

Bangabandhu Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100937
Local Authority	Tower Hamlets
Inspection number	323380
Inspection dates	4–5 March 2009
Reporting inspector	Usha Sahni HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 under pilot arrangements; it was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	466
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Carl Purcell
Headteacher	Mrs Susan Tring (acting)
Date of previous school inspection	28–29 November 2005
School address	Wessex Street London E2 0LB
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Introduction

This pilot inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two Additional Inspectors. The inspectors visited 17 lessons, and held meetings with staff, governors and pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at a wide range of documentation, including 142 responses to parental questionnaires.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following.

- How well does the school enable pupils to make good progress from low starting points and achieve well by the end of Key Stage 2?
- Why does the rate of progress made by pupils appear to slow down in Key Stage 1? How well is the school doing in tackling this issue?
- How good is the support for the more vulnerable pupils, particularly those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities; does it help them to achieve and enjoy their education?
- How effectively are the new leaders and managers, and the governing body, driving the necessary improvements?

Information about the school

Bangabandhu is situated in Bethnal Green, East London and serves in a diverse community. Over 90% of pupils are from minority ethnic groups, and almost as many are learning English as an additional language. Pupils from Bangladeshi families make up over three quarters of the school roll. Just over half the pupils are entitled to a free school meal.

The majority of pupils enter the nursery class in the Early Years Foundation Stage speaking little or no English. Their skills and abilities are generally much lower than expected for children of three years of age.

The school caters for up to 15 pupils with complex needs. A quarter of all pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities; this is a much higher proportion than the national average for primary schools.

The acting headteacher and her new, acting senior leadership team have been in post since January 2008.

Inspection judgements

Grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Overall effectiveness

2

Capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Bangabandhu is a good school that nurtures its pupils and helps them to succeed and achieve well. The pupils say they enjoy learning because 'teachers always make you feel good about yourself and respect everybody'. The very good relationships create a positive and secure learning environment for pupils, who concentrate well in lessons and persevere to give their best. Pupils appreciate the many chances to learn new skills and find out about other places, people and cultures by visiting museums and galleries and attending interesting out-of-school activities. The good school curriculum meets the pupils' needs and interests. The staff rightly take great pride in the pupils' positive attitudes to learning, their courteous and helpful behaviour towards each other, and their strong moral values that underpin their approach to resolving disagreements.

In their academic development, starting from a very low base, pupils make good progress over time because of their motivation to succeed and good teaching in most lessons. The strongest progress is made by pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage and by those at the end of the Key Stage 2. In 2008, an impressive 80% of the pupils attained Level 4 or above in English and Mathematics; this represents excellent progress from their low starting points in Key Stage 1. Progress slows in Key Stage 1, mainly because of weaker teaching in some lessons where the pace of lessons does not demand enough of pupils. Steps taken by the school to tackle some of these weaknesses are beginning to show a positive difference; this was evident in the better progress made by pupils in lessons observed during the inspection. Good teaching and strong personal support that meets their specific learning needs help pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to achieve well.

Children are prepared well in the nursery and reception classes and enter Year 1 feeling confident, and with very positive attitudes to their learning. By the end of Reception Year, although their attainment is below age expectations in some areas, they make good progress towards the early learning goals in many areas of learning, particularly in language, communication and literacy skills.

Although teaching is mostly good, a small proportion of lessons are no better than satisfactory. Consequently, the quality of learning is good overall but varies in lessons. Pupils apply themselves diligently to the activities that mostly engage their interest. The needs of the most vulnerable are met well by carefully crafted learning activities that provide just the right balance between stretching their understanding

and consolidating previous learning. The less-effective lessons are marked by insufficient opportunities for pupils to discuss and debate so that pupils can develop their thinking and understanding of the ideas and content being taught. The teaching, including teachers' use of language, in these lessons is not as well adapted to the pupils' learning and their progress on tasks. Therefore, pupils who are in the early stages of learning English are sometimes left behind.

