

# Beckford Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	100009
<b>Local Authority</b>	Camden
<b>Inspection number</b>	307271
<b>Inspection dates</b>	31 October –1 November 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Kekshan Salaria HMI

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 on roll</b>	
School	412
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Ms Mary White
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ms Dilys Hoffman
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	20 May 2002
<b>School address</b>	Dornfell Street West Hampstead London NW6 1QL
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 7435 8646
<b>Fax number</b>	020 7435 8739

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors and an Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

Beckford Primary School is a larger than average primary school serving an inner city area. Levels of social and economic deprivation in the local area are high. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is twice the national average. The proportion of students with learning difficulties or disabilities is above the national average. The school has a resource base for physically disabled pupils. The school population is ethnically diverse. The majority of pupils have English as an additional language and a high number, 60, are currently at an early stage of learning English.

## Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Beckford Primary School is a good school with some outstanding features. There is a very strong commitment towards making every child feel valued and fully included in every aspect of school life. Learning environments are bright and attractive, and the very well maintained accommodation and playground provide pupils with very good opportunities to play and learn.

Achievement and standards are good overall. Pupils make good progress from a below average starting point and are well prepared for more formal learning when they enter Year 1. By the end of Year 6, standards are average. The school has put into place effective strategies to improve pupils' performance in English, with a particular focus on writing. Inspection evidence confirms that these are already bearing fruit and that standards in this area are rising. Many pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make good progress and those for whom English is an additional language make rapid progress towards fluency in the language because of the very well judged support provided for them.

Personal development is outstanding. Pupils respond extremely well to the school's provision. They make excellent progress in developing independence, responsibility and co-operation. They thoroughly enjoy school life, are very well behaved and enthusiastic about their work.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. The majority of lessons are lively and engage the pupils' interest. The most successful teaching actively engages pupils, promotes their independence and helps them to apply their knowledge and skills to new work. Most teachers set high quality tasks to match the needs and abilities of pupils, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities. However, teaching does not fully meet the needs of the more able pupils. The excellent curriculum makes very good provision for art and music, as well as for basic skills.

The headteacher provides very good leadership; her open management style has cultivated the teamwork, which is a strength of the school. Governors are knowledgeable, supportive and ensure they fully meet their statutory responsibilities. However, they are not challenging the school enough to hold it to account for its performance. The school has highly effective monitoring and evaluation processes, which provide it with a detailed and comprehensive picture of the full range of its provision and standards. The school uses this information effectively; consequently, it has made good improvement since the last inspection. The school has very good capacity to continue to improve further.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

When they start school, children's knowledge, skills and abilities are below those normally expected but particularly low in communication, language and literacy and personal and social development. The nursery and reception classrooms are stimulating, welcoming areas where children thrive. Displays reflect and celebrate their backgrounds and languages. Even the youngest and most recent arrivals settle quickly because of the warm inviting environment, positive adult support and clear expectations. Teaching is good, with a mix of activities led by adults and opportunities for children to make their own choices. Individual needs are recognised and planned for and staff carefully monitor how well children do and track their progress. This, together with a structured approach to early literacy and numeracy skills, prepares them well for the next stage of learning. Most make good progress so that, by the time they leave the

reception class, they achieve levels expected for their age in most areas of learning. However, progress in aspects of communication, language and literacy and mathematical development is not as strong and these standards are not as high.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Raise achievement by improving teaching so that it consistently provides good challenge for the more able.
- Improve the ways that governors evaluate the school's work and hold it to account for its performance.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Overall, pupils' achievement is good. When children arrive at the school in the nursery they vary widely in their skills. They make good progress in the Foundation Stage and satisfactory progress in the basic skills of reading, writing and mathematics in Key Stage 1, although standards by the age of seven are still generally below those expected for their age. However, there have been improvements recently, particularly in writing where standards are now average. Pupils make good progress in Key Stage 2 and standards by the age of 11 are in line with those expected for their age.

Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities and those learning English as an additional language make good progress because their needs are carefully assessed at an early stage, enabling them to receive the support they need. However, the school has not paid sufficient attention to monitoring the progress of the more able pupils, which is not as good as the progress of other groups.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 1**

