



Bonner Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 100891
Local Authority Tower Hamlets
Inspection number 285910
Inspection date 30 January 2007
Reporting inspector Nick Butt

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Stainsbury Street
School category	Community		London
Age range of pupils	4-11		E2 0NF
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	020 8980 1004
Number on roll (school)	417	Fax number	020 8981 2713
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr A Ball
		Headteacher	Mr M Tune
Date of previous school inspection	4 March 2002		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This larger-than-average school moved into a new building in September 2006. It serves an inner-city area that contains much overcrowded accommodation. Four out of five pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds, by far the largest group being of Bangladeshi origin. A very large number of pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is very high. The school has won awards for high standards and for the way it teaches basic skills. For ten years it has been part of a successful Education Action Zone (EAZ), which has recently become a charity to sustain it when funding ceases in 2008.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This excellent school provides an outstanding education for its pupils. The key to its success is the dynamic and incisive leadership of the headteacher, who is supported by an extremely effective leadership team. Together, they have created a culture in which children believe in themselves and have the motivation to do their very best. Standards are consistently and exceptionally high year after year. The achievement of pupils is outstanding. A combination of extremely effective teaching and a rich and diverse curriculum ensures that pupils make very rapid progress. As the headteacher put it, 'The more excitement and interest you bring into the school, the better the day-to-day learning.'

Pupils love attending school. They thoroughly enjoy their lessons and have excellent attitudes to learning. They behave extremely well and support one another whenever they can. A pupil said, 'If someone's stuck we can always help them.' Attendance, which was in need of improvement at the last inspection, is now above average. Pupils don't want to miss a thing. In particular, they look forward to their enrichment afternoon, when they take part in courses in mixed age groups to study a wide range of topics. Pupils know all about living healthily, and the school council makes an important contribution to school decisions. Pupils feel safe and well cared for. They know they will receive help if they have a problem. The school gives them a love of learning and the skills they need to do well at high school.

The teaching and learning are outstanding. Teachers have very high expectations of pupils. Pupils are encouraged to think for themselves. The lessons are stimulating and fun, and carefully planned to challenge pupils to get the most out of their learning. Excellent use is made of assessment data, so that teachers know exactly what pupils need to learn next. They set demanding targets, which pupils meet and often exceed. Outstanding provision in the Reception classes makes sure that children get off to a flying start. Their natural curiosity is fired up by an excellent range of activities to develop their early reading and writing skills.

The leadership team know their school extremely well as a result of meticulous monitoring. They are constantly seeking to do even better, and are conservative in their own estimation of their achievements. Teachers are full of praise for the way the school is led and managed. One said, 'It's a lovely place to work - you feel very respected here.' The governors are extremely effective at carrying out their duties. They support, but also question the work of the school. They helped the leadership team steer through a complicated building project to its successful conclusion, without it affecting the school's performance in any way. At present there is limited playground space, although there are plans to develop the site of the old school as an additional play area.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the outdoor area to provide sufficient playground space for all the pupils.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

The achievement of pupils is outstanding. Standards are exceptionally high. This is all the more remarkable considering that pupils enter the Reception classes with abilities that are well below those expected. It is because of consistently high quality teaching, and an exciting and extremely well-adapted curriculum, that pupils learn so quickly. One new parent wrote, 'I am so surprised to see that my child's reading and writing skills have improved so much in three weeks.' Pupils' progress is kept under constant review, and they are often taught basic skills systematically when grouped according to ability, in small numbers. Pupils at risk of not meeting their potential are identified extremely quickly and appropriate support put in place. As a result, very few pupils are listed as having learning difficulties. All groups of pupils do exceedingly well, including those whose first language is not English. The headteacher analyses their progress in great detail, presenting class teachers with regular reports, which complement their own assessments. The school is always among the top five per cent of schools nationally for the value it adds to pupils' learning.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The personal development and well-being of pupils, along with their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are outstanding. They become hungry to learn and excited about what the future holds. They work together harmoniously, respecting their different cultures. They celebrate one another's festivals and regularly visit places of worship of world faiths. Pupils understand the benefits of healthy lifestyles. Discussing a proposed breakfast club, one said 'At least that way they get some breakfast and can concentrate properly.' They distinguish between 'bullying', which they don't experience, and 'silliness' which they occasionally do. The school council has consulted pupils about designs for the new play space and has seen their ideas included. One member commented, 'We hold meetings to decide if we're going to do something new.' Pupils get involved in many projects in the community and with other schools, including a performance at the Guildhall School of Music. The EAZ has enabled pupils to work closely with their secondary school, and supports them as they move on. They leave the school as confident, well-rounded individuals, with exceptionally good basic skills and a strong desire to succeed.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Teaching consistently excites and motivates pupils, so that their learning accelerates. The highly structured scheme for teaching reading and writing skills enables pupils who previously struggled to make very rapid progress in their small groups. In Years

