

# Bigland Green Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	100939
<b>Local Authority</b>	Tower Hamlets
<b>Inspection number</b>	376489
<b>Inspection dates</b>	3–4 November 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Ruth McFarlane

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	473
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Denis Twomey
<b>Headteacher</b>	Abdul-Hayee Murshad
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	9 June 2009
<b>School address</b>	Bigland Street London  E1 2ND
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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	3–4 November 2011
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. Twenty-one lessons or part lessons were observed, led by 18 different teachers or teaching assistants. Meetings were held with pupils, members of the governing body, staff and the headteacher. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation, including the school's records of pupils' attainment and progress, and school policies, including safeguarding documentation and the school development plan. In addition, questionnaires from 277 parents and carers, 95 pupils and 59 staff were analysed.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- How successfully pupils are helped to develop reading skills throughout the school.
- The extent to which pupils' progress is consistent through the school.
- How well questioning is used in the classroom to accelerate learning.
- How effectively the subject leaders contribute to the drive for improvement.

## Information about the school

The school is larger than average with two classes in each year group. Almost all pupils are from minority ethnic groups, a far higher proportion than average, with the vast majority from the Bangladeshi community. Almost all of the remainder of the pupils, about five per cent, are from Somali backgrounds. Most of the pupils speak English as an additional language, and many are at an early stage of learning English when they join the school. A well-above-average proportion of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average, although the number with statements of special educational needs is above average. The number of pupils who join or leave the school at other than the usual times is above average. The school holds the Artsmark Gold Award. The Early Years Foundation Stage consists of two full-time classes for nursery children aged three to four years, and two Reception classes.

A new headteacher took up post just after the last inspection in 2009. Since then, there have been changes to the leadership structure, including a new leader for the Early Years Foundation Stage.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**2**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

Bigland Green is a good school where pupils achieve well. They thrive because all staff work together well to provide good levels of care, guidance and support. This enables pupils to develop strong personal skills and make good progress in their learning. In consequence, pupils enjoy school and their attendance is above average. They behave well and respect each other and all the adults in school. Parents and carers are very positive about the school. A typical comment from the questionnaires was, 'I am very happy with the school and the support my child is getting.'

Attainment is broadly average in all subjects by Year 6. Previous gaps in achievement are narrowing, including boys' performance when compared to that of girls, and in reading compared to other subjects. However, attainment in reading still lags a little behind other subjects. There are two main reasons for this. First, within the good picture of progress and achievement in the Early Years Foundation Stage, children's understanding of how sounds link with letters (phonics), to underpin reading skills, is not sufficiently well developed. This is because phonics is taught in groups of wide ability, limiting its effectiveness. Second, in Years 1 to 6, opportunities are not exploited for pupils to practise and extend their reading skills through the many good cross-curricular elements in the curriculum.

In lessons, teaching assistants are deployed exceptionally well to help pupils learn. Teachers plan successfully for the varying ages and abilities of pupils in their classes. Much help and advice is given to pupils. Teaching is clearly focused on helping pupils to improve but in just a few lessons, throughout the school, pupils spend the majority of the time all together, often going over previous work and all working on the same activities. In these lessons, pupils have too little time to complete the well-planned tasks that are tailored to individual needs. Teachers' questions are frequent and good attention is given to ensuring the correct use of language in pupils' replies. In a few lessons, questions fail to probe or challenge, and responses are not used as a trigger to fully extend learning.

The governing body comprises a mixture of well-established and new members. Its work in planning for school improvement and development is good. However, its impact on improving outcomes for pupils is no better than satisfactory because checks on learning are too informal. Checks to make sure those school policies for which the governing body is responsible are comprehensive, specific to the school and implemented well, are not robust. The headteacher provides very clear direction and makes good use of his expertise in leading schools. A range of staff training

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opportunities, combined with careful organisation, has helped to underpin significant improvements since the previous inspection. As a result, subject leaders now make a strong contribution to the drive for improvement and to checks on the quality of teaching and learning. Self-evaluation is accurate and well-shared. Current planning reflects a clear awareness of what is needed to take the school forward. This, together with the teamwork now evident, means that the school has a good capacity to improve further.

**What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Improve the effectiveness of lessons by:
  - lifting teachers' expectations so that more challenge is consistently provided through questioning
  - ensuring that the largest proportion of time in each lesson is spent on activities pitched to pupils' different ability levels
  - accelerating progress in reading, particularly in the Early Years Foundation Stage, through making the systematic teaching of phonics more robust
  - including more opportunities for pupils to develop their reading skills in themed work and cross-curricular lessons.
  
