

# Tollgate Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	102749
<b>Local Authority</b>	Newham
<b>Inspection number</b>	308107
<b>Inspection dates</b>	18–19 March 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Judith Dawson

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	461
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Ms Ellen Doran
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Tom Canning
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	6 October 2003
<b>School address</b>	Barclay Road Plaistow London E13 8SA
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 7476 1848
<b>Fax number</b>	020 7511 4221

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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This large primary school serves a diverse community with over 80% of pupils coming from minority ethnic groups, the majority of whom have English as an additional language. Over 30% of the school population are at the early stages of English language acquisition. Over twice the national average of pupils are entitled to free school meals and over 30% of pupils join or leave the school other than at the usual time, considerably more than average. The school has specialist provision for pupils with Autistic Spectrum Disorders (ASD) so there are more pupils than average with statements of special educational needs. The school has received accreditation from the National Autistic Society. It also holds many other awards including the DfES International School Award. The school has a Children's Centre, which is not included in this inspection.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

Tollgate Primary School is outstanding. Several years ago, there were aspects of the school's work that needed substantial improvement. Since then the school has moved from strength to strength under the inspirational leadership of the headteacher. He has generated a high quality leadership team and staff that are united in their desire to do the very best for the children and pupils in their care. The impressive systems for tracking pupils' progress throughout the school enable the leadership team to spot any underachievement. Rigorous monitoring of teaching, learning and the curriculum ensures pupils have the best possible provision. This is an extremely inclusive school where everyone is valued and pupils receive exemplary care. Pupils' attitudes to work, their behaviour and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are outstanding. They love their school and relish the opportunities it gives them. Parents are justifiably lavish in their praise. One remarked 'Tollgate Primary School is a very special place.'

Although children join the Nursery with generally low levels of knowledge and skills, by the end of Year 6 standards are above average. This demonstrates outstanding achievement, putting the school amongst the highest achieving schools in the country. Pupils in the early stages of English language acquisition make similarly rapid progress due to the very effective support they receive. Pupils with ASD are integrated into mainstream classes but have access to calm and quiet areas to enable them to focus. They too make the best possible progress. Although the quality of individual lessons varies, teaching and learning overall are outstanding. This is because of the excellent systems in place to ensure teachers plan their lessons to meet the needs of the range of pupils in their care. They have high expectations of their pupils' work and behaviour and make learning interesting and exciting. Teachers give wise advice when they mark pupils' work. However, the impact is limited when they do not make sure pupils take their advice or correct their work.

Pupils have many opportunities to use their good literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills throughout the rich and stimulating curriculum. This, and their many opportunities for taking responsibility within school and beyond, prepares them very effectively for their futures. Excellent links with parents, visiting teachers and other professionals, including business partnerships put the school at the heart of the community. Pupils have been very active in influencing changes in the environment through the 'We are what we do' project. Strong links with other schools across the world, especially Green Village School in Bangladesh, to quote a parent, 'promote global citizenship very well'. This is a school where every child matters and has opportunities to excel.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 1

Children make excellent progress throughout the Foundation Stage. Although they have generally low levels of knowledge and skills when they join the Nursery, most reach the expected levels by the time they move into Year 1. Children are taught the skills they need extremely effectively. In one lesson, for example, naughty 'Farmer Duck' (the teacher) taught the children how to read and write a new letter. Children are unlikely to forget this lesson because it was such fun. Adults work together very effectively and know the children in their care extremely well, keeping comprehensive records of their progress. These are used to plan each child's next steps in learning and to identify any who need additional academic or pastoral support. Children in the early stages of learning English receive exemplary support and have full access to the

curriculum. The learning environment has been notably improved since the last inspection so children benefit from a well-balanced range of indoor and outdoor activities, firmly rooted in promoting relevant learning. There are very good links between home and school, and the recently established Children's Centre, helping to make children's learning seamless. Relationships are excellent throughout and children learn happily alongside each other, due to the outstanding care of all staff.

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

- Make sure that all teachers allow time for pupils to respond to the advice they give when marking their work.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils' outstanding achievement is a tribute to their excellent attitudes to work and very effective teaching. They make exceptional progress through the Foundation Stage and KS1 and now attain above average standards by the end of Year 2. The standards of pupils now in Year 6 are above average in English, mathematics and science with more pupils working at the higher levels than last year, although many of them had well below average standards when they were in Year 2. This is a significant achievement considering the high number of pupils, often with little or no English language, joining the school throughout each year and the impact of pupils with ASD. The school's swift response to address some underachievement of boys in 2006 has been very successful. Boys' achievements exceeded the girls in 2007. Similarly, concerns about writing, followed by adjustments to the provision, have resulted in higher standards at the end of Key Stage 1 and have reversed a dip in writing standards in the 2007 national tests for pupils in Year 6.

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

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils thoroughly enjoy coming to learn in such an interesting and stimulating environment. As a result, attendance is outstanding when compared with similar schools. Pupils respect and care for each other and empathise with others. In an outstanding drama session, all pupils 'became' the TNT factory workers in Silver Town during World War 1 and demonstrated their understanding of the moral and social issues involved very maturely. Pupils relish the wide range of responsibilities given to them. The School Council, for example, has been actively involved in improving school lunches. Pupils feel safe in school and say that the 'Peer Mediators' help them to sort out any problems they may have. They speak knowledgeably about healthy lifestyles and excel in many sporting activities. The girls' football team was very successful during the inspection, scoring 17 goals!

