

# Shapla Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	100935
<b>Local authority</b>	Tower Hamlets
<b>Inspection number</b>	376486
<b>Inspection dates</b>	15–16 March 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	David Gosling

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>	214
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mark Campbell
<b>Headteacher</b>	Tim Barnes
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	19 May 2009
<b>School address</b>	Wellclose Square London E1 8HY
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 7480 5829
<b>Fax number</b>	020 7480 6332
<b>Email address</b>	head@shapla.towerhamlets.sch.uk

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## Introduction

Inspection team

David Gosling

Additional inspector

Melanie Clapton

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors observed 16 lessons and parts of lessons, taught by nine teachers and held meetings with pupils, staff and the Chair of the Governing Body. Inspectors took account of the responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection and observed the school's work. Inspectors reviewed pupils' books and data on their progress as well as a range of documentation including development plans, child protection and safeguarding procedures. The inspectors considered responses to questionnaires received from 120 parents and carers and also questionnaires completed by pupils and staff.

## Information about the school

This is a smaller-than-average primary school, with nearly all pupils having Bangladeshi heritage and the large majority speaking English as an additional language. The school has an above-average proportion of disabled pupils and pupils with special educational needs, the majority having speech, language and communication difficulties. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above average. The school has gained several awards, including the Quality Mark for basic skills and an International School Award. The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress. The school has a Nursery which children attend full-time, and one Reception class.

**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

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>2</b>

## Key findings

- Shapla is a good school. Ambitious and determined leadership by the headteacher and senior leaders has led to marked improvement in attainment at both key stages. The school is good rather than outstanding because not enough teaching is of the highest quality, and although progress is good, it is not consistently outstanding in all areas. Although attendance rates have improved considerably, extended absence of a few pupils is unhelpful to their progress.
- Achievement is good because all groups of pupils achieve well in English and mathematics, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. Progress in reading is a notable strength. Outstanding progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage provides a firm foundation for future success. Although progress in English is good, improvement in basic accuracy in writing especially that of more-able pupils, is not consistently fast enough.
- Teaching is good, with some outstanding practice, especially in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Teachers make learning interesting and always explain clearly what is needed for good work. Reading is taught very well in all subjects. In the theme lessons, work for more-able pupils is not always fully matched to their needs and opportunities are missed to improve written accuracy and handwriting.
- Pupils' enthusiasm and willingness to try hard are key contributory factors to their good achievement. They behave very well and feel safe. The attendance rate was low last year and, although much better so far this year, improvements have not been made over a sustained period.
- School leaders and managers have created an enthusiastic learning community where standards continue to improve. The leadership of teaching is good, with an excellent range of training provided for staff. Weaker teaching is challenged and teachers are rigorously held to account. Lesson feedback from senior and middle leaders does not always make clear what is required to make good teaching even better.

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

- Increase the proportion of good and outstanding teaching to make progress equally outstanding by:
  - ensuring that the more able pupils are always fully challenged in all lessons
  - using every opportunity to develop pupils' writing skills, especially their accuracy and handwriting
  - providing clearer guidance for teachers in feedback from observations of their teaching on what is needed to make their practice outstanding.
  
- Build on current improvements to attendance so that the attendance rate and proportion of pupils who are absent for long periods are at least in line with national averages by the end of 2012.

**Main report****Achievement of pupils**

Children enter the school with skills well below the levels expected for their age, and leave Year 6 with attainment broadly in line with the national average. In questionnaires, parents and carers were very positive about the progress made by their children and this was supported by the children themselves in their surveys and conversations with inspectors. Inspection findings endorse their views. Pupils play a key part in their good achievement. Lessons are characterised by high levels of enthusiasm, excellent listening skills and high levels of concentration. Even when work is difficult, pupils try hard, an example being the way they wrestle intently with judgements on the quality of their work at the ends of lessons.

Pupils achieve well throughout the school. The pupils of Bangladeshi heritage make good progress and those who speak English as additional language also progress well, partly because of the targeted support they receive early on. As a result of consistently outstanding teaching, progress is excellent in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Teaching and progress are also particularly strong in Years 5 and 6. The above-average attainment in reading by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 is partly the result of the enjoyment of reading engendered in the Early Years Foundation Stage and the excellent grounding children receive in reading skills. This was exemplified by one child in the Reception class seen avidly reading *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* with excellent understanding and skilful use of the knowledge of letter sounds when words were unfamiliar.

Achievement in mathematics and reading is stronger than in writing throughout the school. Reading for information, partly as a result of the emphasis on research skills in the school's themed curriculum, is a particular strength. Pupils are able to write very imaginatively. They use some sophisticated vocabulary and show a mastery of different types of writing including stories, autobiographical, persuasive and

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information writing. Progress is slower in basic spelling, punctuation, grammar and handwriting and this is hindering attainment at the higher levels.

All groups of pupils – irrespective of their ethnic heritage or social background – achieve well, although the progress being made by the more able pupils is not quite as strong in the themed lessons as it is in English and mathematics. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress because they are targeted well and helped by teachers in lessons and taught skilfully by well-trained support staff.

### **Quality of teaching**

Almost all parents and carers and pupils in questionnaires thought that teaching was good. Progress data, pupils' work and inspectors' observations support the judgement that teaching is typically good, although there is occasional satisfactory teaching when themed lessons are taught.

Teaching is outstanding in the Early Years Foundation Stage because of the strong and effective focus on addressing weaknesses in language and social skills when children join the school, especially those who speak English as an additional language. Strong subject knowledge and excellent language teaching lead to a fast rate of progress in reading and writing. Expectations are very high in both the Nursery and Reception classes and regular assessments are used to ensure that the work set challenges pupils at all levels.