The new, acting team of senior leaders has set itself an ambitious plan of action to achieve its priorities, which are based on an accurate self-evaluation of the school. High expectations of all the pupils and staff and a commitment to securing higher achievement for all are driving the leaders' and governors' collective efforts for further improvement. The senior leaders use information from a robust analysis of data to ensure that extra support is allocated to pupils who have fallen behind. They also carry out regular checks on the quality of teaching and work alongside teachers to help them to improve their practice. The school has acted effectively on the key issues identified at the last inspection. While the quality of marking has improved, it remains work in progress in the context of changes to the school's approach to assessment. Punctuality and attendance have improved, with a significant reduction in the proportion of pupils who persistently miss school. The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage has improved, and as a consequence pupils achieve well.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- By December 2009, improve teaching so it is of consistently good quality by making sure that all teachers are skilled at:
 - adapting their teaching in lessons to reflect pupils' responses and their progress on the tasks set for them
 - using language that acknowledges and develops the varying levels of fluency in English among pupils.

How good is the overall outcome for individuals and groups of pupils?

2

Pupils develop good learning habits and attitudes as they move through the school and achieve well by age 11. They value learning, are eager to do well and collaborate willingly to think and solve problems together. They enjoy engaging with an interesting range of activities in lessons, and say that learning is more fun when it involves practical work as in science and mathematics. They are keen to respond to teachers' questions and participate in discussions, making thoughtful contributions. They listen attentively and many are able to express their points of view clearly, and with confidence. In less-effective lessons, pupils are passive and work slowly, often not completing their written work.

The 2008 end of Key Stage 2 results show that pupils made outstanding progress from their starting points. Standards rose sharply and were a dramatic improvement on the 2007 results for all pupils, particularly the Bangladeshi pupils and White

British pupils. Almost half the pupils achieved a higher level in reading, and 80% achieved age-expected standards or better in English and Mathematics. Although rising from an exceptionally low level to broadly average in 2007, standards in 2008 fell at the end of Key Stage 1 in all subjects, with a steep decline in mathematics. Girls performed less well. The school's data and observation of pupils at work show that a number of initiatives are helping to close the gap and accelerate pupils' progress. Intensive personalised support ensures that pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including those with very complex needs, make consistently good progress from their starting points.

Pupils say they feel very safe in the school. They feel that any conflict or bullying, including racist behaviour, is dealt with promptly and to their satisfaction. 'It is so good to know there is someone there to help you talk about your feelings' is how one pupil described the impact of a very supportive environment created by this school. However, pupils' knowledge of issues that affect their personal safety as users of the internet, or when in the street outside of school gates, are not so strong.

The school encourages pupils to voice their ideas, and acts upon them. Pupils readily take up opportunities to influence decisions that impact on them, such as asking for the most popular clubs to be run twice, to enable participation of all who want to attend. Pupils help to promote an awareness of social issues such as the Eco Rangers' work on recycling and sustainable living. Although the pupils have opportunities to contribute through raising funds for charities and taking part in events out of school, they are less involved with their local communities.

Pupils are knowledgeable about health-related issues, particularly healthy eating. They participate enthusiastically in the 'fit in 5', a five-minute audio-visual exercise programme to liven up before lessons for improved concentration. They appreciate and enjoy the healthy food available to them at lunch time.

Pupils' good social, moral and spiritual development is evident in their friendships and their sensitive support for each other, particularly their very caring attitude towards their friends with complex needs. They take pride in who they are, and enjoy learning about other cultures through different subjects, most notably through arts and music.

Although pupils reach good levels of basic skills, they do not have sufficient opportunities to develop their enterprise skills or knowledge and understanding of the world of work.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and their progress	2
How well do pupils achieve and enjoy their learning?	2

¹ Grades for attainment are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; 4 is low

To what extent do pupils feel safe?	2
How well do pupils behave?	2
To what extent do pupils adopt healthy lifestyles?	2
To what extent do pupils contribute to the school and wider community?	3
Pupils' attendance	3
How well do pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	3
What is the extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development?	2

The quality of the school's work

The majority of lessons are good. At its best, teaching is exciting. Teachers' planning is detailed and builds well on what pupils know and what they can do. Use of subject-specific vocabulary is emphasised. Pupils are encouraged to meet specific success criteria in completing tasks within the lesson. The teachers' good subject knowledge and incisive questioning extend pupils' thinking, challenging them to pose questions and to learn from their mistakes.

