

# Berger Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	100218
<b>Local Authority</b>	Hackney
<b>Inspection number</b>	335504
<b>Inspection dates</b>	28–29 September 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Ruth McFarlane

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 of pupils on the school roll</b>	433
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	John I'Anson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Karen Coulthard
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	5 October 2006
<b>School address</b>	Anderson Road Hackney London E9 6HB
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors.

The inspectors visited 18 lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff and pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at documentation, including the school improvement plan. They looked at pupil and staff surveys, the tracking of pupils' progress, examples of pupils' work, case histories of some vulnerable pupils, minutes of governors' meetings and 111 parental questionnaires.

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

- how well current data, assessment, tracking and classroom practice substantiate the school's view that pupils make good progress
- the effectiveness of school strategies in ensuring smooth transition and academic liaison between year groups, especially between the Nursery, Reception and Year 1
- the influence of the creative partnership on pupils' learning
- the impact of middle managers on their areas of responsibility and on pupils' progress.

## Information about the school

Berger is a larger than average primary school in an inner-urban residential area. Pupils come from a wide range of backgrounds and a much higher proportion than is usual come from families where English is an additional language. A higher-than-average proportion of pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities. These are mostly moderate learning difficulties, or difficulties in the behavioural, emotional and social spectrum, or difficulties with speech, language and communication. The school has won several awards for its provision, including the Artsmark and the full International Award. It is actively involved in a 'creative partnership' programme which provides funding and expertise to stimulate creative approaches to the curriculum and learning environment. The Early Years Foundation Stage has places for 110 children age 3'5. Extended services are run by the governing body, including a breakfast club.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**2**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

What is immediately obvious to visitors to Berger Primary School is the positive influence of the school's creative partnership on the vibrant and enriching curriculum which has galvanised enjoyment in learning. In this good school, staff make the environment extremely stimulating, both indoors and out. It is an unsettling time while the adjacent new school buildings are under construction. The current accommodation is due for demolition this current academic year, yet no let-up is evident in ensuring that the school looks inviting. Displays stimulate learning imaginatively. Pupils delight in showing visitors around. One, typically, said, 'My school is very cool and there are loads of things to do.' Inspectors agree. From the inviting breakfast club through to the array of appealing clubs after school that enjoy strong support and broaden pupils' interests and experiences, the excellent curriculum provides something for everyone and strong encouragement to be included and to learn.

Against this backdrop pupils achieve well from starting points that are generally well below those usually found. Children enjoy a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Standards by the end of Year 6 are average, showing good progress overall. Those requiring additional help with their learning do especially well because support strategies are highly effective and the curriculum is adjusted and modelled to appeal to their needs. However, school strategies for ensuring smooth transition and academic liaison between year groups are not fully effective. One reason is that information about the academic progress of each year group is not shared effectively between teachers as classes transfer from one year to the next.

Current data, assessment, tracking and classroom practice substantiate the school's view that pupils make good progress. A good range of data is collected but its use in the classroom is patchy. Setting targets for pupils' next steps in learning is not embedded and just occasionally, tasks are not precisely tailored to pupils' individual needs. Teaching is good. Teaching assistants are often directed well, but in a few lessons they are not used to best effect.

The school's work in partnership with parents and a range of agencies is good. In the staff questionnaire responses, a typical comment was, 'This school does its very best to meet the needs of the individual.' Parents commented, 'The school is extremely supportive and caring.' As a result of the good quality care and support, pupils develop into well-rounded individuals who have an enthusiasm for learning and show a good range of personal skills. Concern about pupils' behaviour was noted by a small minority of responses from pupils, parents and staff in pre-inspection questionnaires. Inspectors agree that in just a few lessons, teachers do not apply the school's behaviour policy consistently and allow a few pupils' inconsiderate behaviour to interrupt smooth

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learning.

Teamwork is centre-stage. As a result, middle management skills are developing well. The impact of those managers who are involved in monitoring the teaching and learning is beginning to accelerate pupils' progress, although not all subject leaders are involved enough in this aspect of their work. There are a number of reasons why the school has good capacity for sustained improvement. Governance is good. The school's self-evaluation is perceptive and accurate and reports good progress since the last inspection. The very experienced senior leaders communicate passionately their vision for continual improvement. They are leading the school well through the upheaval of buildings development while maintaining their diverse, tolerant, all-inclusive community.

