

# INSPECTION REPORT

**SIR JOHN CASS'S FOUNDATION PRIMARY  
SCHOOL**

City of London

LEA area: Corporation of London

Unique reference number: 100000

Headteacher: Gerard Loughran

Reporting inspector: Tom Shine  
24254

Dates of inspection: 5<sup>th</sup> - 7<sup>th</sup> June 2000

Inspection number: 181481

Inspection carried out under Section 10 of The School Inspections Act 1996

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Nursery, Infant and Junior
School category:	Voluntary
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	St James's Passage Duke's Place London
Postcode:	EC3A 5DE
Telephone number:	(0207) 283 1147
Fax number:	(0207) 626 5071
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Revd. Brian Lee
Date of previous inspection:	30 <sup>th</sup> January - 3 <sup>rd</sup> February 1995

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	
Tom Shine	Registered inspector
Ron Ibbitson	Lay inspector
Pauline Osborne	Team inspector

The inspection contractor was:

PPI Group Ltd  
7 Hill Street  
Bristol  
BS1 5RW

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Alexandra House  
33 Kingsway  
London WC2B 6SE

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

This voluntary school is the only maintained school within the Corporation of London, the Local Education Authority. It is one form entry and has 197 pupils aged 4 to 11 on roll, which is about the same as other schools of this type. There is an integrated nursery centre on the site that provides services for both education and social services. Twenty-four of the children are also on the school roll. There are 61 children with special educational needs (SEN) - 31 per cent - of whom 3 have statements of SEN. The school serves a mixed community, with most pupils coming from minority ethnic backgrounds, the majority of whom are from Bangladeshi families, with African and African-Caribbean families being well represented. English is the first language for a minority of pupils. Until recently, many children entered the nursery with little or no English and this contributed significantly to their attainment being well below average and was still below average, although improved, by the time they entered reception. However, as the reputation of the school spreads, the social profile of pupils entering the school is changing, with more children speaking English and attainment on entry improving rapidly. The school enjoys Beacon School Status.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

This is an outstanding school that achieves high standards in English, mathematics and science. Standards in music are exceptional. These standards are the result of very good teaching and this, together with the outstanding leadership of the headteacher and senior staff, ably supported by a very effective governing body, ensures that the school achieves its objective, *to ensure that high standards of learning take place*. The school provides good value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- By age eleven, attainment in English and mathematics is above average and is well above average in science. Standards in music are outstanding.
- Overall, teaching is very good, with over 90 per cent of lessons being good or better; good planning and high quality questioning are consistent features of the best teaching and contribute very effectively to pupils' good progress.
- The headteacher and senior staff provide outstanding leadership that focuses on continuing to improve the already good standards; they are very effectively supported by a thoroughly involved governing body.
- Targeted support by staff funded by the Ethnic Minority and Travellers' Achievement Grant (EMTAG) and support for pupils with SEN are of a very high quality
- The school cultivates pupils' personal development very effectively.
- Pupils' very good attitudes and their behaviour contribute very positively to their learning.

#### **What could be improved**

- Children's skills in locating and retrieving non-fiction books in the library are under-developed.
- Despite the efforts of the school, the attendance rate is below the national average.

*The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan.*

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

Since the last inspection in January 1995, the school has made impressive progress in tackling all of the action points identified. For example, there has been noticeable improvement in the use of literacy skills across the curriculum and the quality of writing and presentation are of a high standard. The quality and range of work in Information and Communication Technology (ICT) are now of a good standard and are improving rapidly. ICT is beginning to be used more consistently across the curriculum. The determination of the governing body to continue to improve all aspects of the school is reflected in its high quality school improvement planning. Most importantly, the quality of teaching in the school has improved very significantly and is now of a very good standard.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	Compared with			
	All schools			Similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
English	n/a	A	C	A
Mathematics	n/a	A	B	A
Science	n/a	A	A	A*

Key	
very high	A*
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

These are good results indeed, overall, and show that pupils have made very good progress since they were admitted to the school when *these* pupils' attainment on entry was well below average. They also broadly show sustained levels of high standards over recent years. In relation to schools in similar circumstances, that is, schools with a comparable proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals, pupils achieve standards well above average in English and mathematics. In science, the school's performance is in the highest five per cent of schools nationally. The school attributes the dip in the English results in 1999 to a generally weaker cohort, containing more pupils with special educational and language needs than in previous years, but having a less detrimental affect on progress in mathematics.

