

# Blue Gate Fields Infants' School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	100915
<b>Local Authority</b>	Tower Hamlets
<b>Inspection number</b>	285919
<b>Inspection dates</b>	4–5 July 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Arnalena (Nina) Bee

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>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	352
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Dr A Rahi
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ms J Atkins
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	20 May 2002
<b>School address</b>	King David Lane London E1 0EH
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 7790 3611
<b>Fax number</b>	020 7780 9105

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<b>Age group</b>	3–7
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Blue Gate Fields is above average in size. Most pupils are from Bangladeshi backgrounds although a few other ethnic groups are represented. Almost all pupils speak English as their second language. When children enter school the number who are at the early stages of learning English is high. The proportion of pupils identified with learning difficulties and disabilities is above average. There has been a high turnover of staff in the last two years.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Blue Gate Fields provides a good education for its pupils and has some outstanding elements. Pupils have excellent attitudes to their work and behave extremely well. Relationships are outstanding and pupils thoroughly enjoy all that the school offers them. Attendance has improved. The school does its best to encourage parents to send their children to school regularly. As a result, pupils very proudly accept the good attendance certificates they are awarded in assemblies. Pupils develop exemplary personal and social skills. They work very well together in groups as they learn the skills needed to work in teams. This, and the above average standards they acquire by the time they leave in Year 2, prepare them very well for their next stage of learning.

Standards are the highest they have been for a long time. Achievement, although good overall, is very good in Years 1 and 2 because of particularly good teaching. Teaching and learning are good. Where teaching and learning are best, teachers have very high expectations of pupils to get on with what they have to do. In addition, when teachers ask questions to reinforce and develop understanding, they check that all pupils are involved. Provision in the Foundation Stage is good. The curriculum for these children is good and supports all areas of learning well. The way teachers use the attractively designed outside area to develop skills and knowledge is outstanding. However, some teaching is satisfactory because the children are not always consistently challenged.

The good quality curriculum provides educational visits that effectively extend pupils' knowledge beyond the school environment. An exciting choice of out of school clubs is offered, as well as a range of visitors, who add further excitement to learning. Pupils really appreciate and talk very enthusiastically about these opportunities they are given. Care, guidance and support are good overall. The pastoral care given to pupils is outstanding as is the way the school supports their parents. It is not surprising that pupils feel safe and secure in school and develop very positive attitudes to learning or that their parents are overwhelmingly supportive of all the school does. Academic support is satisfactory but is not quite as strong as the personal support pupils receive. Targets are given for literacy and numeracy but they are not always used effectively in helping pupils to improve. There is some good marking but it is inconsistent.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher has a very clear vision for the school and is passionate about raising achievement and pupils' enjoyment in learning. She is well supported by her senior staff. As a team, they rigorously analyse the quality of teaching and learning and use data about progress and pupils' work to support their judgements. A recent high turnover of staff has resulted in many subject leaders being new to the job. Because of this, they are not yet in a position to evaluate the achievement and standards in their subject areas with sufficient accuracy.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Improve teachers' marking of pupils' work so that it links more with their targets and consistently informs them what they need to do to improve.
- Develop the role of the newly appointed subject leaders so that they are fully aware of the achievement and standards in their subject areas.
- Continue to develop teaching and learning, particularly for the younger children, so that all pupils consistently receive lessons that are good or outstanding.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Following a trend of average standards for a number of years, standards improved in 2006 and have improved further in 2007. Standards at the end of Year 2 are above average. Achievement is good overall. It is very good in Years 1 and 2 because pupils in these classes have been consistently well taught. Throughout the school pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities and those who are learning to speak English generally achieve as well as their classmates.

In the Nursery and Reception classes the children get off to a good start and generally achieve well. Children enter the Nursery with levels of attainment that are below average, particularly in language and communication skills because of their lack of familiarity with the English language. Despite this, school data show that just over half of the children reach the expected levels by the end of Reception. However, Foundation Stage teaching is not always effective and, at times, a few children do not receive enough challenge and could achieve more.