**What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Improve the school's use of assessment information by ensuring that:
- analysis of data is faster, more sharply focused, and accessible to all staff to enable them to make prompt use of it in planning the next steps in learning
- there are clear subject specific learning targets to be reached in literacy and numeracy which are regularly checked and discussed with pupils
- teachers liaise fully with previous and next year groups to ensure smooth transition and smooth progress in pupils' learning.
- Extend the core of good teaching by:
- ensuring the consistent application of the behaviour management policy
- extending and making better use of the skills of the teaching assistants.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****2**

Pupils clearly enjoy their learning and they achieve well. They respond with interest and enthusiasm in the many lessons that actively engage and encourage them to develop their thinking. An excellent example was a Year 4 French lesson in which good use of resources linked the subject with geography in a game about the weather. The high levels of active involvement demanded were rewarded by pupils' enthusiasm, participation and rapid progress throughout. Pupils are keen to do well. Attainment in English, mathematics and science by the time pupils leave the school is broadly average, and progress from individual starting points is good throughout the school. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those who have English as an additional language, also achieve well as a result of the effective support they receive. Pupils' attendance has improved since the last inspection and is broadly average. When this is taken together with their good progress in basic skills and good attitudes to learning, their preparation for secondary school and the world beyond is good. Pupils get on well together, and they cooperate and collaborate effectively. They say they feel safe, and that although bullying can be an issue they can rely on the adults around them to help. Pupils have a good understanding of the importance of adopting a healthy lifestyle and many participate in the wide range of physical activities on offer. They speak enthusiastically about healthy food. Pupils behave well around the school,

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although a few lessons are interrupted by inconsiderate behaviour. Exclusions are few. Pupils support their school and they understand that they are all part of one inclusive community. They make a good contribution to school life through their participation in activities and in charitable giving, which helps them understand the varied needs of the wider national and global community. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and this is reflected in their usually very harmonious relationships.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

### How effective is the provision?

Assessment has improved since the last inspection and this underpins the effective teaching. In the great majority of lessons, pupils are engaged because teachers have good subject knowledge and they teach in a lively and enthusiastic way. Teaching assistants are often directed well to ensure that all pupils, whatever their learning needs, are very well included and supported, although in a few lessons teaching assistants are underutilised. Planning is thorough, especially where teachers use the latest pupil information available in school to help them. Marking is encouraging, and often detailed, but it does not always identify for pupils the next steps in their learning.

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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The curriculum is innovative, imaginative and highly stimulating. The creative partnership enjoyed with outside agencies has been a catalyst for excellent links across subjects, and is supported by an exciting range of visits to places of interest, relevant to pupils' learning. Visits to the London Eye and a trip down the Thames are well-remembered, exciting examples. The school's work towards the successful award of International School has enabled pupils to extend their knowledge and understanding of the world. Modern foreign languages are a key feature of the curriculum: French is supplemented by a Spanish club and Mandarin is taught in Year 6. Technology is used successfully to support learning. Intervention strategies work well for pupils who find learning difficult and good opportunities exist for gifted and talented pupils, particularly in sports and art. The Artsmark award is testament to the high quality of this provision. Staff know their pupils very well. Sensitive support for those who are particularly vulnerable and those with specific social, emotional and physical needs assists them to make good progress in personal and academic skills. Good liaison exists with the secondary school but the links between year groups are not fully effective. Strategies to improve known areas of weakness, such as pupils' attendance and behaviour, are working, and success is recorded in a rise in attendance to average, and in the good general level of pupils' behaviour outside of lessons. One or two parents and pupils say that problems have occasionally taken 'too long' to resolve, though inspectors found no evidence of undue delay.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

The headteacher and her deputy provide inspiration and motivation shared with all the school community. They emphasise and promote inclusion and equality and, as a result, vulnerable pupils now make more even progress through the school than at the time of the last inspection. The quality of pupils' personal development has been sustained. Taking into account the views of all groups and stakeholders in the school community in planning for development is embedded deep into the culture of the school and sustained by the sharing of good practice and innovative approaches to curriculum development. The school shows a strong commitment to promoting cohesion within and outside the school community. Pupils show pride in their school in the way they work and play together. The school has a good understanding of its own community through its strong links within the area. Its promotion of green technologies and 'Fair Trade' acts as a