Personal development and well being and spiritual, moral, social and cultural developments are outstanding. Pupils have a strong awareness of their own cultural heritage and that of others. Each individual is highly valued and achievement is widely celebrated. As a result, pupils are very proud of their school, feel safe and enjoy learning. 'It's like being at home, I feel so safe,' said one pupil. Behaviour is excellent and pupils report that bullying is rare. Pupils take their responsibilities seriously. Their thoughtful behaviour towards each other contributes to the school's very positive climate. For example, playground 'buddies' show great commitment towards making playtimes better for their peers and look out and play with those who do not have friends to play with. Pupils are happy and enjoy school a great deal. The school council is very effective and presented an excellent computer presentation to inspectors showing strong examples of their contribution to the community. Pupils also speak knowledgeably about healthy food choices and report that they enjoy the wide range of extra sport activities such as table tennis.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Overall, teaching and learning are good. Pupils are taught well and as a result make good progress. Teaching is strong because lessons are well prepared, teachers' expectations of what

pupils can achieve are high and relationships are very good. This helps the pupils to feel secure, raises their self-esteem and hence boosts their learning. Teachers have good subject knowledge. They use their detailed knowledge of individual pupils' needs to support their planning. Tasks are often practical and collaborative work helps pupils to link challenging concepts. Good practice in questioning skills exists. For example, key questions are identified to elicit pupils' understanding and are used to engage pupils in high quality dialogue but this is variable across the school.

Teaching assistants provide good quality support. They keep pupils focussed, support them through good questioning and provide feedback to class teachers on how individuals have progressed in the lesson. In a small number of lessons where teaching is less effective, pupils rely heavily on guidance from their teacher in order to proceed, tasks are not well matched to pupils' abilities and the more able pupils are not challenged.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 1**

Curriculum provision is outstanding. There is a strong commitment to pupils' personal development and to celebrating their diversity and developing their cultural awareness. This is particularly evident in the recent excellent work celebrating Black History Month. This gave pupils opportunities to celebrate their own heritage and learn about the work of people close to the school as well as more famous role models.

Pupils enjoy their learning because there is a very well planned curriculum, which provides a wide range of interesting and relevant activities. For example, writing activities are linked to current issues such as the introduction of a school uniform and England's involvement in the rugby world cup final. Visits to the local area and beyond and visitors into school are well used to widen children's experience. Many pupils are able to develop their musical talents through instrumental tuition. Pupils from Nursery onwards learn French in school. The curriculum is kept under review to ensure it meets the needs of all pupils. A wide range of clubs develop sporting and other skills and take up is monitored carefully to ensure all pupils can attend if they wish. For example, some clubs were changed from after school to lunchtime to ensure all who wanted to could attend. Effective links are being developed between subjects.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

Care, guidance and support are outstanding. The school is very welcoming and has a very harmonious atmosphere. The vast majority of parents praise the school's work and feel that their children are well cared for, 'I am very pleased with the school. They seem to genuinely care.' a parent reported. The caring ethos is also seen in the welcome extended to new arrivals. Pupils feel that the 'Buddy system' works very well. Pupils expressed confidence in knowing that they always have an adult to talk to should they have any concerns. The learning mentor plays a very effective part in this. The school also liaises with a wide range of agencies and has strong support for pupils within school for personal development.

Child Protection procedures are robust. Risk assessments and health and safety procedures are firmly in place. Pupils' personal and academic development is carefully monitored. Most marking is helpful and encouraging; however, the school recognises the need to develop consistency in marking across all year groups.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good overall. The headteacher has created a very positive ethos. She leads the school extremely well and has real vision for its continuing development. Because of her leadership, there is a clear, shared philosophy behind everything that is done and pupils benefit from consistent provision, for instance in teaching methods, the curriculum and the approach to discipline. She is supported extremely well by a very committed and motivated senior leadership team. Subject leaders have a good understanding of strengths and weaknesses in their area and speak highly about the support and challenge provided by senior leaders although they have not had the opportunity to contribute fully to monitoring and raising standards.

Senior leaders regularly analyse data to determine whether pupils are doing as well as they can and areas where improvement are needed. However, this data is not always analysed rigorously enough; for example, it is not used to identify the trends or overall achievement of the more able pupils.

The governors are knowledgeable and support the school well. The leadership team take most of the responsibility for monitoring the quality of provision and standards but governors do not question sufficiently the school's evaluation. The school has identified appropriate priorities for improvement in its school improvement plan but need to ensure the plan accurately identifies how improvement will be measured.

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**Annex A**

## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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### Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

### Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

### The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

8 November 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Beckford Primary School, London, NW6 1QL

Thank you very much for making us so welcome in your school. We had a lovely time. We really enjoyed seeing your lessons and talking to you. There is a great atmosphere at your school and we can see that you and your teachers really enjoy being at Beckford.

We think yours is a good school and were very impressed with the way your school takes care of you. You are learning to be responsible and independent. Your behaviour is very good and you all get on very well with each other and with the staff. The teaching in your school is good and the school provides you with many interesting learning activities both in and out of school. You told us how much you enjoy these and your parents agree. By the time you get to Year 6 you are very well prepared for the next phase of your education.

Your headteacher runs the school tremendously well and wants to keep on improving it and she and the teachers know just how to do that. To make your school even better, we have suggested that they give some of you more challenging work and to improve the ways that governors check the school's work.

I hope that you carry on enjoying school, work hard and continue to do well in the future.

Kekshan Salaria

Her Majesty's Inspector