities which are typical for their age. By the time they leave Reception, their level of good development is almost in line with the national average. In 2016 and 2017, girls did not achieve as well as boys and their attainment was below average. As a result, not all pupils are fully prepared for Year 1.
- Leaders have a secure picture of the strengths and weaknesses in the early years. Their strategies are improving standards quickly. However, they have not ensured that the quality of teaching is consistently good so that children, particularly girls, make good progress. Pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare are good.
- Leaders do not effectively check the progress of children. As a result, they are not able to identify quickly those children who fall behind in order to provide them with timely support. Staff do not routinely use the information about children's progress to plan activities to address any gaps in their knowledge and understanding.
- Children's literacy skills are not consistently reinforced to ensure that they make good progress in their early reading and writing. Sometimes the teaching of phonics is not effective in supporting children's understanding of letters and the sounds they represent.
- Children's behaviour is consistently strong. They know the routines well and how to behave and be safe. For example, they are used to staff using phrases such as 'walk not run', 'be polite', 'put your hand up', 'take turns' and 'share with others'. They respond well to instructions.
- Children who are two years old in the pre-Nursery receive good care and support. Staff interact well with children, responding effectively to their verbal and non-verbal communication. Staff are knowledgeable about the children's typical development and characteristics of learning, including their emotional and physical development. Leaders have split learning between just two-year-olds and two-and-a-half-year-olds to ensure that their developmental needs are met.
- A small number of children who speak mainly in Hebrew are effectively supported by bilingual staff, who provide instructions in both Hebrew and English. Children feel comfortable with familiar language used at home and this helps them engage in their learning.
- In the Nursery Class, children played purposefully in the 'grocery shop' and developed their understanding of different types of fruits. When a child was able to use the name of one of the fruits correctly while eating her snack, she said, excitedly, 'Look, I have blueberries!'
- Children in the Reception class have good opportunities to develop their musical skills. For example, children in a music lesson imitated musical instruments such as trumpets, drums and piano, as directed by what they heard, and followed the instructions carefully.
- Children in the Nursery and Reception classes learn about different cultures and festivals. Children learn about Diwali and made mehndi patterns and diyas to mark the event. Children in the Reception built a model of the Taj Mahal as part of their learning about India. Children also made models of Noah's Ark containing different animals as part of their learning about Judaism and Christianity.

- Staff have strong links with parents to keep them informed about their children’s learning. These links with parents also help children to settle quickly into routines when they join the school. There are regular newsletters and parents’ meetings to keep parents informed about their children’s learning.
- Staff are fully trained to keep children safe. Leaders and staff ensure that safeguarding is effective. There are no breaches of statutory welfare requirements.
- The school meets the independent school standards in relation to the early years provision.

School details

Unique reference number	133533
DfE registration number	302/6114
Inspection number	10038166

This inspection was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, 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	Other independent school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	208
Number of part-time pupils	2
Proprietor	Dayan A David
Chair	Michael Ezra
Headteacher	Anthony Wolfson
Annual fees (day pupils)	£4,260
Telephone number	020 8202 5646
Website	www.nrps.co.uk
Email address	head@nrps.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	23–24 September and 30 September–1 October 2014

Information about this school

- Nancy Reuben School is an independent modern-orthodox Jewish school for girls and boys aged 2 to 11 years of age (the school's age range was 4 to 11 at its last inspection in September 2014).
- The school shares its site with the local Sephardi Synagogue, of which many of the pupils and their families are members.
- The school aims to inspire in our children a love of learning, and a desire to acquire

knowledge, which extends to both secular and Kodesh’.

- In April 2017, the current headteacher joined the school along with a new head of Kodesh. They were joined in September 2017 by a new deputy headteacher. There is a new governing body with a new chair of the governing body. There have also been a number of changes to staffing since the last inspection.
- The early years consists of a playgroup for two-year-old children, pre-kindergarten for two-and-a-half-year-old children, kindergarten (Nursery) and Reception. All children in the Nursery and Reception attend full time. Parents have an option to either send their children part time or full time to the play group or pre-kindergarten.
- The school was last inspected in October 2014 and was judged as requiring improvement. This inspection took place over four days to accommodate Jewish public holidays. The school was judged to meet all the independent school standards.
- There are no disadvantaged pupils.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

Information about this inspection

- This full standard inspection took place with one day's notice.
- The inspectors observed teaching and learning across the school in all year groups, including in the early years. Almost all were joint observations with either the headteacher, deputy headteacher or the head of Kodesh studies.
- The inspectors held meetings with pupils in key stage 2 about their learning and views about the school. The inspectors also listened to Year 1 and Year 2 pupils read and discussed their reading with them.
- The inspectors scrutinised books and the school's own information on the progress pupils make. Inspectors checked the single central register of pre-employment checks on staff, and looked at pupils' attendance and behaviour records. They also examined documents and policies in relation to the curriculum, safeguarding and health and safety.
- The inspectors met with the headteacher, the proprietor, senior leaders and parents. Telephone discussions were also held with the chair of the governing body and a member of the board of trustees.
- There were 103 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View. Inspectors also spoke to 21 parents during the inspection. Inspectors also considered 32 responses to the survey for staff.

Inspection team

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