

# Forest Gate Community School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	102775
<b>Local Authority</b>	Newham
<b>Inspection number</b>	335969
<b>Inspection dates</b>	16–17 September 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Michael Lynes HMI

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>	Secondary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1020
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Dorothea Schulz
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs M Wheeler
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	8 October 2006
<b>School address</b>	Forest Street Forest Gate London E7 0HR
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8534 8666
<b>Fax number</b>	020 8519 8702
<b>Email address</b>	info@forestgate.newham.sch.uk

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Royal Exchange Buildings  
St Ann's Square  
Manchester M2 7LA

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and four additional inspectors. Inspectors visited 40 lessons (25 half lessons and 15 part lessons), and held meetings with governors, staff and students. They observed the school's work, and scrutinised the school improvement plan, governing body minutes, students' written work, and questionnaires from 129 parents, 310 students and 29 staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following: standards and achievement in English, which was a key issue for improvement at the last inspection, particularly of Bangladeshi students how well the school monitors the quality of teaching, which was also a key issue for improvement at the last inspection behaviour, both in classrooms and around the school how effectively the school promotes equal opportunities and tackles discrimination.

## Information about the school

Forest Gate is an average sized comprehensive school but there are significantly more boys than girls. About a quarter of the students are from the Bangladeshi community and a third are of Indian or Pakistani origin. A high proportion of students are entitled to free school meals and a very high percentage have been identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities. Of these the percentage with a statement of additional need is similar to the national average. It is the local authority's designated secondary school for visually impaired students. The school has specialised in business and enterprise since 2004. It has recently been designated as a high performing specialist school and will specialise in applied learning. It has Healthy Schools, Investors in People and International Schools status. At the time of this inspection a major rebuild of the school had just begun.

**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

Forest Gate is a good school. It has sustained the quality of its work in almost all areas and improved in some significant ones since the last inspection. It is now outstanding in two respects: the management of teaching and learning, and students' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development. Standards improved in 2009 as a result of a far more rigorous approach to the development of teaching, most notably in English. This was a particularly important achievement as standards in English had been static for the previous three years. As a result, the percentage of students achieving five A\* to C grades including English and mathematics increased significantly and was above the national average. This represents good achievement. The school's own monitoring indicates that Bangladeshi students attained higher standards than in 2008, and that their achievement was good. The good and sometimes outstanding quality of teaching seen during this inspection confirms that this improvement is set to be sustained this academic year. Consequently, capacity to make further improvement is clearly good. However, beyond the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, both teaching and therefore achievement are more variable. For example, results in both geography and history have fluctuated significantly since the last inspection. Furthermore, results in GCSE applied business, although above the national average, are not as good as the school has judged them to be. Results in design and technology were poor in both 2008 and 2009. As a result, the number of students achieving five A\* to C grades overall represents satisfactory rather than good achievement. The school is fortunate to have developed a significant number of good practitioners in the core subjects which should enable it to address this issue swiftly through sharing good practice. Inspectors were impressed by the ways in which the school supports students' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development. This is evident in the very good quality relationships between staff and students, and the high staff morale. A very large number of students told inspectors that they enjoyed school and almost all staff who responded to the questionnaire said that they were proud to be a member of staff. Students of all ages are able to discuss potentially highly controversial issues in an intelligent and sensitive manner. Students of different cultures learn and play as part of a harmonious community. When conflict does occur they try to resolve it for themselves, but are confident of who to turn to for further support if needed. Behaviour in lessons during the inspection was often exemplary. Particularly impressive was that students of all ages were able to concentrate and listen to one another attentively. Behaviour around the school is not as good and some overly boisterous behaviour was observed. This is reflected in the relatively high number of fixed-term exclusions. However, permanent exclusions are very low as the school does all it can to work effectively with all of its students. The