Some variability in learning and progress is a consequence of weaker practice in some aspects of teaching. Inconsistent use of assessment of learning in day-to-day teaching and too much of teacher's talk that is too difficult for pupils to understand or does not develop their speaking skills in English means that some pupils make less progress. In these lessons, teachers try to fit the lesson plan to pupils and are not flexible enough to change their planned lesson or its pace to reflect pupils' response.

Marking and assessment have improved since the last inspection. Pupils mostly understand what they need to do to improve their work. Assessment and tracking by leaders are both accurate and frequent. This has enabled, for instance, current Year 6 targets to be revised to make them more challenging. Very good use is made of assessment data and tracking of pupils' progress to review pupil groups and provide timely and appropriate additional support. However, while some pupils know their targets and what they have to do to achieve these, this varies from class to class.

The learning and care needs of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are met very effectively by the extensive provision made by the teachers and teaching assistants working with external partners from health, social care and education services. Careful assessment and identification of precise needs helps the staff to plan detailed steps for learning for pupils with very specific needs, and contributes to their personal development.

The curriculum is kept under review to ensure that it engages pupils' interests, and maximises use of local resources. Theme weeks, a rich variety of links with arts organisations, museums and galleries, and a range of extra-curricular activities, provide opportunities for practical learning across different subjects; this is an aspect of the school's work much enjoyed and praised by the pupils.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

High quality teaching and purposeful learning	2
Effective assessment	2
An appropriate curriculum which meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, provision through partnership with other organisations	2
Support, guidance and care	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The acting headteacher and her newly constituted leadership team are clear about the most urgent priorities and have set about driving the necessary improvements with enthusiasm. As successful teachers themselves, the leaders have high credibility among the staff, pupils and parents. They have successfully focused staff attention on raising standards and achievement of all pupils as the driving force that must underpin all they do. This is most evident in the improvements that have been made in the quality of teaching overall and standards in writing.

Governors take a longer term view of the school's performance and its needs. This enables them to make an important contribution to ensuring that the school has good capacity to make continuous improvements in outcomes for its pupils.

Leaders at all levels regularly monitor the quality of teaching and learning. Their accurate judgements, and precise identification of the weaker aspects of teaching, are proving helpful in providing developmental feedback to teachers and improving teaching.

Robust systems, policies and procedures are in place to safeguard pupils. Arrangements to protect the most vulnerable pupils with complex needs are particularly strong.

Strong relationships with parents and carers make a significant contribution to the care and well-being of pupils; however, these good relationships are not fully utilised to engage parents and extend all pupils' learning both in school and at home. The parents of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are closely involved in decisions about their children's learning and well-being; Bangla-speaking support staff make an important contribution in this respect.

Bangabandhu is a very inclusive school that values diversity and promotes equality through the curriculum and respectful relationships between pupils, staff and families. Its positive ethos contributes strongly to community cohesion. As a member of a local partnership of primary and secondary schools, the school is working on a strategy to strengthen the partnership's contribution to promoting community cohesion in this very diverse local area.

Carefully planned staff deployment ensures a smooth transition for pupils on their move to a new class each year. Very good use of resources and equipment by staff, particularly information and communication technology, supports pupils' learning.

These are the grades for leadership and management

Communicating ambition and driving improvement	2
Promoting equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination	2
Ensuring that safeguarding procedures are effective	2
Ensuring that the governing body provides effective challenge and support so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities are met	2
Promoting the school's relationship with parents and carers, including their involvement in decision-making about matters relating to learning and well-being	3
Developing partnerships with other providers, organisations and services	2
Ensuring the school contributes to community cohesion	3
Deploying resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. As a result, children make a good start to their education. From well-below-average starting points, they make good progress in all areas of learning, although most children do not reach the goals expected for their age by the time they enter Year 1.

