

Bigland Green Primary School

Bigland Street, London E1 2ND

Inspection dates

13–14 October 2015

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Leaders have not made sure that standards are rising quickly enough. Levels of attainment remain too low.
- There is too much inconsistency in the extent to which teachers follow some of the agreed policies. As a result, some pupils do not receive sufficient guidance to help them make good progress.
- Not all teachers set most-able pupils work at a sufficiently challenging level. Consequently, not enough of these pupils achieve the higher levels of attainment.
- Standards at the end of Key Stage 2 remain too low. Disadvantaged pupils entitled to additional funding are catching up with their peers in the school, but do not attain as well as other pupils nationally.
- Actions taken to help pupils learn phonics (the sounds that letters make) more quickly have not led to a sustained increase in the number of pupils reaching the expected standard by the end of Year 1.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education enables them to make positive contributions to their own community, promotes ambition and helps pupils appreciate how others choose to live.
- Pupils make good progress in the early years. They develop positive attitudes to learning. Weak skills in their speech and language on entry are quickly improved.
- School leaders ensure safeguarding procedures are understood by all staff, rigorously implemented and kept under regular review. Pupils feel safe and are taught well about how to keep themselves safe.
- Pupils who arrive mid-year with no knowledge or experience of English make excellent progress.
- Pupils concentrate in lessons and enjoy learning. They behave in a harmonious and safe manner.
- Governance has been strengthened since the last inspection. Governors are in a stronger position to hold leaders to account for the impact of their actions.
- Parents have confidence in school leaders and benefit from a wide range of opportunities to learn how they can support their child's learning.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by ensuring that leaders at all levels hold teachers to account for consistently and effectively following agreed teaching policies.
- Improve the quality of teaching so that pupils' progress quickens, and standards rise more rapidly by:
 - ensuring that all teachers make effective use of policies and assessment information to help all groups of pupils improve their work and make good progress in all subjects
 - checking that all teachers plan lessons and activities which move on pupils' learning, especially the most able, as soon as they are ready.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management requires improvement

- The headteacher has eradicated the weakest teaching which he identified shortly after the last inspection. His decisions to reorganise and appoint new members of staff to his senior leadership team were well considered. However, senior leaders have not improved the quality of teaching enough. This is because leaders do not insist that every teacher follows the agreed teaching and assessment policies consistently. Leaders have not ensured that the work some teachers set for pupils is challenging enough, especially for the most able. As a result, too many pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable.
- Senior leaders use a range of evidence to check systematically on the work of teachers. They use these regular checks to decide on appropriate priorities for training and support. They make sure that the objectives set to manage teachers' performance are linked to outcomes for pupils and the agreed priorities for school improvement.
- Senior leaders have not made effective use of these rigorous systems to hold all teachers to account for the impact of their work on pupils' achievement. They have tolerated inconsistency in the quality of teaching during a period of significant staff change since the last inspection.
- Middle leaders support the process of planning for improvement well. They monitor standards systematically and regularly. A system of 'shadow leadership' is helpful in building leadership capacity. However, middle leaders are less successful in helping make sure that all teachers apply the agreed policies fully and to good effect.
- The headteacher and his senior team have secured the trust and confidence of many parents by promoting values of openness and honesty strongly, and improving communications. They have been particularly successful in inspiring more parents to attend events intended to improve their understanding of how their children learn, and of safeguarding issues.
- Leaders promote equality of opportunity well and have been successful in improving participation in the whole range of activities on offer. For example, nearly all pupils and parents new to the school who arrive with little or no skills in English attend extra classes before the school day begins.
- Leaders at all levels work effectively to ensure that safeguarding procedures and policies are well understood and consistently applied. These arrangements are kept under regular review and meet statutory requirements.
- The curriculum offers a broad and balanced range of subjects, with a clear progression of subject-specific skills linked to the programmes of study. Middle leaders are managing the transition to assessment without levels thoughtfully, using the opportunity to raise expectations of what might be achieved by each year group. Specialist teaching of art, music and physical education contributes well to the achievement of pupils in these subjects.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is well provided for. Their ambitions are heightened and their horizons are broadened by inspiring events and activities. For example, older pupils visit a leading university to attend lectures and learn about higher education. This year they learned about the origins of democracy in Ancient Greek culture. A broad range of opportunities to understand the importance of tolerance and respect for others prepares them well for their future lives in modern Britain.
- Leaders' use of the additional funding available to disadvantaged pupils is increasingly effective. The additional support provided by this funding is monitored well and has led to recent improvements to outcomes for these pupils. As a result, gaps in attainment are closing.
- Leaders have used the sport premium funding to ensure a greater proportion of pupils take part in a wider range of sports than previously. Approximately six in every 10 pupils attend sports clubs after school as a result.
- The local authority offers valuable advice and training to school leaders and governors. This has been particularly effective in helping senior leaders to challenge the weakest teaching and improve governance. Links with other local successful schools enable teachers to understand how barriers to learning can be overcome.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Since the last inspection, governance has improved. New governors have brought access to a wider range of skills and their work to check on standards has been sharpened. Governors ask insightful and challenging questions of school leaders and use a wider range of activities to consider the impact of leaders' work. Governors ensure that decisions about teachers' pay are informed by clear evidence of

