

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Blue Gate Fields Infants' School

King David Lane, Stepney, London E1 0EH

Inspection dates:

8 and 9 October 2024

Outcome

Blue Gate Fields Infants' School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils flourish at this happy school. The school has created an atmosphere where pupils 'learn, grow and achieve' together. Pupils enjoy coming to school because they have kind friends to play with. Relationships between adults and pupils are built on trust. Pupils are confident that, if they have any concerns, staff will listen and help them. This helps pupils to feel safe.

The school has high expectations of pupils. Pupils behave well and show positive attitudes to their learning. They achieve well across a range of subjects.

There are a variety of opportunities for pupils to take on roles of responsibility. For example, playground buddies promote kindness by 'looking out' for pupils who might need someone to play with.

The school provides a well-planned programme of enrichment. Through educational visits, pupils explore the local area and famous landmarks linked to what they learn in class. Pupils spoke with delight about their recent trip to see Big Ben and Buckingham Palace.

Pupils are taught about faiths and cultures that may be different to their own. They learn the importance of treating everyone equally. For example, pupils in Year 2 respectfully explain what they have been taught about Judaism and why the Torah is important.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Reading is at the heart of the curriculum. Children are taught to read as soon as they join the Reception Year. This is because the school wants all pupils to read with confidence. Pupils are read aloud to daily. They talk about their favourite stories with enthusiasm. In

the Nursery, children are taught to identify sounds that they can hear in the environment. This prepares them well for learning phonics in the Reception classes.

Staff have been trained to deliver the phonics programme effectively. Books are carefully matched to the sounds that pupils know. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), read with developing fluency. Pupils are given regular opportunities to revise the sounds that they have been taught. This typically helps teaching staff to identify and support any pupils who need help to catch up.

The curriculum here is ambitious. The school has identified the knowledge and skills that pupils need to learn over time. For example, children in early years can confidently make amounts up to five. This is because they know what each number represents. Pupils in Year 2 identify how animals are suited to specific environments because they have previously been taught about different habitats.

The teaching of vocabulary is a priority here. In the specially resourced provision for pupils with SEND (specially resourced provision), pupils are taught to use vocabulary they need in different subjects. However, on occasions in early years, some teaching does not model important vocabulary or sentence structures that the school wants children to hear and practise. When this is the case, some children miss out on meaningful opportunities to hear and use key vocabulary.

Teachers have good subject knowledge and present information clearly. For instance, they use visuals to help pupils to deepen their understanding of actions and consequences. However, sometimes teaching does not check what pupils know sufficiently well. This means that some pupils have gaps in their learning and, on occasions, are not ready to learn new content.

Pupils with SEND are identified accurately and quickly. Most of these pupils access the same learning as their peers. The school works effectively with a range of external professionals. These experts provide a range of training for staff. The curriculum in the specially resourced provision meets the needs of pupils through an individualised programme of learning. This helps these pupils to achieve well.

Pupils are motivated to learn. The curriculum is taught without any interruption. This is because routines are firmly established, which starts from early years.

Attendance remains a priority. The school puts in place appropriate strategies and support for pupils and families so that attendance improves. However, despite the school's best efforts, the number of pupils who are persistently absent is still high.

The school places pupils' wider development at the core of what it does. Pupils learn about rights. They explain the importance of the right to be safe and to have an education, for example.

Pupils have been taught how to keep safe online. They know why it is important not to share passwords and how to safely search for information online. Pupils learn about positive relationships and consent in an age-appropriate manner.

Staff feel valued here. There are a range of initiatives in place to reduce workload and support well-being. The governing body and leaders work together effectively. They identify the right priorities and take appropriate actions so that the school continues to improve.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Sometimes, the checking of what pupils know and understand is not as effective as it could be. Consequently, some pupils have gaps in their learning. The school should ensure that teaching checks pupils' knowledge and understanding swiftly and accurately so that all pupils achieve well.
- On occasions, in early years, some teaching and support do not model key vocabulary or extend children's sentence structure well enough. This means that some children miss out on opportunities to hear key vocabulary and to practise using it. The school should ensure that children acquire the vocabulary that they need for future learning.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024 graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good for overall effectiveness in June 2019.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	100915
Local authority	Tower Hamlets
Inspection number	10345700
Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	336
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Robert Oakley
Headteacher	Catherine Jones
Website	www.bluegatefieldsinfant.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	11 June 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.
- There is a specially resourced provision for 12 pupils with SEND with a diagnosis of autism. There are currently 12 pupils attending this provision.
- The school operates a breakfast and after-school club.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector held meetings with the senior leadership team to discuss school development.
- The inspector met with the governing body and with the school improvement partner.

- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- The inspector scrutinised a wide range of documents, including those related to pupils' wider development and behaviour and attendance. The inspector also met with groups of staff and pupils to discuss these aspects of the school's work.
- The inspector visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The views of parents and carers and staff were also considered, including through Ofsted's online surveys.

Inspection team

Deborah Walters, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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