- Increase the impact of the governing body on improving outcomes for pupils by:
  - ensuring that checks on the work of the school are more rigorous
  - ensuring that statutory policies and procedures are comprehensive, specific to the school and monitored robustly.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****2**

Pupils' attainment on entry to Year 1 is below average, especially in reading. Across the school, progress and achievement are good. Even so, all groups do a little less well in reading, and in 2011 boys did less well than their peer group nationally, in English and mathematics. Pupils have responded well to the prompt action taken by the school, including individual (one-to-one) and small group support, successfully aimed at developing boys' interest in learning and raising their achievement. Their progress, and its equality with that of others, was clearly observed in lessons, with boys and girls performing equally well. In religious education lessons in Year 2, for example, a visit to a synagogue was followed up well in class with a variety of tasks that interested boys and girls, ensuring that pupils made good progress in understanding a religious culture which was new to most of them.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve well. This was exemplified in a geography topic observed in Year 6, where the teacher fully involved them throughout, thus ensuring that their learning matched that of their classmates. This group, and the many pupils at an early stage of speaking English, those who are known to be eligible for free school meals, and those who join the school mid-way through the year, receive knowledgeable and carefully planned support from well-

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managed teaching assistants. Because of this, they make equivalent progress to their peers.

Pupils show considerable enjoyment and pride in their learning. They use their sensible attitudes to draw all possible benefit from the lessons. Pupils have a clear awareness of how to stay healthy. They are keen to point out that fruit and vegetables are good for you and enjoy participating in the good range of physical activities provided. Pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils enjoy taking on the responsibilities that the school offers them, and they recognise that they are working for, and helping, each other. School council members explained to inspectors how they contributed most successfully to improving the play areas outside, and in devising whole school aims. Eco councillors and playground buddy roles are fulfilled enthusiastically by pupils, who serve the school community well. Pupils’ contribution to the wider and global communities is developing. Their average literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills ensure adequate preparation for their future lives.

*These are the grades for pupils’ outcomes*

<b>Pupils’ achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils’ learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils’ behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attendance <sup>1</sup>	2
<b>The extent of pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective is the provision?

The good pastoral care provided for pupils contributes substantially to their sense of well-being. Pupils are well known to staff members, who make pupils’ welfare a priority and pay due regard to safeguarding arrangements. Pupils are regularly reminded about the need to take care, for instance, when using computers. The transitions from home to school and on to secondary school are smooth and efficient,

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

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enhanced by good partnerships with local schools. Staff have worked rigorously and successfully with outside agencies to ensure pupils’ above-average attendance.

Teachers make good, thoughtful use of their classrooms to create an interesting and welcoming learning environment for the pupils. Relationships are a strength. As a result, pupils are keen to learn and ready to work hard. Teachers use a good range of strategies to engage the pupils, including using the interactive whiteboards effectively. Explanations are clear and reflect teachers’ good subject knowledge. Occasionally, staff do not give pupils quite enough opportunities to get on with planned tasks matched to their abilities, because they keep them too long while they explain previous work or carry out a whole class task. Marking routinely provides pupils with praise and clarifies for them how to develop their work further, but questioning in class is sometimes undeveloped.

Subjects link together well and this makes the curriculum engaging and leads to good learning. However, the school has not fully evaluated the impact of the curriculum on outcomes for pupils. Leaders are aware of the need to ensure that enough opportunities to develop basic skills, especially in reading, are built into all topics. The well-supported creative and educational activities outside normal lessons make a valuable contribution to pupils’ learning, levels of enjoyment and personal development. High quality provision for art has led to the school’s Artsmark Gold Award. Strong partnerships in the local area enrich pupils’ experiences, for instance, in a range of sports, with benefits evident in their physical and social development.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
The use of assessment to support learning	2
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils’ needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

## **How effective are leadership and management?**

The headteacher has been successful in creating a good, caring school with a strong ambition to improve, shared well with the whole school community. Success is illustrated by the improvements in the consistency of pupils’ progress since the previous inspection, rooted in improved checks on the quality of teaching and learning. These checks involve a wide range of the school’s leaders and managers who all work together to drive improvement. Governors are linked to year groups and monitor aspects of pupils’ experience in school. These checks are largely informal and have limited impact in promoting further improvements in outcomes.