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 1**

Teachers in Tollgate Primary School are ambitious for their pupils. They make excellent use of the school's tracking systems to pinpoint what their pupils can do and what they need to learn next. Lessons have clear objectives to accommodate the different abilities within each class. These are shared with the pupils. Adults are sensitive to the way pupils learn and adapt their

methods to accommodate their needs. Therefore, pupils with ASD or other learning or social challenges, and those in the early stages of English language acquisition, are able to learn effectively alongside their peers. Gifted and talented pupils are fully challenged. A parent remarked, 'Both our children are exceeding their potential.' Excellent relationships ensure that pupils thoroughly enjoy their learning. They relish their targets for improvement and there are always new challenges when these have been achieved. Teachers give detailed written advice to their pupils when they mark their work. However, most pupils move on to their next piece of work without responding to this advice, missing opportunities to make the most of their strong desire to improve.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 1**

The outstanding curriculum has been skilfully adapted to meet pupils' needs. There is a strong commitment to pupils' personal development, celebrating diversity and cultural understanding. This is clearly reflected in the attractive displays and the 'Tollgate' song, composed by the pupils, who sing 'We all bring our own special gifts to the school.' Visits, visitors and extra-curricular activities enrich pupils' learning. High quality artwork, multi-language displays and many opportunities for music-making are integral to school life. The use of ICT within other subjects has notably improved since the last inspection. Lessons often involve pupils in using multiple skills. In an English lesson, for example, to support their history topic, pupils researched and wrote job descriptions for Greek philosophers. International links deepen pupils' understanding of many cultures and enhance their ICT skills. One pupil reports, 'My most favourite thing is the use of computers to communicate with our partners.'

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils feel safe and secure in this school because care, guidance and support are of the highest quality. There are very effective systems in place to provide for their welfare and protection and the school fully meets government requirements for safeguarding children. Well-established links with parents and outside agencies ensure that vulnerable pupils or those who have specific learning challenges receive the best possible care. Systems to ensure all pupils have access to the curriculum are outstanding. Pupils with ASD are helped to learn at their own levels and skilled staff enable them to integrate within mainstream classes as much as possible. The detailed tracking systems enable teachers to identify any dips in individual pupil's progress and arrange extra support. The sensory room and attractive gardens enhance pupils' emotional wellbeing. There is a strong ethos of wrap-around care at Tollgate Primary School.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 1**

One of the headteacher's strengths is his ability to empower other leaders and managers to take an active role in school improvement. The senior leadership team and subject leaders have a very clear understanding of the school's strengths. They are not resting on their laurels and are constantly seeking ways to make pupils' learning even better. Changes are swiftly evaluated for their impact. For example, the school tried teaching Years 5 and 6 in ability groups for English and mathematics but found that, as teachers are so good at matching work to pupils' needs, this was unnecessary. Leaders are seeking ways to enrich the curriculum even further

and to encourage pupils to take even more responsibility for their learning. The headteacher is committed to ensuring that the school remains at the heart of the community and is accessible to all who need it. There are strong links with industry. The school is extremely well resourced because of the vigilant seeking of additional financial and practical support. Governors are very effective, providing both support and challenge to the senior management team. The school's strong track record and the headteacher's skilful and sensitive talents in inspiring both staff and pupils to give of their best provide outstanding potential for future development.

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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
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	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

### Achievement and standards

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

<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>	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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

31 March 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Tollgate Primary School, London, E13 8SA

Thank you all very much for the very warm welcome you gave us when we visited your school. We were so impressed with your politeness, friendly smiles and your excellent behaviour. What impressed us especially was the way that you all work really hard and really enjoy your lessons. Well done. You and your parents told us how good your school is and how many extra things your teachers do to make your learning exciting and challenging. You also told us how well you are cared for and how all of you are helped to do the best you can. We agree with you. You have an outstanding school and have every right to be proud of everyone who is part of it. That means you as well!

One of the reasons your school is so good is because your teachers know exactly what you can do and what you need to learn next. This means they can plan lessons that are just right for each of you. This helps you make excellent progress. Those of you who need extra help with learning or who are learning to understand and speak English have plenty of help to make sure you learn as well as everybody else. All of you have plenty of challenge and we know that you enjoy working towards your targets. You take care of your books beautifully and your teachers give you plenty of wise advice when they mark your work. We noticed that many of you did not correct your work or show your teachers that you have understood what they have asked to you do to improve. We have asked them to make sure that they give you time to take their advice and correct your work. This will give you the chance to amaze your teachers when your next piece of work is even better!

Mr Canning is an excellent headteacher. He leads the school extremely well and everything he and the teachers plan is to help you all have the best education possible. He and all the adults in school make a great team. You have excellent teachers and plenty of links with other schools across the world as well as people closer to home in Plaistow. We are sure that there must be fewer plastic bags and more low energy light bulbs because of your efforts. One of you told us that the school is like one big family. We think it is too - and it is a family where everyone does his or her best. We all felt it was a privilege to be part of your school for two days. Thank you all and we wish you the very best for your future lives. You certainly have an excellent start.

Best wishes

Mrs Judy Dawson

Lead Inspector