

# 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>	323382
<b>Inspection dates</b>	9–10 June 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Michael Milton

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

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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 (total)	465
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Dennis Twomey
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ms Jill Hankey
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	6 July 2006
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Bigland Street London E1 2ND
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 7702 7088
<b>Fax number</b>	020 7423 9353

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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	9–10 June 2009
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

The school is larger than average with two classes in each year group. Almost all pupils are from minority ethnic groups, with the vast majority from the Bangladeshi community. Almost all 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 are known to be eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly average, although the number with statements of special educational need 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 several national awards. The Early Years Foundation Stage consists of children in the Nursery and Reception years. They are taught in four mixed-age classes in an Early Years Unit. The school provides a before school and after school club, which are attended by a relatively small number of pupils.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Bigland Green is a good school. Parents are very pleased with the education it provides for their children. When children join the Early Years Unit, they often have knowledge and skills well below those expected for their ages, especially for language and their knowledge and understanding of the world. However, they make good progress as they move through the school. As a result, by the end of Year 6 pupils' standards in English, mathematics and science are broadly average. This is because the headteacher's leadership, with the strong support of the deputy headteacher, has created a common sense of purpose among the large staff team. This staff team is committed to providing good teaching, high-quality care, and an enriched curriculum in a school in which every child matters.

Children in the Early Years Unit make good progress because of effective teaching and care by the staff. They make particularly good progress in their personal, social and emotional development and their physical development. When they join Year 1, their standards are below those expected for their ages, especially in literacy and calculating skills. Pupils' achievement is good during Key Stages 1 and 2. The teachers and teaching assistants use effective strategies to support the learning of the very large majority of pupils with English as an additional language. However, because of variations in the quality of teaching and assessment, pupils' achievement is not consistently good in all classes for reading, writing, mathematics and science. This year, a good range of improvements have been made to these elements of assessment, teaching and lesson-planning. However, they are not yet fully established as part of the daily practice in each class. Despite these inconsistencies, pupils' standards are rising in both key stages. Pupils who need extra help with their learning make good progress because support is well matched to their needs by both teachers and teaching assistants. On occasions, more-able pupils do not make sufficient progress as the work does not provide them with enough challenge.

Teaching and learning are good. The quality of lessons ranges from satisfactory to outstanding. The best lessons have several common strengths such as clear learning objectives that the pupils understand and the use of interactive whiteboards to provide stimulating learning resources. However, there are some inconsistencies in the quality of marking to help pupils identify their next steps of learning. Also, adults' expectations are not always sufficiently high about the quality of pupils' handwriting and presentation of their work. The broad curriculum gives a focus on the key skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT). In addition, there is outstanding enrichment through the wide range of clubs, visits and visitors, which pupils enjoy immensely. There is excellent provision for the creative arts and pupils reach high standards in music and art and design, reflecting the school's Artsmark Gold award.

Adults provide pupils with care and support of an outstanding quality. There is excellent support for vulnerable pupils. The school takes excellent steps to involve parents in its life and in supporting their children's education. There are clear systems for tracking and reviewing the progress of each pupil, and taking action to follow up any underachievement. Although these systems are helping to raise pupils' standards, they are not yet being used to best effect throughout the school. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. They behave very well. Their excellent understanding of healthy living reflects the school's Activemark and Nutrition Silver awards. They feel safe and know how to stay safe at all times, for instance when using the internet. Pupils make good contributions to the school's community through, for example, the school and class councils. Effective collaboration with staff at the

local mosque has helped improve pupils' attendance, which is now above average when compared with similar schools. Pupils are satisfactorily prepared for their future economic well-being because of their good personal development and average key skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT.

Governance is good. Governors are holding the school to account for the quality of education it provides. This year, several senior staff have been absent for a number of months, and there have not always been other staff ready to deputise by taking on their responsibilities. The school has minimised this disadvantage by effective collaboration with the local authority for support with teaching English, improving assessment and developing the skills of middle managers. The work of senior leaders is improving and has some important strengths. The school makes a good contribution to community cohesion.

## **Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

The staff are skilled in structuring learning and play activities to engage all children, including those at an early stage of learning English. Staff intervene sensitively in learning activities to support and extend children's learning. By the end of the Reception Year, children's personal, social and emotional development is at the expected level because of the good relationships between adults and children. Adults value children's contributions to activities. Lunchtimes are used particularly well to develop children's social skills and self-confidence, and to help them make healthy eating choices. Children have particularly good opportunities for physical development both indoors and outside. They have a growing awareness of how to stay safe, for example when using scissors or riding bikes.

There is a good emphasis on developing children's speaking and listening skills. However, there are insufficient opportunities for imaginative role play. Staff training has improved the teaching of reading and early letter and word sounds (phonics) and, as a result, children's enjoyment of reading and stories has increased. More-able Reception children are starting to read and write independently.

The well-planned curriculum is modified effectively to meet the needs of those who require extra support with their play and learning. The curriculum provides a good balance of child-initiated and adult-directed activities, and between learning indoors and outside. There are good systems to assess children's progress. Children are increasingly aware of what they need to achieve in different activities. However, target-setting is not used well enough to ensure that activities meet the needs of the more-able Reception children. The good leadership includes checking and challenging staff so that agreed teaching and assessment methods are implemented consistently.

