



# Inclusion Quality Mark (UK) Ltd

9<sup>th</sup> July 2014

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London  
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**Assessment Date: 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2014**

## Summary

Passionate, articulate, hardworking, engaged, analytical, purposeful, creative, inspirational and visionary are all adjectives that can be attributed to the BGA staff. It was a pleasure to spend quality time in their company.

I came away from this visit to BGA with two thoughts that summarise its outlook:-  
The staff at all levels give above and beyond what one can reasonably expect of them.  
**Nobody is left out, child or adult. All are valued for their unique gifts and talents.**

A few quotes from the visit add to the summary:-  
“My child needed a special school; this is a special school.”  
“Exceptional is the norm.”  
“We are helped to figure things out, not just given the right answer.”

## Unity by Cleo V. Swarat

I dreamed I stood in a studio and watched two sculptors there.  
The clay they used was a young child's mind and they fashioned it with care.  
One was a teacher: the tools she used were books and music and art.  
One was a parent with a guiding hand and gentle loving heart.  
And when at last their work was done, they were proud of what they had wrought.  
For the things they had worked into the child could never be sold or bought!  
And each agreed she would have failed if she had worked alone.  
For behind the parent stood the school and behind the teacher the home!

## **Care for children, their backgrounds and their life chances, underpins the Bethnal Green Academy (BGA) ethos.**

The poem talks of moulding learners. BGA certainly does that, building capacity across every category of person associated with the school. It is a place where ideas are generated, welcomed and then moulded to suit the needs of the community, to the advantage of the students.

To aid me with this report, I did look up synonyms for outstanding; exceptional, great, important, impressive, magnificent, phenomenal, preeminent, special, superior, superlative, ace, major, meritorious, standout, stellar, super, world-class. This was in attempt to capture the impression that BGA had left after the two day visit.

When a senior Queen's Counsel, at the end of a long morning of working with an older group of students is able to say that they were the best group with whom his organisation had worked, you know that something special happens at this school. This was a moment of summary after two days of very detailed and interesting discussion within the school.

**That something is special is very clear in every aspect of school life; people matter.**

Each and every person associated with BGA is valued for themselves as individuals, with personal idiosyncrasies, strengths and areas for continued capacity building. It is an environment, created with care by the very humane adults to ensure that each and every student will benefit to the maximum from the wide range of experiences available, some within normal school hours, many offered before school, including a free breakfast for those who wish it, at lunchtimes, after school and on Saturday mornings. Many of these opportunities are supported by groups of volunteers from the broader community, including a variety of City businesses, whose staff volunteers are developing a two way support system enabling students to develop a clear picture of the needs of the working environment, further embedding the work ethic inside the school.

Energies and ideas are harnessed and channelled to the advantage of the learners, but, as every person within the organisation is an active learner, that means that coaching and mentoring are key aspects of the process, as well as dialogic exploration of ideas. Communication within the school is of an exceptional quality.

**Putting all this very simply, people, students in particular, are extremely well known.**

By understanding the detailed and sometimes very complex needs of individuals, learning is tailored to their needs. The BGA reputation for dealing with such needs is becoming widely known, so students from other establishments actively seek places, but BGA also receives a significant number of students who have been excluded from other schools. All find a safe, secure and extremely well ordered and managed environment within which they are able to moderate behaviours and make progress in their learning, with significant levels of success for many as a result of the dedicated and focused approaches.

I would want to recognise the substantial volume of work undertaken by the IQM coordinator, Alison Brannick (Vice Principal), supported fully by staff at all levels, especially Laura Percival, Director of Learning for SEN (SENCO) and Agnieszka Laskus Director of Learning for Ethnic Minority Achievement and Literacy and their deputies, Jennifer Hall and Aurica Fabian, in collating such a wealth of information that was interesting, informative and gave a rounded view of the academy.