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headteacher models a high degree of openness and the ability to reflect honestly on experience that has underpinned much of the progress since the last inspection. She has encouraged staff to think carefully about the ways in which improvements could be secured, and has empowered senior staff to make changes. Nowhere is this more evident than in the way that teaching and learning have been improved since the previous inspection, when they were judged to be satisfactory. They are now securely good and some outstanding lessons were observed in English, mathematics and science. This has been achieved through the development of a deep understanding of how students learn and a robust approach to both challenging and supporting middle leaders to improve teaching in their subject areas. Specialist status has had a clear impact on raising standards in mathematics, where achievement has been consistently at least good since the last inspection. Links with sponsors have widened opportunities for students. However, achievement in applied business is only satisfactory and the school could do more to ensure that the physical environment reflects the business and enterprise specialism. The governing body is very well qualified and experienced and has a secure understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They hold the senior leadership team to account well and have begun to engage with parents and carers more effectively. However, they realise that there is more to do to actively respond to parental concerns. A good example of this is the way in which the school promotes healthy living. Both students and parents are consistent in their view that the school could do more. Two examples of this are the high numbers of students who smoke on the school site and the poor condition of the girls' toilets. Some students believe that the school should impose greater sanctions on the smokers. The toilets were commented on by inspectors at the last inspection and this is now a matter of urgency for governors to act upon.

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

- Extend the exceptional work to improve teaching and learning in the core subjects across the curriculum to ensure that: the overall five GCSE A\* to C figure represents good rather than satisfactory achievement students' achievement is consistently good, particularly in history, geography, art, and design and technology. Respond to both parents' and students' concerns by ensuring that all aspects of leading a healthy lifestyle are more effectively promoted. In particular, eradicate smoking in school and improve the girls' toilets.

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

Students clearly enjoy their learning. The vast majority of lessons observed during the inspection were at least good, and a fifth were outstanding. This means that students make securely good progress across a range of subjects, especially in English, mathematics and science. Because many teachers have good subject knowledge and display a passion for their subject, students are enthusiastic and motivated. As a result behaviour is consistently good in class and sometimes exemplary, and makes a

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significant contribution to the quality of learning. Those students with special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve in line with their peers due to effective support in class and close monitoring of their progress. The school's contribution to promoting healthy lifestyles is satisfactory but both parents and students believe that it could do more. Inspectors agree. A very large majority of students feel safe at school, and most parents agree. The school is alert to present and future employment opportunities in the local area and gives students the qualification and skills they need for further training and to be successful in the world of work. The school has embedded the development of the skills and personal qualities necessary to live and work together successfully with people from different cultures and backgrounds in all aspects of its work. The integration of pastoral and academic systems and procedures embodied in the house system is very effective. Both students and parents recognise that this is highly supportive and responsive to students' needs.

*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>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>3</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>	2
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>1</b>

## How effective is the provision?

Teaching is good or better in nearly all cases. Only two inadequate lessons were seen;

<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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one of these teachers was observed again and judged to be good. Inspectors agree with the school's own monitoring that most teaching is good; this is a significant improvement from the last inspection. The best teaching seen was founded on excellent relationships with students and a real desire to connect with their interests and needs. Skilful questioning developed high order analytical and evaluative skills in many lessons. These qualities were very evident in two Year 10 English lessons, which also made an outstanding contribution to the students' social and moral development. Satisfactory lessons were characterised by slow pace and a tendency for the teacher to talk too much. This was also a feature of some good lessons. The school has sustained the good quality of its curriculum since the last inspection. It has widened opportunities by developing a number of new diploma courses in collaboration with other schools, and is the lead school for business and finance in the locality. Local businesses work closely with the school to support business and enterprise status. Students report that a very wide range of trips and visits, both locally and internationally, contributes to both their enjoyment of school and their understanding of other cultures and religions. The curriculum is good rather than outstanding as the impact on achievement beyond the core subjects has been more limited. The school works effectively with parents and outside agencies to ensure that the needs of vulnerable students and those at risk of exclusion are met. Staff were able to provide striking examples of how they had supported particular students through troubled periods, and demonstrated the positive impact that it had on their achievement, enjoyment and attendance. The school has improved its procedures for tackling absence and lateness. As a result attendance is now above the national average, persistent absence has reduced and punctuality has improved.