Equal opportunities are promoted well in the school to ensure that all groups make equally good progress overall. Discrimination is not tolerated. Safeguarding

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procedures are satisfactorily applied to ensure that all pupils are adequately protected. For example, recruitment procedures are carefully checked and confirmed prior to appointment. Community cohesion is promoted satisfactorily but the school is at an early stage of analysing the local, wider and global aspects and evaluating its work in this field. Local links and partnerships are good, allowing for the sharing of a range of expertise, training opportunities for staff and enhancements to the curriculum. There are good working relationships with parents and carers, and they in turn support the school well in the overall provision for their children.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school’s engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Most children enter the school with knowledge and skills that are low in relation to the levels expected nationally for their age. They make good progress and achieve well in the Early Years Foundation Stage but most have not reached average attainment on entry to Year 1. Overall, children’s progress in linking sounds and letters and in reading is weaker than in their other learning. This is because, although the school’s planning describes a good, systematic programme for teaching phonics, sessions are presented to groups of wide ability, which does not ensure each individual can make their best progress in this aspect.

The children are very happy in school and settle in well because staff create a friendly and caring learning environment, and the children benefit from the good links that are established with parents and carers. Staff encourage the children to develop good, safe hygiene practices, for example, washing their hands before lunch. Teaching is good. The outdoor area provides a stimulating learning space, well set out with interesting activities. Adults provide the children with a good balance of teacher-led activities and chances for them to choose for themselves. In response,

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children behave well, and they are keen to do well with their work. Some Reception children can already count beyond 10, and can recognise and write some of the sounds and letters in their names.

Staff know the children well, and the frequent observations and assessments of their progress over all areas of learning result in tasks being suitably adapted to match their ability levels. The well-informed new leader successfully ensures good attention to welfare and learning. As a result, careful assessments and photographic records of children’s experiences at school provide a thorough picture for parents and carers of their children’s progress.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

## **Views of parents and carers**

There was an above-average response to the questionnaire sent to parents and carers seeking their views about the school. The very large majority are positive about everything the school provides, especially the teaching, safety and information about their children’s progress. Almost all say their children are happy at school. Comments such as, ‘The school has improved’, ‘My child is happy at school’ and ‘The school is well led’, were typical. Concerns were few and of no particular pattern. A very small minority of parents and carers feel their concerns are not dealt with well, or felt the school was not meeting their children’s needs. Records showed that concerns are usually dealt with very promptly. In most of the lessons observed during the inspection, the teachers planned carefully for the different abilities in their class and records showed that pupils make good progress overall whatever their particular needs.

### Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Bigland Green Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 277 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 473 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	149	54	125	45	3	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	125	45	143	52	6	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	112	40	158	57	4	1	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	95	34	161	58	13	5	4	1
The teaching is good at this school	124	45	145	52	5	2	1	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	92	33	166	60	12	4	1	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	113	41	148	53	10	4	1	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	86	31	163	59	12	4	1	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	71	26	172	62	18	6	6	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	108	39	144	52	15	5	4	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	78	28	167	60	23	8	2	1
The school is led and managed effectively	100	36	157	57	10	4	1	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	121	44	144	52	11	4	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## 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	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is 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. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 8 April 2011 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



7 November 2011

Dear Pupils

### **Inspection of Bigland Green Primary School, London E1 2ND**

Thank you all for the warm welcome you gave to us when we visited your school recently. What a pleasant two days we had! We enjoyed meeting and talking to you and noted the pride you have in your school. Thank you for responding to the questionnaire.

We have found that yours is a good school, where you make good progress thanks to good teaching and support, and reach broadly average standards by the end of Year 6. You told us you feel safe at school and you have good knowledge and understanding about how to lead a healthy lifestyle. Staff care for you, guide and support you well. You enjoy your lessons.

The headteacher agrees with the inspection team that you all could achieve even more at school. There are several ways to do this, first of all by making sure that the way the youngest children learn their letters and sounds is changed a little to help them learn more quickly. For the rest of you, we have suggested that teachers let you get on with tasks matched to your different abilities for a greater part of each lesson and that the questions teachers ask you really make you think hard. Finally, we have asked staff to make sure you have plenty of practice in basic skills like reading, not only in the separate lessons, but also in themed work and subjects that are linked together.

We have also asked the governing body to make sure they check carefully all the paperwork that the school has, and try to come into school as often as they can to see how you are all getting on. You can all help by continuing to work hard and aiming really high.

Yours sincerely

Ruth McFarlane  
Lead inspector

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