It is worth noting that the above group are supported by an even broader group, of fifteen teaching assistants who work in the classroom with students and with a variety of withdrawal and intervention groups, ten Graduate Achievement Coaches (GACs) who are subject specialists and support students in English, maths, science and humanities lessons in the mainstream classroom or via withdrawal intervention group. Student Learning Managers,

Assistant Student Learning Managers and Learning Mentors are also very much part of the Inclusion Team.

External staff, such as a Speech and Language Therapist, Educational Psychologist, School Health Team and School Counsellor play crucial roles in the Inclusion team at BGA. Other relevant specialists are brought into the team as and when necessary.

Essentially the layers of staffing ensure that every member of the team, including peers, is able to act as the eyes and ears of the school, forming a series of concentric teams around each child, with the express purpose of ensuring that they gain maximum benefit from their learning opportunities.

Communication lines are clear, open and ensure speedy information passing, with the effect that problems are solved as quickly as possible, enabling parents, staff and students to move forward harmoniously and with reduced stress. If issues are greater, skilled staff utilise restorative techniques to solve situations.

The clear vision of the Principal, Mark Keary and the Senior Leadership Team is demonstrated throughout the academy, as evidenced by the conversations with the academy partners, staff at all levels, parents, Governors and students. This is well articulated within the Academy website and is clearly on view throughout the Academy. The vision is enacted by staff modelling expectations, treating adults and students with equal respect, ensuring that the ethos is enabled to grow.

Students respond accordingly, evidenced through the classroom and outside visits at different times of the day. There is very clear distributed leadership, with a number of key staff acting as central “hubs” through which developments are shared, enhanced, tested in practice and reviewed rigorously to assess impact. As a result the Academy benefits from the drive and enthusiasm of a broad group, which is communicated through the students who readily articulate their respect for this effort on their behalf.

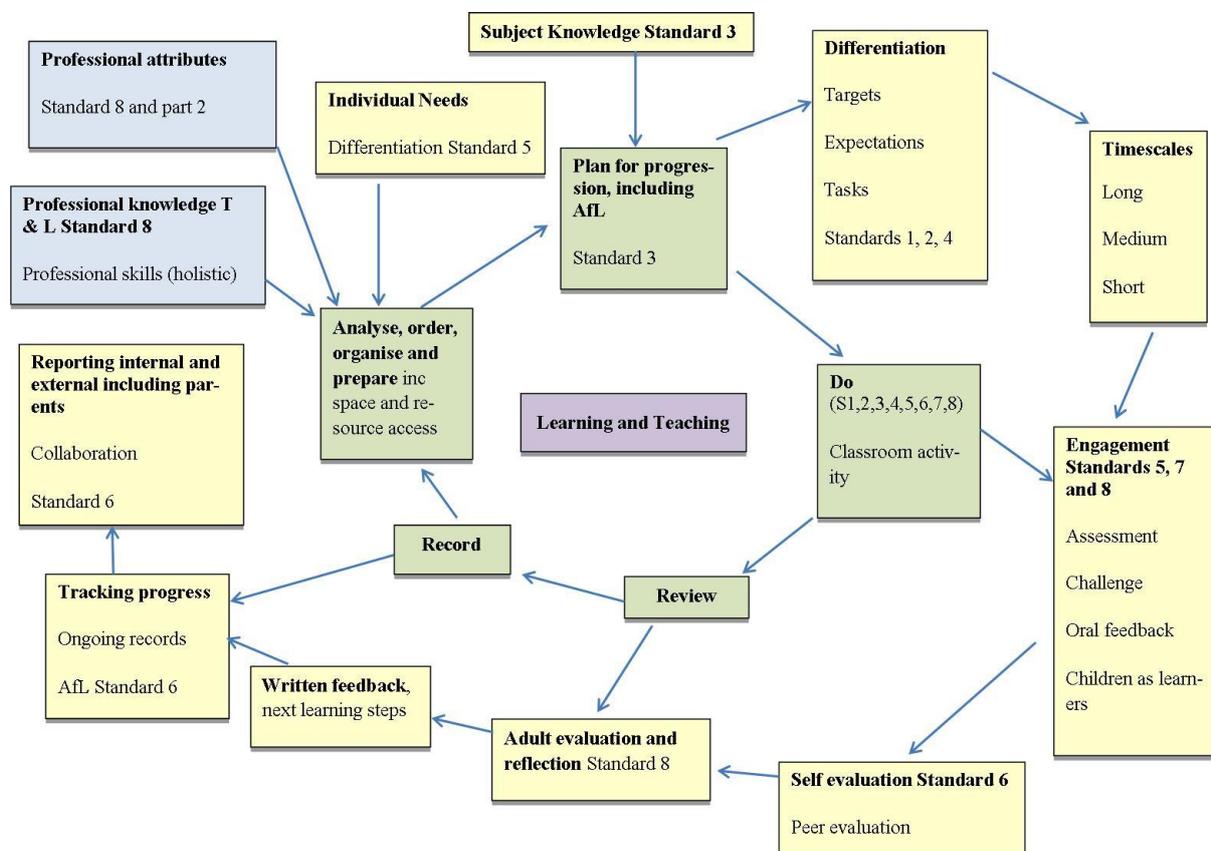
The over-riding impression given by BGA is of a school that has a clear understanding of what is expected and what can be provided to enhance the learning experience for all students. There is an energy and enthusiasm from the staff which is infectious and clearly visible in the attitudes and behaviour of the students who gave their time to be interviewed. The students admit to being encouraged and inspired to aspire. They are aspirational, even if they have identified individual needs. Respect is an inbuilt factor, as is responsibility. Students take on roles across the school, in support of the highly visible staff group at break times, but also outside school as ambassadors, helping to safeguard student in the community.