Teachers use a wide range of interesting activities, for example the designing of a weather vane with a sculptor, and some inspirational teaching leads to a very positive climate in all lessons. The regular use of small-group and paired discussion and the strong visual support provided enhance engagement and also make work more accessible for those at an early stage of learning English. The clarity with which teachers explain what pupils need to do to improve their work is a key factor in explaining pupils' good progress. Teachers consistently challenge pupils with targeted questions and they encourage and probe pupils to develop their answers.

There are two particular weaknesses in some teaching which prevent it from being outstanding. In the themed lessons, teachers sometimes set the same work for the most able as for pupils of average ability and this is leading to the former not always being challenged enough. Although reading is developed well across subjects, teachers are not taking full advantage of opportunities to improve writing and this is slowing progress in basic accuracy and handwriting at Key Stages 1 and 2.

Teachers' use of the planned curriculum provides very well for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, reflected in the striking displays around the school, which pupils talk about with enthusiasm. These include displays on bullying where pupils designed their own anti-bullying posters, and on inventions where pupils designed and explained their own inventions. Pupils are helped to express their cultural understanding, for example with colourful Divali cards.

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## **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

In questionnaires the overwhelming majority of parents thought behaviour was good, and inspectors agree. One of the key contributory factors to the school's success is the excellent working ethos in lessons. Teachers have high expectations of behaviour and implement the school behaviour policy consistently and skilfully. Pupils collaborate very well and stay focused when working independently, leading to minimal interruptions to learning. There are a few pupils with behavioural difficulties but these are managed very well, with very few incidents of poor behaviour recorded over the past year. The large majority of pupils reported in their questionnaires that they felt safe in school all of the time.

Discussions with pupils and their work showed a very sophisticated understanding of the different types of bullying, including bullying on the internet and bullying over differences in religious practice. Pupils reported that bullying is rare. They fully understand not only that it is a transgression of one of the school's 'Golden Rules', but also what the consequences for perpetrator and victim would be. There have been virtually no cases of racism recorded in recent years.

Punctuality is good and has improved in recent years. Attendance was below the national average last year, with a much higher-than-average proportion of pupils absent for long periods. This situation has been addressed mainly through a higher level of challenge of targeted families and a strengthened reward system. There have been considerable improvements so far this year but these have not been sustained over a long period.

## **Leadership and management**

Leaders and managers have been effective in improving attainment and progress since the previous inspection and in sustaining the good quality of teaching. More specifically, progress in reading and mathematics has improved considerably as a result of an intensive focus on these areas in training and planning. Leaders know the school's strengths and weaknesses well and its strong performance shows it has good capacity to improve further.

The school has a distinctive and shared vision and an excellent improvement plan, both of which have been shaped by the headteacher, the governing body and staff. The targets set for progress in each year group are considerably above national expectations. The strong leadership of teaching and learning at headteacher, senior and middle leader levels makes these challenging targets realistic. Weaknesses in teaching have been addressed, either through teachers leaving or through the excellent training programme provided. Teachers are rigorously held to account for the progress their classes are making, especially in the termly meetings where the progress of each pupil in each class is scrutinised. The monitoring of teaching is frequent and it is supported by the regular checking of books by subject leaders. The school's evaluations of lessons are accurate, but feedback where teaching is good does not always make it clear what is needed to take it to a higher level.

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The curriculum is well balanced and provides a very rich range of extra-curricular activities, including visits and visitors. Partnerships with parents and carers and the local community are making a significant contribution to learning, especially the weekly reading and mathematics support sessions provided by employees from a major nearby business. Effective and well-organised leadership of provision for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is providing a good level of support. The school's themed curriculum is providing pupils with an excellent global perspective. It also provides for regular discussion and reflection of issues and different values, enhancing pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The school's careful analysis of the performance of individuals and groups ensures that all enjoy equal opportunity to achieve well. The school is a safe and racially harmonious community.

The governing body is closely involved in the life of the school. The monitoring and challenge provided by the governing body are robust, with close scrutiny of reports from the headteacher on pupils' progress and termly updates from staff on progress on priorities in the school improvement plan. Statutory requirements for safeguarding are met.

## Glossary

### 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.
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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons, and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

**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.**

19 March 2012

Dear Pupils



### **Inspection of Shapla Primary School, Tower Hamlets E1 8HY**

Thank you very much for your friendly welcome and for being so helpful when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed talking to you all very much and listening to what you had to say. We were very impressed with the wonderful displays of your work which you and your teachers have produced.

Shapla is a good school. The surveys you and your parents and carers completed show that you like your school very much. You make good progress with your learning and by the end of Year 6 reach similar standards to those of other pupils nationally. Those of you who need extra help are well supported by staff and also make good progress. You get a particularly good start to school in the Nursery and Reception classes, where you make excellent progress. Your teachers know how well you are doing and make sure you know what makes good work. They make lessons very interesting for you. You are very polite and behave well in lessons and around the school. You work hard and are very keen to learn. You have a good awareness of how to keep yourselves safe from harm and nearly all of you who completed the questionnaire told us that you feel safe in school.

To help you do even better, we have asked teachers to make sure in all lessons that those of you who learn quickly are challenged even more. Your progress in writing is not as good as in reading and mathematics and we have also asked your teachers to do all they can to improve your accuracy in writing. Teaching is good, but we think your school's leaders and managers should help teachers to make lessons even better. Those of you whose attendance was below average last year have improved it a lot, but we want your school to help everyone attend every session. The few of you who still struggle to attend regularly can help by doing your best to attend every day.

I would like to thank you again and wish you well for the future.

Yours sincerely

David Gosling  
Lead inspector

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