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beacon for sustainable development. The school has been quick to capitalise on its many different cultures by establishing links with diverse communities extending beyond the United Kingdom to places as far away as Beijing. There is plenty of good quality monitoring of teaching and learning. Judgements of inspectors in lessons jointly observed with senior leaders confirmed the school's view. While the promotion of equality of opportunity for all groups of pupils is effective and accorded a high priority, the school is not sharp enough in its use of its good quality data to secure the very best possible outcomes for all children. For example, analysis of this data is too slow to be of best use to teachers in their planning, and is currently not accessible to all staff. Safeguarding of pupils and child protection procedures are secure, underpinned by governors, who maintain a careful overview of requirements. Governors are knowledgeable and experienced. They work well with the school to ensure that expenditure has been well managed to push forward the school's priorities, providing good value for money.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

**Early Years Foundation Stage**

Based on their low starting points, outcomes for children are good, even though by the time they start Year 1, most have not reached the standards expected of five- year-olds nationally. This year has seen significant improvement in the standards reached over 2008, particularly in communication, language and literacy. Children are happy, confident and enthusiastic learners. Progress in key skills and in the development of personal skills is good because of effective teaching and good leadership. This ensures



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individual needs are identified and provided for and children's welfare is promoted carefully. Children enjoy taking responsibility for small tasks such as putting toys away or holding the door open for other children to pass through, and this helps them develop skills for the future. Planning fully embraces the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage framework. Children receive a good balance of adult-led activities and those they choose for themselves. Outdoor learning is an integral part of the day despite the restricted area available owing to the new building work. Every area of learning has well planned activities laid out and children show keen interest in enjoying the full range on offer. These are very well supervised by adults and progress is carefully assessed on a standard format that assists the identification of next steps in learning. Current priorities include developing a fuller understanding of how assessment processes link together between the Nursery, Reception and Year 1 classes to enable smoother transition. The Key Person role is well established to support children's needs and a good partnership is developing with parents, carers and outside agencies.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

**Views of parents and carers**

About a quarter of eligible parents in this multi-ethnic community responded to the questionnaire. Nine out of every ten responses were strongly supportive of the school and its work. Parents rate highly the way the school keeps their children safe and healthy, and prepares them for their futures. They are pleased with the progress their children are making and the way the school helps them support each child. While no major concern was raised, a very few parents indicated that they feel their concerns are not taken account of, or that the school does not meet the needs of their child. A few others felt that poor behaviour is not dealt with effectively. Inspectors investigated concerns expressed and agreed that more could be done to insist on good behaviour in the small number of lessons where this is an issue, but that other concerns were not substantiated. Records showed that concerns that reach the headteacher are dealt with appropriately. The excellent curriculum and use of outside agencies provide support for a wide range of individual needs.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

### Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Berger Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 111 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 450 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	56	50	51	46	0	0	3	3
The school keeps my child safe	41	37	64	58	1	1	2	2
The school informs me about my child's progress	39	35	64	58	0	0	4	4
My child is making enough progress at this school	38	34	63	57	5	4	3	3
The teaching is good at this school	40	36	63	57	2	2	3	3
The school helps me to support my child's learning	32	29	68	61	3	3	4	4
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	36	32	68	61	2	2	2	2
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	37	33	60	54	2	2	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	30	27	68	61	7	6	2	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	37	33	62	56	4	4	3	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	27	24	68	61	6	5	3	3
The school is led and managed effectively	41	37	62	56	2	2	3	3
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	45	40	62	56	2	2	3	3

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
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.

### Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
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.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



1 October 2009

Dear Pupils,

Inspection of Berger Primary School, Hackney E9 6HB

Thank you so much for your help when we inspected your school recently. We thoroughly enjoyed meeting you and hearing about the things you are rightly proud of. How exciting the trips to the London Eye and the trip down the Thames sound! You go to a good school. I know you, your parents and your teachers agree. Those responsible for leading and running the school do a good job and you tell me there are always lots of interesting things to do. What exciting clubs you have! You are developing into responsible young people who have a good understanding of healthy eating and how to care for others and the environment.

It is clear that you really enjoy going to school. Most of you behave well most of the time, but in a few lessons some of you do not behave well enough. We have asked teachers to ensure that all pupils behave well, and you can all help by helping each other to concentrate on learning. You do well at school and most of you reach the standards expected for your age in reading, writing, mathematics and science. You told us that all the adults take very good care of you and they make every effort to help you make the best progress possible. Your lessons are good. We have asked your teachers to make sure that everyone understands exactly what you need to do next in your work and to set challenging targets for you to work towards. We have also asked them to do still more to judge if you are making as much progress as could be reasonably expected, right from the beginning of the school year, and to make sure all the adults are using all their skills to help you.

You can help in this by continuing to work hard and help each other to do your best.

I wish you every success for the future.

Yours faithfully,

Ruth McFarlane

Lead Inspector

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