The Academy is one where development is embedded in all processes. Systems are strengthened as a result of rigorous testing and adaptation to need. The Academy is a place that values innovation. Thinking by staff at all levels and students of all ages is encouraged and valued, ensuring that everyone feels their contribution supports the Academy’s improvement. This process has been evolutionary. The Academy record of achievement, as evidenced by results at KS4 demonstrates the benefits that have arisen from this approach. This also bodes well for future attainment at KS5, which will be able to build upon such firm foundations.

The academy policy can be summarised as a dynamic continuum. There is:

- 1) Rigorous analysis of evidence leading to quality information being made available to support.
- 2) Detailed planning, including the provision of appropriate resources and staffing.
- 3) Students actively share in their learning journey, which is, tracked and reviewed at regular intervals.
- 4) With accurate and detailed records being collated and disseminated, allowing the process to be cyclic and developmental.

This process encapsulates many of the aspects of the diagram below, which may be of use in personal discussions about teaching and learning, particularly with regard to the Teaching Standards.



There are very well thought through, strong structures and processes that underpin the child focused philosophy, ensuring that where there are barriers to learning, these are identified and remediated. Students engage with real life issues of a general nature within a range of lessons and on a personal level are supported by several levels of student support. The academy is well supported by a broad range of inside intervention programmes as well as outside agencies, widening access to support to cater for all individual needs.

Learning has been an identifiable focus for current whole-Academy development, with significant work being undertaken to ensure that personalised approaches to learning are a reality for vulnerable students, with a differential approach being realised for all learners.

Learning is tracked throughout a child's career at BGA. Systems are in place that further improve the quality of information derived from attainment data that is given to teachers to support target setting. The school has successfully developed on-line access to individual progress records for students and parents, with staff being able to input data and extract important information about the dynamics of pupil progress to support their lesson planning. Planning for learning is equally rigorous, throughout the school, centred on the development of all ability levels of students.

The Academy staff, at all levels, are appraised of and share in, Academy development. In many areas of Academy life, individual teachers and faculties are enabled to operate at the forefront of local and national initiatives in their specialist areas. There is considerable collective professional expertise within the staff. They are supported by the management of the Academy, both within their work and with training appropriate to their needs. As a result, Inclusion is evident in every aspect of academy life, ensuring that Every Child Matters and, as an extension, that every person associated with the academy is also fully valued.