teachers' impact on outcomes for pupils.

- Governors fulfil their responsibilities to ensure safeguarding arrangements are effective. They ensure that decisions on how to spend additional funding for disadvantaged pupils are leading to improvements in rates of progress for these pupils.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment **requires improvement**

- The quality of teaching requires improvement because there is too much inconsistency in the way teachers apply agreed policies. As a result, not all pupils make as much progress as they could. This is why standards are not rising quickly enough in some parts of the school.
- Teachers assess pupils' progress frequently and work together to check the accuracy of their judgements. However, not all teachers use the agreed policy on assessment and marking well enough to help pupils build on their learning in subsequent lessons.
- Some teachers give most-able pupils work which is too easy for them. These pupils do not benefit from more challenging work which teachers could give them to help them improve. As a result, too few of these pupils attain as highly as they might.
- Teachers promote and uphold the school's values well. They inspire most pupils to work hard and are skilled at managing and helping improve the more challenging behaviour exhibited by a small number of pupils.
- Support staff provide effective additional guidance and encouragement to individuals or groups of pupils.
- In some classes, pupils benefit from regular, helpful advice about how to develop their mathematical skills. However, some teachers recognise success but do not offer guidance to help pupils master concepts often or clearly enough.
- Teachers give pupils plenty of opportunity to write in a wide range of genres and for some meaningful purposes. However, the guidance they give to help pupils improve their writing skills is too variable. The school has agreed a policy on handwriting, but not all teachers follow this or model it in their own writing.
- The teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) has been strengthened. However, it is not yet effective enough to ensure that reading standards in Key Stage 1 are rising rapidly and being sustained. Most teachers make sure that activities in reading lessons are sharply focused on developing pupils' reading skills, including when they are not working directly with the teacher. This is improving pupils' rates of progress. However, there are still some occasions when pupils are given less helpful activities to do in reading lessons.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare **is good**

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils and parents express confidence in the ability of school staff to keep everyone safe and promote their well-being. They feel comfortable about approaching staff if they have concerns or need advice. Formal complaints from parents are rare. They are considered in accordance with the school's policy when they do occur.
- Pupils spoken to understand exactly what bullying is and how it might occur. They say it is not a problem in school. Pupils have been well taught about how to stay safe from potential risks when they use the internet.
- Pupils are taught well about their social responsibilities. For example, they are diligent in efforts to conserve energy resources and enthusiastically raise money for charity.
- Leaders have provided training for parents about dangers posed by radicalisation and extremism. This has ensured that parents have a growing awareness of these potential risks to young people.
- Pupils are given effective guidance about how to stay healthy. This guidance is well matched to the age, abilities and starting points of individual pupils.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils treat one another with kindness, respect and courtesy in the classroom and at play. They allow others to learn without disruption. They enjoy taking responsibility when this is asked of them.

- During lessons, pupils demonstrate exemplary attitudes to learning. However, work seen in books does not always echo this commitment to learning. Teachers sometimes need to repeat written comments asking pupils to complete work or try harder.
- As a result of effective monitoring and support from leaders, the unacceptable behaviour of a small number of pupils has become less frequent. The small number of instances of discriminatory behaviour logged in school records is declining. There have been no exclusions.
- Pupils' attendance is average over time, but has risen higher than this on occasion. Nearly all pupils in Years 5 and 6 arrive an hour early at school for additional lessons. Pupils come to school with the correct equipment and take good care of the premises.