Inspectors find that pupils' attainment in English and mathematics at age eleven is above average. Some pupils' standards are well above average and the general level would be higher still but for a significant number of pupils, some of whom are relatively recent newcomers to the school, who have significant SEN or need for sustained EMTAG support. Standards in science at age eleven are well above average. At age seven, inspectors find that standards in reading and writing are above average and, in mathematics, are in line with the national average. Pupils' achievements in music are outstanding. The school knows its pupils well and has set challenging, but realistic, targets which it is on course to achieve. Overall, the school is doing its best by its pupils and strives successfully to ensure that each achieves its full potential.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very positive. Pupils are highly responsive and enthusiastic and show interest in their work. They enjoy school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good in and around the school. Pupils are very courteous and polite to each other and to adults.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils have very good relationships with each other and with all members of staff. They willingly take on responsibility in the daily routines of the school.
Attendance	The attendance rate is below the national average. The rate of unauthorised absence is well above the national average.

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour, their personal development and very good relationships are very positive contributors to their effective learning. The school recognises that there is a problem with attendance, the main cause being the taking of holidays in term time, and spends much time and energy trying to improve it.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Good	Very good

*Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Satisfactory' means that the teaching is adequate and strengths outweigh weaknesses.*

Teaching is much better than it was at the last inspection when the overall quality was reported as being sound, although in 1995 there were a few unsatisfactory lessons. This is because there has been an almost complete turnover of staff since the last inspection and the school has selected its teachers very carefully. In this inspection, the overall quality of teaching was judged to be very good and has a direct bearing on the very good progress pupils have made by the time they are ready to leave the school. In the lessons seen, just over 90 per cent was at least good, of which 48 per cent was very good or better. The rest was satisfactory. Teaching for the under fives, overall, was good. It was satisfactory in the nursery and good in the reception class. The teaching of 5 to 7 year olds was good in 73 per cent of lessons, including those for literacy and numeracy, with 17 per cent being satisfactory. The best teaching occurs in Key Stage 2, where 77 per cent of teaching was at least very good, with 8 per cent excellent. No lessons were seen in this key stage that were judged to be less than good. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is of a consistently high standard in Years 5 and 6. The teaching of music, by specialist teachers throughout the school, is of high quality. Homework is used well to reinforce learning.

In the best lessons, teachers' very secure subject knowledge and understanding of methods and strategies, for example, in the literacy and numeracy sessions, attract the attention of the class for the whole of the lessons. Very good planning with clear learning objectives ensures that pupils are fully aware of what is to be learned, and effective questioning challenges pupils to build on work previously learned and are directed well to all groups of pupils. It is not surprising that all pupils, including those with English as an additional language and those with SEN, all of whom are very well supported, make very good progress. The teaching of ICT is of a good standard generally and is very good by the subject co-ordinator. In some classes, it is well integrated into other subjects, for example in some science lessons, and the school is aware of the need to extend the best practice in some classes to the whole school.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. The national literacy and numeracy strategies have been successfully introduced and an impressive ICT suite has recently been opened. Music provision is excellent. The curriculum is enriched by a wide range of visits and visitors and by an impressive range of outside school activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. The school has very effective procedures to identify and support pupils early. They are well supported and make very good progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	This is excellent. Members of this very well resourced service plan and work exceptionally well with class teachers, ensuring that pupils' work is integrated well into the mainstream and that all pupils receive access to the full curriculum and make very good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Overall, very good. Assemblies and music make very positive contributions to pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Exemplary. This is an exceptionally caring school.