The Governing body is a strong element of the development agenda, ensuring that the Academy is able to articulate strong, logical reasoning for improvements and initiatives before committing funding. There are a number of very active members, with broad expertise which is made available to benefit the Academy.

Parents express their pleasure at having their children at the Academy and endorse the view that the school is open, honest and welcoming, to their children and them as parents. They are ambassadors for the organisation in the community and report that the community view of BGA has transformed over the past few years.

The recent Ofsted report (December 2012) was rightly very supportive of the Academy, its achievements over the recent past and its capacity to maintain development. The Outstanding judgement is well deserved. This is a truly outstanding school.

On the IQM website we state that a school achieving the Inclusion Quality Mark award is likely to have many of these attributes:-

- An open, honest and humane approach to the needs of the whole school community.
- Very self-aware, through review, quality assurance and good knowledge of school data.
- Actively seeks maximum success for each and every learner.
- Focuses on the pursuit of excellence in teaching and learning.
- Is very well ordered and organised at different levels, with a clearly stated development agenda.
- Has an enthusiastic, supportive staff progressing the learning agenda.
- Motivated pupils.
- Very good relationships, between colleagues, with parents and among the children.
- Parents, Governors and outside agencies able to provide broader support, but also appropriate challenge.

There is no doubt that Bethnal Green Academy demonstrates these attributes, across all categories, at a very high level.

Significant strengths:-

- Open approach to the needs of the whole Academy community.
- Very self-aware, through relentless review, quality assurance, good knowledge of Academy data.
- Clear planning at strategic and detailed levels.
- Enthusiastic, supportive staff progressing the learning agenda.
- Motivated students, with a clear view of their learning needs and aspirations.
- Parents, Governors and outside agencies able to provide broader support, but also appropriate challenge.
- A community where everyone's personal and learning needs matter.

**Kahlil Gibran: Teaching.**

Then said a teacher, "Speak to us of Teaching." And he said:

No man can reveal to you aught but that which already lies half asleep in the dawning of our knowledge.

The teacher who walks in the shadow of the temple, among his followers, gives not of his wisdom but rather of his faith and his lovingness.

If he is indeed wise he does not bid you enter the house of wisdom, but rather leads you to the threshold of your own mind.

The astronomer may speak to you of his understanding of space, but he cannot give you his understanding.

The musician may sing to you of the rhythm which is in all space, but he cannot give you the ear which arrests the rhythm nor the voice that echoes it.

And he who is versed in the science of numbers can tell of the regions of weight and measure, but he cannot conduct you thither.

For the vision of one man lends not its wings to another man.

And even as each one of you stands alone in God's knowledge, so must each one of you be alone in his knowledge of God and in his understanding of the earth.

Any areas for further consideration are embedded within the remainder of the report, or attached as reflective discussion points.

I am of the opinion that the Academy fully meets the standard required by the Inclusion Quality Mark. Any minor areas requiring development, the Academy has articulated within their self-evaluation.

On the evidence of this visit, I would have to say that Bethnal Green Academy is a very good example of an Inclusion Quality Mark school and should consider becoming a Centre of Excellence for Inclusion. Centre of Excellence status would support both school and individual development, offering, as it does, opportunities to explore aspects of inclusive practice in individual classroom practice or across the whole school.

I would have wanted to suggest Flagship status, but this requires a second round of inclusive activity.

**However, I can see BGA becoming a strong ambassador for Inclusion, locally and further afield.**

I have no hesitation in recommending that the Academy be awarded the Mark and be reassessed in 3 years' time.

**Assessor: Chris Chivers**

**Findings confirmed by Inclusion Quality Mark Ltd:**



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Joe McCann MBA NPQH  
Director of Inclusion Quality Mark