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

- Secure good or better planning, assessment and teaching in each class so that all pupils make consistently good progress as they move through the school.
- Produce a strategic plan for staff development to ensure continuity of effective leadership in the future, including subject leadership.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

When pupils join Year 1, their standards are below those expected for their ages in most areas of learning. During Key Stage 1 pupils make good progress. During the current year, their standards are rising in reading, writing and mathematics but are still below average at the end of Year 2. Standards at the end of Year 6 are lower in English than in mathematics and science. Most pupils are confident and fluent in speaking and many read well. They write for different purposes and varied audiences, and have a good range of descriptive vocabulary. However, weaknesses in the quality of handwriting and accuracy in spelling limit the achievement of a significant minority. Pupils who join the school during the school year are quickly assessed and then given targeted teaching by support teachers and teaching assistants. As a result, they make good progress. Challenging targets are helping to raise standards but there is not yet an established pattern of rising standards.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils understand and share the school's values, including respect for others and a commitment to racial equality. They were thoughtful during an assembly that was part of a sequence about what is valuable in life, using stories from different faiths. Pupils identify things in the wider world that they consider wrong or unfair. They relate well to adults and each other, and work effectively in groups. They report that isolated incidents of bullying are quickly resolved by staff. Their spiritual development is enhanced through the high-quality provision in art, music, drama and opera. For example, Year 5 pupils saw an opera before writing and performing their own excellent opera. Pupils produce high-quality work in art and design using an exceptionally wide range of media. In a Year 1 lesson pupils showed good skills of independent learning, but these skills are underdeveloped in too many lessons.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

In the best lessons imaginative and practical activities capture pupils' interest and generate sustained concentration. Pupils are challenged to think for themselves. Tasks are well matched to pupils' differing learning needs. Support staff help pupils learn in all parts of lessons, using community languages where necessary. In a lesson where pupils' learning was outstanding, they watched a short, silent cartoon before writing a dialogue between two of the characters. Pupils of different abilities were given levels of support that enabled them all to succeed with this challenging, motivating work. During lessons teachers support any pupils who are facing difficulties with their learning but are less effective at checking that more-able pupils are sufficiently challenged. Some marking gives pupils clear advice about how to improve their work, but this good practice is not consistent across the school.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is well matched to pupils' needs and interests. Collaboration with the local authority is helping to improve the English curriculum. Subjects are linked together to create

interesting topics. ICT is used effectively to support pupils' learning in other subjects such as science, art and English. Links with local secondary schools, the BBC, the National Theatre and an accountancy and law firm extend pupils' learning opportunities. There is specialist teaching of music, physical education and art and design which contributes to high standards. The school's wide range of clubs include golf, knitting and fencing. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have the opportunity of a residential visit during which they learn about other communities in Britain.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Staff know the pupils and their families well. The learning mentor's work provides outstanding support for pupils facing difficulties with their academic and personal development. The family liaison worker leads staff who involve parents in a wide range of activities that increase parental support for their children's education and strengthen the school community. For example, about 50 parents have attended a 'strengthening families' course and many parents and their children join visits to places such as Hastings to support out-of-school learning. Procedures for safeguarding pupils are in place and meet requirements. The necessary health and safety audits are carried out. Although there are clear systems for tracking and reviewing the progress of each pupil, these systems are not fully embedded. As a result, they are not yet consistently effective in raising standards in all classes.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

There is a good range of monitoring and evaluation activities that involve both senior and middle leaders. The school knows its strengths and weaknesses. The good, well-structured, raising attainment plan is helping the school to remedy any weaknesses and improve teaching and pupils' rates of progress. At the heart of the school is practical action to ensure that all pupils benefit from the education it provides. For example, staff expertise, teaching methods and the broad curriculum promote the learning of pupils with English as an additional language. There is excellent collaboration with other organisations and services to help remove barriers to pupils' learning. Community cohesion is good. The school knows the needs of the local community well and ensures all groups of parents are fully involved. However, as the school has recognised, pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to work with pupils from different ethnic and faith backgrounds. Governors benefit from the evaluative reports they receive from the school improvement partner. The school has a good capacity for further improvement because of its track record of improvement this year, the developing strengths of senior and middle leaders and the excellent partnership with parents and the other organisations, including the local authority.

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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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

### 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/or disabilities make progress	2

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<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.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
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	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

## The quality of provision

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

## 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	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

23 June 2009

Dear Pupils

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

We really enjoyed visiting your school and meeting many of you and the staff. Thank you for making us so welcome. We were impressed by your politeness and self-confidence. It was good to hear from you that you feel safe at school, enjoy the interesting activities and visits, and are well prepared for your transfer to secondary schools. The school council made clear to us how it is helping the school to improve. You are really good at coming to school regularly and this contributes to your good learning. We were most impressed by your work in art and design, and really enjoyed seeing the video of the Year 5 pupils' opera.

The school provides you with a good education. By the end of Year 6 your standards are average in English, mathematics and science. However, your standards are a little lower in English than in the other subjects. Some of you can help raise your English standards by improving the quality of your handwriting and the accuracy of your spelling.

Your lessons are often good but are sometimes just satisfactory. In the best lessons work is planned so that all of you learn well regardless of your ability. The best marking of your work makes it clear to you how you can improve. We have asked the school to make sure that all of your lessons are at least good so that you can learn well all the time. The school gives you some really interesting things to learn. The staff are good at helping you develop as people. You behave well and are keen to learn. All adults take a great deal of care of all of you. The teachers and other staff are exceptionally good at involving your parents in the life of the school. We enjoyed seeing many of you read with your parents in the Early Years Unit and Key Stage 1 classes.

Your headteacher and the staff work hard to give you the best possible education at Bigland Green. This year some staff have been absent for several months, but there were not always other staff ready to take over their leadership roles. We have asked the school to plan so this does not happen in future.

You can all help your school to improve by continuing to behave so well and keeping up your good attendance. Also, you can help by thinking carefully about how you can improve your work.

Yours faithfully

Michael Milton

Lead Inspector