The school provides a very effective curriculum that meets statutory requirements fully and places strong emphasis on the development of *all* pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. The provision for



pupils with EAL and for those with SEN is particularly well integrated into the curriculum. Provision for ICT is very good. The school is making progress in ensuring that pupils' skills are used consistently in all classes to support learning in other subjects to bring practice throughout the school up to the level of the best. The excellent music provision leads to singing and string playing of an unusually high standard. The school knows its pupils very well and offers exceptional levels of care.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher has a very clear vision of what sort of school this should be: he " <i>wants the best for the children</i> " and, ably supported by the deputy head, provides excellent leadership and management in achieving this. Their skills complement each other very well in improving standards in teaching and learning. Together with the senior staff they form a strong, effective team that fosters learning, creating an excellent ethos.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors are very supportive and fulfil their statutory responsibilities very well. They are knowledgeable and well informed and committed to raising standards still further.
The school's evaluation of its performance	This is very good. The school plans very well and sets challenging, but realistic targets based on a thorough assessment of pupils' previous performance. The senior staff regularly monitor the quality of teaching.
The strategic use of resources	Excellent. All resources are used very effectively, including funds for pupils with SEN, those from the EMTAG and those from the National Grid for Learning (NGfL).

The headteacher, deputy head and senior staff, well supported by the governing body, provide very clear educational direction for the work of the school, which achieves its aim of: *providing a learning environment which is challenging, stimulating, caring and safe*. The governing body is much more involved in the life of the school since the last inspection. The school applies the principles of best value very effectively.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children like school.</li> <li>• They make good progress.</li> <li>• Behaviour is good.</li> <li>• There is the right amount of homework.</li> <li>• The school is approachable.</li> <li>• Teaching is good.</li> <li>• The school has high expectations.</li> <li>• It works closely with parents.</li> <li>• The school is well managed and led.</li> <li>• It helps pupils become mature and responsible.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The range of activities outside school.</li> </ul>

Inspectors strongly support parents' positive views. A minority of parents would like to see more out-of-school activities but inspectors found the range of activities to be good.

## PART B: COMMENTARY

### WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

**By age eleven, attainment in English and mathematics is above average and is well above average in science. Standards in music are outstanding.**

1. The results of the National Curriculum test in English for *all* pupils aged eleven in 1999, were in line with the national average. In mathematics, they were above the national average, whilst in science pupils' results were well above average. Compared with similar schools, the results in English and mathematics are well above average. In science, results are very high compared with similar schools. The English and mathematics results in 1999, compared to the national picture in English and mathematics, were not as good as the previous year when they were well above average. This was because in a relatively small cohort of no more than 27 pupils, there was a higher percentage of SEN and EAL pupils than average and these small variations to the cohort made significant percentage changes to the test results. This was most marked in English where more pupils with SEN and EAL depressed the proportion of pupils than in previous years achieving higher level results. This affected the mathematics results to some extent, but to a lesser degree. In science, on the other hand, the knowledge-based nature of the test enabled a higher than average number of pupils to achieve well above average, even though there was a higher proportion of pupils than average receiving EMTAG support.
2. Inspection findings broadly reflect last year's test results, with standards in mathematics being above average and those in science being well above average. In English, standards have improved compared with last year and are now above average. These are remarkable achievements, particularly when it is considered that most pupils in this cohort entered the school with attainment well below average and that of the 28 in the year group, nearly 29 per cent have significant SEN or EMTAG support or a mixture of both. Three of these pupils (11 per cent) have entered the school relatively recently. The main reasons for these achievements are first the good standard of teaching and support in the school and the consistently very good teaching in Years 5 and 6. The teacher in Year 6 has been at the school only for just over a year and is now beginning to have a very measurable impact on standards. The second contributory factor to these good standards are the very good attitudes of the pupils to learning which help them to achieve their best.
3. By age seven, pupils' standards in reading and writing are above average and, in mathematics, are in line with the national standard. The English results are above the standards indicated by the 1999 National Curriculum tests that were in line with the national average, although well above compared to similar schools. The school attributes this improvement to the successful introduction of the National Literacy Strategy and to the recruitment of good quality teachers. There is evidence that the National Numeracy Strategy is beginning to improve standards in Key Stage 1.
4. One of the features of the very good teaching in this school is the range of good opportunities given for pupils in all lessons to practise their speaking and listening skills. Teachers emphasise technical vocabulary very well. In an English lesson in Year 2, for example, pupils use vocabulary such as *glossary*, *index*, *alphabetical order*, *fiction* and *non-fiction* with confidence and understanding. Teachers use questioning effectively to promote learning and pupils listen attentively. In the same lesson in Key Stage 1, in which the class was studying the holiday patterns of families in the 1930's, the class was totally absorbed. This was shown clearly when, in answer to her teacher's question "*What information have we found out?*" a girl confidently replied: "*Only rich people went abroad. Middle class people went to the seaside for a week. Working class people went on a day trip to the seaside.*" Such opportunities are present throughout the school. In a literacy lesson in Year 6 for example, the teacher asks: "*How would you know someone was writing in the first person and then in the third person?*" One girl replied "*The writing would be characterised by I*", whilst in reply to the second part of the question a boy said "*when someone not in the story tells the story.*" Such opportunities are not confined to lessons. In an assembly for children in the nursery and Key Stage 1, children described the work they had done to the whole group confidently, gently prompted by the