Outcomes for pupils

require improvement

- Outcomes for pupils require improvement because their progress is not consistently good across different subjects, groups and classes.
- The proportion of pupils who attain the expected level in the Year 1 phonics check is below the national average and dropped further in 2015. Leaders have focused sharply on providing training and resources with the aim of improving the teaching of reading, but this is not improving standards rapidly enough.
- Attainment by the end of Key Stage 1 is broadly in line with national averages, which represents good progress for many pupils with low starting points. However, the proportion of most-able pupils exceeding expected levels of attainment is lower than the national average. It is not showing sufficient improvement over time.
- Pupils' attainment by the end of Key Stage 2 remains below that expected, based on the school's own information. Senior leaders have recently plotted the attainment of pupils in each year group using new, more challenging indicators of attainment. The higher expectations indicated by this move represent a positive move. However, pupils' attainment information shows that many pupils need to exceed expected progress in order to make up for previous underachievement.
- Pupils with disabilities and special educational needs do not all make similar progress to their peers, given their starting points. Some do not make the progress expected of them through Key Stage 2, especially in writing.
- Disadvantaged pupils entitled to additional funding make similar progress to other pupils in the school, although they do not attain as highly as other pupils nationally. This is because attainment by the end of Key Stage 2 is lower than the national average. In 2014, disadvantaged pupils were about nine months behind other pupils in the school in mathematics and about six months behind in writing, but attained better than their peers in reading. The gap between their attainment and other pupils nationally was less than six months in reading and mathematics but just over six months in writing.
- The school's own evidence indicates that additional support provided to disadvantaged pupils is increasing the pace of their progress across the school in recent months and gaps are closing further.
- The very large proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language make progress which is as good as other pupils. Pupils arriving at the school with no prior experience of the English language or British culture make excellent progress as a result of the very effective support they and their parents receive. Many of these pupils go on to reach levels of attainment typical of their age by the end of Year 6, despite their very low starting points.

Early years provision

is good

- The early years is more effective than other parts of the school because leaders have secured a greater consistency in teaching quality, and standards are rising more rapidly as a result.
- Nearly all children enter the early years with very weak skills in speech, language and personal development. They have other skills which are lower than typical for their age. Skilful teaching and consistent modelling of accurate, clear speech by adults enables children to make rapid progress. By the end of the Reception Year, more than half of all children attain a good level of development. Although this proportion is lower than the national average, it has risen sharply in 2015, according to the school's own evidence.
- Teachers ensure that children develop confidence and curiosity. They use these attributes to investigate the engaging activities on offer and to participate fully, whatever barriers may exist to their learning. This

prepares them well for the next stage of their education in Year 1.

- The early years leader has provided further training so that teachers are more effective in helping children acquire early skills in reading, writing and mathematics. Children are making much more rapid progress as a result, including those with disabilities and special educational needs.
- The quality of teaching and resources is equally good both indoors and outdoors. Children become increasingly confident and engaged as they develop their speaking and listening skills in the Nursery classes.
- The early years leader and her staff have created a positive, safe learning environment. Children are taught the skills needed to cooperate and persevere from the outset, in keeping with the six-step 'learning mission' which school leaders and governors have established. As a result, they play and learn safely, behave well and enjoy working together.

School details

Unique reference number	100939
Local authority	Tower Hamlets
Inspection number	10001413

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	478
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Zoinul Abidin
Headteacher	Abdul-Hayee Murshad
Telephone number	020 7702 7088
Website	www.biglandgreen.towerhamlets.sch.uk
Email address	admin@biglandgreen.towerhamlets.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	3–4 November 2011

Information about this school

- Bigland Green is a larger than average-sized primary school. It has two classes in each year group.
- The early years provision consists of two full-time Nursery classes and two full-time Reception classes.
- The vast majority of pupils speak English as an additional language. They are nearly all of Bangladeshi Asian heritage.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics at the end of Year 6.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported through the pupil premium is well above average. The pupil premium is additional government funding which supports pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, or children who are looked after by the local authority.
- Since the last inspection the senior leadership team has been restructured. Four assistant headteachers support the headteacher, three of whom have been appointed since the last inspection.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning during a tour of the school and in longer observations in 13 lessons. Many of these observations were conducted with the headteacher and other senior leaders. They also spent time with school leaders scrutinising pupils' work and considering the school's own information about outcomes for pupils.
- Meetings were held with pupils, the headteacher, staff with leadership responsibilities, members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read in Years 2 and 3.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation including minutes of governing body meetings, records of checks on the quality of teaching by leaders and information in relation to safeguarding.
- Inspectors took account of 38 parental responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. The lead inspector spoke to parents at the end of the school day.

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