3 to 6, ability groupings make it easier for teachers to tailor the work precisely to meet pupils' needs. Pupils are encouraged to talk about their learning and to make links in their understanding. In a particularly effective mathematics lesson, Year 3 pupils gave different ways that they had worked the same sum out in their heads. The discussion that ensued helped them to make excellent gains in their understanding about place value. Support staff make a very valuable contribution to pupils' learning, working with groups and individuals. Teachers use a wide range of methods to make lessons exciting, including asking pupils to discuss ideas in pairs, and working interactively with new technology. Specialist music and sports teaching is of a very high quality, and contributes considerably to pupils' enjoyment of school.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is outstanding. This is because the school opens up for pupils a world of possibilities, and widens their vision. Activities are carefully planned to be relevant and to extend learning. Consequently, pupils excel both academically and in their personal development. The level of enrichment is superb, both through educational visits and visitors, but also through the many courses that are run to give pupils a real appetite for knowledge. In one afternoon session, groups were tasting Spanish food, practising French conversation, using laptop computers to make willow patterns, making model mountains out of polystyrene, making jungle collages, learning contemporary dance and producing 3D mathematical models. At the same time people from the zoo were showing pupils an extremely large snake! As one child put it, 'You learn something new that you haven't learnt before.' Pupils also experience regular contact with the world of work through visiting a local law firm, which sends volunteers to hear readers and to help with mathematics.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The care, guidance and support of pupils are outstanding. The staff are totally committed to the pupils, and are determined to do all they can for them both pastorally and academically. Pupils have a tremendous sense of achievement in being helped to overcome something they were finding difficult. A pupil said, 'I've really improved and I understand lots of things now.' Excellent procedures are in place to meet the needs of pupils with learning difficulties. These pupils draw pictures to illustrate the targets from their individual education plans and then display the pictures, to help remind them what they are aiming for. Parents are extremely supportive and appreciative of the school. One said, 'We have always been struck by the caring ethos which seems to run through all aspects of the school.' Pupils receive outstanding support and guidance in their studies, based on teachers' excellent knowledge of their abilities and what they need to learn next. Consequently, almost all pupils make outstanding progress and attain at least the nationally expected levels in tests.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The leadership and management of the school are outstanding. Excellent leadership by the headteacher gives confidence to pupils, parents and staff alike. His passion is that all individuals achieve their full potential and he is determined to see that they do so, irrespective of their starting points. The fact that this is an inner city school facing very difficult challenges and barriers to learning makes this achievement all the greater. Pupils often make phenomenal progress as they realise they can learn. The leadership team and the curriculum team ensure that provision is of the highest quality, and review their practice to see how they can make things even better. This was why they introduced a new scheme for teaching basic skills in reading and writing, which has proven so successful for those pupils at risk of falling behind. Parents and pupils are very proud of their school, and feel fully included in the decisions that are made, for example about a new uniform. One parent commented, 'Pupils' and parents' views on school policy/plans have been genuinely sought (for instance over the new playground).' The governing body is extremely effective as a critical friend to the school. In view of its remarkable track record, and the strength of its leadership team, the school's capacity to improve is outstanding.

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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?	1
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

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 behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	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	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1
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

¹ 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.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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

Thank you very much for making me so welcome at your school. I did enjoy my visit. Your school is outstanding, and you are right to be extremely proud of it. These are some of the special things about it.

- You make excellent progress and reach high standards.
- Your behaviour is outstanding and you look after one another very well.
- The lessons are of a very high quality. Teachers make them exciting and fun.
- You have lots of interesting things to do, especially on your enrichment afternoons.
- The school cares for you extremely well, and helps you to do better in your work.
- There is excellent leadership from the headteacher and his team.

Your new building is a great improvement, and I know you enjoy having more space. The only thing that needs to be done now is to increase the playground area so that you have enough room outside. It is good that you have had a say in how this should look, and that your ideas have been taken on board.

Thank you once again for telling me about your school. My best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely,

Nick ButtLead inspector