*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>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

Leaders and managers display a deep commitment to improving the lives of students and demonstrate ambition for them to succeed. As a result, almost all go on to further education and very few do not move on to employment, education or training. The relatively new Chair of the Governing Body has instituted effective measures to ensure that the governing body has a sharper focus on raising standards. These measures had a clear impact in the improvements to the 2009 GCSE results. The leadership and management of teaching and learning are outstanding. The deputy headteacher

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responsible for this is an inspiration to the team. This work also had a clear impact in 2009 to improve the GCSE results. The school takes parents' views seriously and the headteacher holds regular, open-access surgeries to listen to their views. Governors and senior leaders accept that they need to do more to respond to parents' concerns regarding the promotion of a healthy lifestyle. Safeguarding procedures are thorough and all staff have received regular training. The school demonstrates a clear commitment to ensuring equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination. This is evidenced by both the improved achievement and reduction in exclusions of Bangladeshi pupils during the last academic year. Leaders and managers actively enjoy, celebrate and value the ethnic diversity of students. The ethnic mix of staff reflects and complements that of students. Incidents of racial disharmony are very rare. The number of Bangladeshi students receiving fixed-term exclusions reduced in 2009. The school evaluates its role in the local and wider community well and actively involves students with schools in other parts of the UK, Europe and Africa. The school community itself is very cohesive. The school could do more to get students involved in the local community, for example by utilising its specialist status to enable students to build even more effective links with local primary schools.

*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	1
<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>

## Views of parents and carers

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school. The large majority of parents and carers are highly supportive of the school. In particular, most recognise how much their children enjoy



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school, and believe the school keeps their child safe and that teaching is good. A significant minority believe the school could do more to listen to their concerns and suggestions, and more successfully promote a healthy lifestyle. Inspectors agree with this comment about healthy lifestyles and have made it a key recommendation for improvement. A small number of parents had minor concerns and constructive suggestions to make. Issues raised covered several areas and in the main related to the individual parent/carer concerned.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Forest Gate Community 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 12 statements about the school. The inspection team received 129 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 1,020 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	44	34	79	61	3	2	3	2
The school keeps my child safe	38	30	75	58	13	10	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	38	30	69	54	10	8	6	5
My child is making enough progress at this school	29	23	77	60	15	12	4	3
The teaching is good at this school	32	25	78	61	10	8	5	4
The school helps me to support my child's learning	25	19	74	57	17	13	6	5
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	22	17	69	54	24	19	6	5
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)	35	27	67	52	14	11	5	4
The school meets my child's particular needs	18	14	84	65	14	11	5	4
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	43	33	53	41	16	12	10	8
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	17	13	76	59	21	16	9	7
The school is led and managed effectively	30	23	71	55	17	13	6	5
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	41	32	69	54	9	7	6	5

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.**



18 September 2009 Dear Students Inspection of Forest Gate Community School, London, E7 OHR It was a real pleasure to visit your school and see the ways that it had improved since it was last inspected. We were impressed by your behaviour, which was consistently good and sometimes excellent in class. This was a real achievement considering both the disruption caused by the new building and that many of you, and your teachers, were fasting as it was Ramadan. So congratulations to all of you! Inspectors judged your school to be good. We thought that it was outstanding in two ways: The way teachers have improved the quality of lessons since the last inspection, particularly in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. You agree, as many of you told us that you learnt a lot in lessons and enjoyed school. The way the school promotes your social, moral, spiritual and cultural development. This means that you are learning the skills and personal qualities necessary to live and work together successfully with people from different cultures and backgrounds. There are two things that we have asked the school to work on so that it can keep on improving: The quality of teaching beyond the core subjects. Its inconsistency means that you do not always achieve your best GCSE results, particularly in geography, history, art, and design and technology. You, and your parents, told us that the school could do more to help you live healthier lives. We were surprised by the number of you that choose to smoke on the school site and by the poor condition of the girls' toilets. We have asked the governors to do something about both of these issues urgently. I know that the younger ones will be looking forward to the new building when it is ready, and I wish those of you in Years 10 and 11 the best of luck with your examinations. Very best wishes  
Michael Lynes Her Majesty's Inspector

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