teacher, whilst all listened quietly and patiently.

5. Literacy supports pupils' learning well in other subjects, such as science and history. This is a significant development since the last inspection. Pupils enjoy reading and, by ages seven and eleven, their reading skills are above average. The reading of the higher attaining pupils is very good, but pupils of all attainment levels and ages would benefit from improvement to their library skills. At age seven, pupils read with fluency and accuracy and understand and are able to talk about their book. Talking about a story of *The Bug Men*, a boy explains: *"It is about a bully and the people he bullied turned into bugs and they started bullying him."* At age eleven, higher attaining pupils are able to talk about a range of authors and show good understanding of a range of texts, selecting relevant information to support their claims, one girl explaining: *"I enjoy J K Rowling's books because of the descriptive passages, easy to understand plots and the variety of settings within his books."* Writing is above average for pupils aged seven. They write in a range of forms: a diary for Cinderella; character profiles; play writing from real experiences, for example, *at the opticians*. Higher attaining pupils write imaginatively and clearly, using adjectives well: *"There was a glowing crystal. They touched it, then they saw a spinning thing. They jumped into it....Nick said: I'm scared. Don't be scared, said Charles. Then they fell into the 22<sup>nd</sup> Century...."* Average attaining pupils spell accurately and punctuate correctly. Most pupils write in a well formed cursive script. All pupils, including those with SEN and EAL, make good progress. In Key Stage 2, pupils make very good progress, including pupils with SEN and EAL, because of the high standard of teaching and the overall standard is above average by age eleven. This would be higher were it not for the unusually high number of pupils needing specialist support in this age group. Handwriting is consistently joined and punctuation is good. Pupils' writing is sustained and confident with a good use of vocabulary as in this example which is by no means unique: *"Her father said, Hermia I want you to marry Demetrius. Hermia was heartbroken, Lysander was torn apart. Demetrius was happy for he had loved Hermia. Hermia was weeping like a willow tree."* Higher attaining pupils write in clear sentences and use well-structured paragraphs. Their vocabulary choices are imaginative and words are used precisely. A child of average ability uses evocative language to conjure up the picture she successfully paints, writing, *"As she explored the damp musty rooms she imagined what it once must have looked like."* Punctuation is generally of a good standard.
6. Numeracy is emphasised well and pupils' skills support other areas of the curriculum effectively. Throughout the school, pupils of all attainment levels make good progress. At age seven, pupils are generally achieving at the expected standard, although a significant number of pupils are achieving above. Average attaining pupils add and subtract two digit numbers with increasing confidence. They show secure understanding of place value and of odd and even numbers. Higher attaining pupils are beginning to develop their own mental strategies in adding two numbers containing three numbers. When working with *shape, space and measures*, pupils recognise and use the geometrical features of shapes such as sphere, cylinder, cube and cuboid. As they move through the school, pupils make very good progress. By age eleven, all pupils have a very secure grasp of mathematics in general and numeracy in particular and the overall standard is above average. Evidence from pupils' past work shows a wide range, from work on angles and handling data to probability. They use maps effectively to calculate distances using metric measures. Higher attaining pupils add, subtract, multiply and divide effectively to two places of decimals. In class, pupils work on the concept of ratio to solve problems and respond well to the challenging work which was well planned as the result of very good teaching. In this lesson, pupils were working at a level well above average.
7. In science, pupils achieve standards above the national average by the age of seven and all pupils make good progress. By the age of eleven, pupils achieve standards well above the national average and pupils make very good progress. At this age, pupils have a very good understanding of scientific concepts. In *Life Processes and Living Things*, pupils show very secure knowledge of the main functions of the human body. Literacy is used well to support learning in the subject, one pupil writing, *"Our heart works with blood. Organs do an important job. The heart pumps blood around our bodies by beating. Every time it beats it squeezes our blood."* In *Physical Processes* pupils know that the Earth's gravity causes weight and there is evidence of scientific vocabulary being used well. A pupil's notes records, *"Forces are measured in Newtons"*. There is good investigative work on *Electricity*, pupils showing they

