

Plashet School, Newham

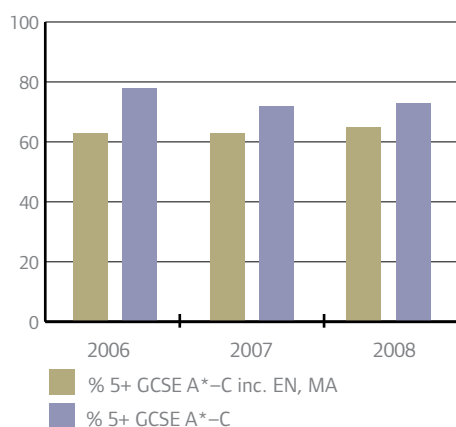
Bushra Nasir CBE joined Plashet School in 1990 as a deputy headteacher and took on the headship three years later. Working with a small leadership team whose members she had appointed, she had first to change the mind-set of some staff and then to establish the 'certain systems' that she sees as crucial to the school's success. Her approach was to identify and engage a few key individuals, using them as leverage for more general change.

The ethos built up over years at Plashet School is all-pervasive, powerful and highly productive. Rather than the more passive virtue of tolerance, this cohesive community fosters mutual respect based on knowledge and self-confidence. 'We celebrate diversity together. The school helps us do that.' The students have firm beliefs, rooted in their own cultures and faiths; they also have open minds and a zest for questioning and debate. 'To question your faith often strengthens your faith.' The school's diversity is clear to see and hear. It mirrors the busy East London community in which Plashet sits. Most students come from Indian, Pakistani or Bangladeshi backgrounds; a significant proportion have African or Caribbean heritage. Many are Muslim, some are Hindu, Sikh or Christian. In this school, questions of faith are taken very seriously but without bigotry or conflict. For over 90%, English is an additional language. Over 30% are eligible for free school meals. Yet the overwhelming impression the school creates is of confidence, purposefulness and cohesiveness.

'Plashet? It's a land of opportunities!' There was no hint of irony in this answer from a Year 11 girl to the question, 'What's special about your school?' Around her, others nodded emphatically. 'Teachers look for the best opportunities for every student. Whatever help you need, they're always there.' 'It's an honour to be in Plashet School. All the problems I've faced, I can give credit to teachers for sorting them out.'

The headteacher is a strong and persuasive role model. She points out to her pupils that she's a local girl made good and what she did, they can do. Her confidence is justified by the upward trend over eight years of the school's results in national tests. Ever since 2000, Plashet's results have surpassed national and Newham borough averages. The headteacher is clear about the chief pillars on which Plashet's achievement depends: leadership and management, the continuing professional development of staff, inclusion and a strong ethos.

School data



2007 data		Student profile
Roll:	1,352 girls	33% Asian British, Pakistani
Age:	11-16	24% Asian British, Bangladeshi
CVA:	1,019	23% Asian British, Indian
FSM:	32.40%	6% African Caribbean, British
Inspection judgements and quote (Mar. 2008)		
23	Outstanding	'Outstanding school' where 'students enter with slightly below average standards' and 'GCSE results are very high.'
3	Good	
0	Satisfactory	
0	Inadequate	