Induction procedures for children into the Nursery are a particular strength. All families receive a home visit by a member of staff who then becomes the child's key person. This designated person follows the child through the Early Years Foundation Stage. As a result, relationships throughout this stage are outstanding. In addition to home visits, welcome and coffee mornings are held so that children get used to the building and this enables them to settle quickly into school life. As one parent said, 'The Nursery does an absolutely fabulous job of preparing the children for "big school".'

Children make particularly good progress in their personal development, because well-established routines are in place to ensure that children and their parents are introduced to expectations in a systematic way. Behaviour is generally good. All groups of children play and learn well together. Those children who are new to learning English are very well supported so that they can join in with all activities.

Staff are particularly good at framing questions that encourage responses from pupils in increasingly complex vocabulary. The basic skills that children need are taught effectively with the good curriculum supported well by visitors into school and visits into the local area and beyond. Most activities are well planned and designed to meet the needs of all children. There is a very good balance of activities that children choose for themselves and those that adult-led. Staff have identified that the large

outside area, which is an excellent resource, is a priority for further development. It is possible, at the moment, for children to choose outside tasks that occasionally become aimless and repetitive.

Most activities are based on careful assessments and a drive to identify what children need to do next in their learning. They are also focused on the children’s own interests; the setting-up of a ‘Bakery’ in the Reception area all came from one child making gingerbread men. Parents are particularly grateful for the way staff take children’s needs and interest into consideration. As one wrote, ‘I have a child in Reception who loves every moment of school and asks to go in on weekends. She is so excited about learning. Her teachers are so loving and they seem to have such an insight into my daughter.’

Good leadership and management have resulted in a strong staff team who put the care and education of the children as their top priority, and who have made significant improvements since the last inspection. This leads to children being well prepared for the next stage of their education, having the developing skills and confidence they need to succeed.

How good are the outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
What is the quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
How effectively is the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	2
Overall effectiveness: how well does the setting/school meet the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2

Views of parents and carers

In their responses to the questionnaires, the overwhelming majority of parents and carers were very positive about the school and its impact on their children’s learning and well-being. They particularly appreciate the school’s success in promoting good behaviour and attitudes to learning among their children. Provision of good-quality support for them and their children, particularly those with a learning difficulties and/or disabilities is much appreciated.

Overall, parents’ and carers’ views reflect the inspection findings.

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. In 2007-8, 15% of schools were judged to be outstanding.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well. In 2007-8, 49% of schools were judged good.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils. In 2007-8, 32% of schools were judged satisfactory.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves. In 2007-8, 5% of schools were judged inadequate.

Common terminology used by inspectors

- Attainment:** the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
- Progress:** the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
- Achievement:** an overall measure of the pupils' success in their academic learning. The term combines attainment and progress. Pupils might make good progress, for example, but if their attainment remains low, inspectors may judge that their achievement is only satisfactory.
- Capacity to improve:** the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
- Leadership and management:** the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.

20 March 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Bangabandhu Primary School, London, E2 0LB

Thank you for being so welcoming when we came to inspect your school last week. We enjoyed meeting you very much indeed. We judged that yours is a good school and that your acting headteacher and everyone who teaches and works with you is doing a good job. I am sure that you knew this already as you, and most of your parents, said the same. These were the things that we liked most about your school.

- You enjoy learning, work hard mostly, and make good progress in lessons that are practical and interest you.
- Your school plans a good curriculum for you and invites in many visitors to work with you to improve your skills in all the subjects.
- You are good at working together and discussing your work and many of you were keen to answer questions asked by teachers.
- You mostly behave well in class and lessons, and rarely need reminders to settle down quickly.
- Teaching is good in most lessons.
- Your acting headteacher and other leaders know what needs to be done to improve the school and have already started to do this.

To help the school become even better, we have said that the senior leaders should:

- improve teaching so all of it is good or better, so all the children make good progress
- make sure that your teachers use language carefully to explain things more clearly to you, and to help you to improve your English.

Thank you again for talking to us about your school and your work.

Good luck in the future.

Yours faithfully

Usha Sahni
Her Majesty's Inspector

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