have clear ideas to answer the question, "Does the length of the wire affect the brightness of a bulb?" One girl writes that she is going to investigate by "changing the length of the wire whilst keeping the same battery and bulb." Having established the conditions needed to make a fair test she concludes, "I think the brightness is going to stay the same because the voltage in the battery is the same and the electrons flow at the same speed." Work is neat and well presented.

8. Standards of music in the school are of exceptional quality. *The Strings Project*, with five part time teachers and musicians funded by the Local Education Authority, is key to this success. It begins with *Musicianship* in the nursery class and this continues up to Year 3. During this time pupils study music through singing games and clapping rhythms, become familiar with instruments such as chime bars and drums and begin to read music. In Years 4 to 6, every child learns a stringed instrument, the vast majority learning the violin with some learning to play the cello. One of the teachers from this project also teaches the children singing, the standard of which is very good. Pupils have string tuition in small groups and also whole class lessons. By age eleven all pupils play a stringed instrument competently, playing an excerpt from a *Corelli* violin concerto and the *Londonderry Air* very effectively using appropriate dynamics and following the directions of the conductor carefully. The standard is well above what is expected for pupils of this age. Indeed there can be few primary schools where the whole of the upper school play the violin or cello so well and receive free tuition and the loan of instruments. This is a valuable resource and it is hard to see how it could be put to better use. At the parents' meeting, parents praised the school for promoting high standards and signalled out the quality of music in particular. Inspectors find that this confidence is very well placed.

**Overall, teaching is very good, with over 90 per cent of lessons being good or better; good planning and high quality questioning are consistent features of the best teaching and contribute very effectively to pupils' progress.**

9. Teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection when there were a few unsatisfactory lessons and the overall quality was sound. Teaching for the under fives is good, overall. It is also good in Key Stage 1. The best teaching occurs in Key Stage 2 where it is very good, overall. Nearly 48 per cent of teaching is very good or better; this is a much higher proportion than is usually found in schools. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is good in Key Stage 1 and very good in Key Stage 2. An impressive feature throughout the school is the way all teachers and support staff work in harmony as a team. This flows from the headteacher down who believes leadership and management *is about working as a team*. This belief is successfully translated into practice with class teachers, teachers and other staff from the EMTAG team, those supporting SEN pupils and support assistants working together to improve standards. It is significant that pupils in lessons accord all adults the same respect. Similarly the teachers and musicians in the String Project work together very well and are integrated well into the life of the school.
10. All teachers are committed to high standards for their pupils and this is evident from their planning which includes clear learning objectives. In one of many examples throughout the school, an English lesson in Year 6, in which the openings of a number of novels and short stories are analysed, the lesson objectives are clearly written on the blackboard, so that pupils know what is expected of them, "Describe and evaluate the style of *Michael Morpugo*". The teacher follows the lesson plan well and he is helped in this by the framework of the literacy hour. Homework is used effectively in this lesson to reinforce and extend learning. The learning objectives are clear and explicit and relate to the work in progress, the teacher instructing the class, "tonight I want you to add to the list of words we have begun that have *Greek origins*." In a well-planned mathematics lesson in the same class, the concepts are introduced according to an increasing level of challenge, with the teacher giving clear explanations to meet the challenges.
11. The quality of questioning is usually very good. These questions challenge pupils to think and to recall their previous learning and reflect the teachers' high expectations that pupils should be challenged to do their best. For example, in the mathematics lesson in Year 6, pupils study the concept of ratio and the teacher relates it to an everyday experience with which children could

be expected to be familiar – painting a room. The teacher’s questions increase skilfully in level of difficulty. *“I like green and I have blue and yellow paint. I use 1 litre of blue and 2 litres of yellow and I like this shade of green, but I have a room twice as big. How many litres of paint will I need?”* The class responds correctly. Then he asks, *“If I need 12 litres of green paint how many will I need of yellow?”* The pupils find this more challenging and the teacher encourages them to talk with one another about the problem, after which they arrive at the solution and make very good progress. In an excellent lesson in Year 5, on *approximating* the teacher asks a simple question, *“What makes you think your answer is accurate?”* Simple, but not simplistic, because in attempting to answer this question the members of the class have to analyse their own strategies for approximating and to examine how exactly they arrive at an estimate before explaining it to the class.

12. The quality of marking varies and is at least satisfactory, but at its best is very good, identifying weaknesses and ways to improve pupils’ work as in *“Your setting out is a little confusing; it is a good idea to use a chart”* (Science work in Year 6). Praise is also used well to provide encouragement and acknowledge work of quality, *“Thank you for your careful observation and labelling”*. (Different piece of science work Year 6). In the response to the questionnaire, parents were very happy with the quality of teaching. On the evidence of this inspection, they are right to be so.

**The headteacher and senior staff provide outstanding leadership that focuses on continuing to improve the already good standards; they are very effectively supported by a thoroughly involved governing body.**

13. The headteacher, very effectively supported by the deputy head and senior staff, provides outstanding leadership and management and is clearly committed to achieving high standards. The governing body is also very effective and supportive in providing a sense of direction for the work of the school. This is achieved by its involvement in the school development plan and through its organisation into key committees for its main areas of work: *personnel, curriculum, finance and general purposes and premises*. It views its role as supporting the school as a critical friend as being very important and believes it holds the headteacher to account. The governing body has done well to reorganise itself since the last inspection when its lack of involvement in school development planning was identified as a weakness and governors were rarely seen in the school during school sessions. Governors now visit the school frequently, depending on their roles and responsibilities, and the chair visits the school regularly to discuss progress with the headteacher.
14. The headteacher’s excellent leadership is characterised by his very strong, clear desire to promote high standards, *“I want the best for the children”* he said with conviction on a number of occasions. He has a very clear vision and knows the strengths and weaknesses of the school well. To this end he meets with his deputy on a weekly basis to discuss short, medium and long term planning and strategies and to evaluate their effectiveness. The headteacher delegates well, but, in so doing, understands the need to keep well in touch with those with delegated authority such as members of the senior management team, the special educational needs co-ordinator and the EMTAG co-ordinators. Regular, purposeful meetings, therefore, take place in which the effectiveness of provision is evaluated, such as targeted EMTAG and SEN support. Teaching in the core subjects is monitored regularly by the senior staff. The National Curriculum test results and the results of non-statutory tests are analysed and individual pupils’ progress is tracked effectively. Realistic, but challenging, targets are set for all pupils and reviewed regularly.
15. Staff respond well to this high quality of leadership and it is not surprising that their morale is high. They know that they are valued and that most of the budget in this well-resourced school is spent on staff. A teacher who joined the school recently had previously worked in the area as a supply teacher. He said he had wanted to work full time in this school because he had heard how well it was managed. Since coming to the school he had found this to be true saying, *“it is nice to be inspired”*.
16. One of the ways the very high standard of leadership and management is demonstrated is by