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

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils' personal development, well-being and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are outstanding. Pupils are extremely polite and respectful towards each other, the adults who help them and people who visit the school. Everyone gets on very well with each other. Pupils in Year 1 were seen competently reading to each other. Whilst pretending to be teachers, they confidently challenged each other's understanding of the text. Pupils have an excellent awareness of the need to eat healthily and keep themselves fit. They fully engage in the 'Fit in Five' daily exercise activities. Pupils say that they feel safe at school and any incidents are swiftly dealt with. They have an outstanding awareness of the need to stay safe at all times. For example, pupils spoke maturely about road and fire safety and very enthusiastically about the day a fire officer came in and talked to them. Pupils contribute well to the school community and are given interesting jobs of responsibility such as watering the flowerbeds. Although they collect money for charities their contribution to the local and wider community is not as strong and the school acknowledges this.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching and learning are good overall. In Years 1 and 2, teaching is consistently good and underpinned by lessons that move at a fast pace and pupils who are actively engaged in their activities at all times. Throughout the school, relationships are outstanding between adults and pupils. Lessons are managed effectively and pupils are given excellent opportunities to consolidate and reinforce skills previously taught. Assessment information is used accurately to match tasks to pupils' needs.

Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good overall and results in children learning well. Activities are generally well planned and very effectively resourced. As a result, in most instances the children are very keen and eager to select them. Occasionally, this is not so, and the children do not always visit more challenging activities that promote reading and writing. This is because adults miss the opportunity to remind the children of what they have to do when they select

these activities. At times, teachers talk for too long. On these occasions a very small minority of children have difficulty concentrating.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is good. The strong emphasis on language development has helped to raise standards in reading and writing although the school acknowledges there is still work to be done in extending opportunities to write in different ways. In Key Stage 1, work is generally well matched to meet the needs of all pupils, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities, and those who are learning to speak English, enabling them to make the same good progress as everyone else. While there continues to be a strong emphasis on literacy and numeracy, the school has reviewed its practice following the previous inspection. Links between subjects have been identified and a broader and more balanced curriculum has evolved. Provision is good in the Foundation Stage. There is a good balance of indoor and outdoor activities that motivate children to learn well. Very good systems enable these young children, in Nursery and Reception classes, to make a smooth transfer from one class to another.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Care, guidance and support are good. This is a highly inclusive school where pupils say they feel safe and know that if they have a problem an adult will help them. Child protection and health and safety procedures are fully in place. Good links have been forged with support agencies to help provide for the specific needs of some pupils. Parents are kept well informed about the progress made by children. Staff are well deployed to meet the needs of all pupils, including those who are learning to speak English. Pupils' progress is tracked well throughout the school although aspects related to setting targets and the marking of work are not so strong. At times, a few pupils, including those with learning difficulties could achieve more if they were better informed with regard to what they needed to do to improve.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Almost all parents say that the school is well led and managed. The headteacher's drive and commitment inspire the senior leadership team, who speak enthusiastically about next steps for improvement. Leadership responsibilities are distributed wisely within the senior leadership team, and this enables them to take on key tasks such as leading termly meetings with individual staff about pupils' progress. This results in a strong knowledge and understanding of pupils' achievement however the newly appointed subject co-ordinators have not yet sufficiently developed an awareness of achievement and standards in their subjects.

The performance management process for staff has been recently reviewed to ensure that whole school targets take into account staff's level of expertise. Consequently, staff are supported and also challenged at their level. Improvement since the school was inspected last is good. School self-evaluation reveals an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. As a result, they make informed decisions about priorities for further improvement. In light of this, the school's capacity to make further improvements is good. Governance is satisfactory. Expertise within the governing body is varied. Some governors have

a good knowledge of school's priorities and areas for development. New governors are less able to challenge or support the school effectively.

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## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

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

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

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2
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

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	3
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	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

### The quality of provision

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

<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 performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	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	3
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

13 July 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Blue Gate Fields Infants' School, London, E1 0EH

Thank you for making our visit to your lovely school so enjoyable. We were very impressed with how hard you work and how much you like coming to school. We think you are all making good progress and those who look after you are home agree. You go to a good school.

I am writing to let you know what we like best about your school.

- We think teaching is good and that your teachers plan very interesting activities that help you learn well.
- In Years 1 and 2 your progress is very good because you are taught particularly well.
- Behaviour is excellent and you are polite and kind to each other.
- We think you are very well looked after and cared for when you are at school.
- By the time you leave school in Year 2, you reach standards that are higher than usually found among seven year olds.
- When we talked to you, we thought you had a very good idea of why you need to keep yourselves safe, eat healthily and keep fit.
- We think the school is well led and managed.

We have asked the school to do three things to make it even better.

- Make sure that teaching is good in all lessons in the nursery and reception.
- Make sure that teachers remind you more often of what your targets are and clearly show you what you need to improve when they mark your work.
- Check that the new teachers are familiar with how well you are doing in the subjects they look after.

Keep working hard and enjoying your time in school.

Best wishes

Nina BeeLead inspector