the very strong relationship the school has with parents. One measure of this was the very well attended parents' meetings and the use of a Bengali interpreter to ensure a sense of inclusion to members of this ethnic group, which is a regular feature of this school's provision. It goes without saying that parents think very highly of the school and of the way the school is led and managed. The school perceives good relationships with parents as going beyond mere courtesy and politeness. Well informed, educated parents, aware of what their children should be learning, are better able to support them at home and to offer encouragement and so help them to make progress. This is the concept behind *The Parents' Room*, an adult education facility in which outside tutors (from the City Literacy Institute) and school staff offer a range of relevant courses, for example in literacy, for parents whose home language is not English. This is jointly managed by the City Literacy staff and the school's literacy co-ordinators. Parents also help to staff the room and the frequency with which it is used reflects the growing confidence and increasing involvement in their children's education to raise standards further.

**Targeted support by staff funded by EMTAG and support for pupils with SEN are of a very high quality.**

17. At the last inspection, provision for these large groups of pupils was very good. The school has maintained these high standards and, in the case of pupils with English as an additional language, has built on them, as provision for these pupils is now outstanding.
18. Pupils supported by EMTAG make very good progress, many starting from a low baseline and by age eleven, achieve standards above the national average and well above those of similar schools. Provision consists of teachers, classroom assistants and a bi-lingual instructor and nursery nurse, managed by two co-ordinators. These staff plan very well both with each other and with class teachers and children in classes relate to them as readily as they do to their class teachers. The co-ordinators, who are also the co-ordinators for English and literacy, do not have a class teaching responsibility and manage this work very effectively, working alongside classes, one in each key stage. In conjunction with the local education authority, a policy has been devised, since the introduction of the National Literacy Strategy, that meets the needs of these pupils in the school.
19. Provision for pupils with SEN is very good. There are very effective procedures for identifying and supporting children early. The importance the school gives to the needs of these pupils can be illustrated by the decision of the governing body that they would be better met if the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) had a clear overview of the school. She therefore, does not have a class responsibility. The SENCO works closely with the EMTAG co-ordinators and they have devised effective procedures when children first enter the school to distinguish between SEN and language needs. The school is sensitive to the lack of clarity that educational jargon can bring to pupils' individual education plans, and arranges regular meetings with some parents and their children so that they fully understand the targets that have been set.

**The school cultivates pupils' personal development very effectively.**

20. Pupils' personal development is promoted very effectively, especially through the school's provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This aspect was reported as being very strong at the last inspection and these high standards have been maintained. The school has a very warm, welcoming atmosphere and has an excellent ethos. This can best be summed up by an excerpt from a display in the dining hall, one girl writing, *"I love my Mum because she is kind because she respects me as her daughter."* One of the school's aims is to *"encourage the spiritual development of the children"*. The school achieves this aim very successfully, especially through assemblies and literacy and music lessons. The use and choice of music in assemblies provides a very reflective and uplifting atmosphere and there are quiet, suitable moments provided for personal reflection at the end of assemblies. Music plays a central part in the life of the school and makes an enormous contribution to pupils' personal development through enhancing the spiritual, social and cultural life in pupils.
21. The school has a very clear moral code supported well by a code of conduct with clear

expectations set out for children, staff, parents and visitors alike. It sets high standards of behaviour and all pupils respond accordingly. Staff act as good role models and treat pupils in a consistent manner. They are fully aware of the expectation that they should “*set a good example by their own behaviour.*” At the meeting, parents felt the introduction of *Golden Time* was a positive innovation and had encouraged good behaviour. Relationships between pupils and between pupils and adults are very positive and there is a strong sense of community in the school. Pupils and adults work very well together and all staff are very approachable. Pupils are very proud of their school and this was summed up by the welcome a boy in Year 1 gave to an inspector on the first day, “*thank you for visiting us!*” The school’s promotion of pupils’ cultural development permeates the school. There is a variety of display in classrooms and around the school representing a range of cultures. The curriculum also reflects the multi-cultural population in the school. Pupils in Year 5 study Caribbean poetry, songs are sung in different languages and the library reflects the multi-cultural diversity of the community. Several staff are bi-lingual and dress in cultural costumes, providing good role models reflecting the school community. Bi-lingualism is seen as a positive benefit, and not a disadvantage, as the school brochure makes clear: “*We think that it is very positive to be able to speak several languages and helps to understand how other languages work.*” The school uses its unique setting very well by arranging visits to the many places of interest in the City of London and further afield and by inviting numerous visitors representing differing cultures to the school.

**Pupils’ very good attitudes and their behaviour contribute very positively to their learning.**

22. Pupils’ attitudes to learning are very good. When children first enter the school as under-fives they are made very welcome and this lays a good foundation for the development of good attitudes and positive values, which they develop as they progress through the school. These attitudes are reinforced by the high quality of teaching for all pupils, including SEN and those supported by the EMTAG team. This quality of teaching and the teachers’ expectations that pupils will do well has a very positive impact on learning and contributes very effectively to their general level of confidence. Pupils are enthusiastic and go to school eagerly. They take pride in their work and in many lessons observed they were totally absorbed and concentrated on their work. At the meeting and in the questionnaire responses, parents said that they were very happy with the attitudes of their children promoted by the school and believed that their children like school.
23. Similarly positive responses were made about pupils’ behaviour, parents saying they were very pleased with pupils’ behaviour. This confidence is well founded, because, in lessons and in and around the school, behaviour is very good and, on occasion, is exemplary, enabling effective learning to take place. In lessons, in response to the high quality teaching, behaviour is generally not an issue as the pupils are too busy listening to their teacher or being fully focused on their tasks. In the well-equipped playground, the children take their turn in playing in the marked out games area. All age groups play well together, including boys and girls, reflecting the very good relationships between the children. There was no sign of bullying or any aggressive behaviour. At lunchtime, pupils are very well behaved.

## WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

### **Children's skills in locating and retrieving non-fiction books in the library are under-developed.**

24. At ages seven and eleven, pupils read well, but their research and retrieval skills are not up to the level of their reading skills. The library is an inviting area and is large and spacious, but discussions with pupils revealed that those aged seven were not able to locate non-fiction books. Pupils aged eleven were able to find the nominated books, but only after a considerable period of time, and showed no sign of being familiar with and using the library classification system. This indicates that insufficient attention is given to teaching these skills.
25. There are areas of shortcomings in the library which, if rectified, would help improve pupils' retrieval skills. There are a series of folders entitled "*How to find the book that you want*" which contains a catalogue of books available. These catalogues are not child-user friendly and for many pupils are placed on shelves that are too high for them to access. A classification chart explaining the system, appropriately placed, would help pupils quickly find the books they are looking for, provided they have been taught how to use it. There is a computer in the library which could be used to catalogue the books, using software such as a Micro Librarian System and would also allow pupils to use their ICT skills.

### **Despite the efforts of the school, the attendance rate is below the national average.**

26. This is below the national average of 94.1per cent and is mainly due to extended holidays and other holidays being taken in term time. It would be unfair to blame the school for this, as not only does it recognise that attendance is a problem, but it devotes a lot of time and energy in trying to improve it. The headteacher is very firm with parents taking holidays in term time and promotes attendance in many ways, for example through newsletters and reminders on notice boards. Extended holidays are strongly discouraged. At meetings with the headteacher it is explained to parents that, except in exceptional circumstances, their child will be taken off roll if the holiday extends beyond 4 weeks, as pupils will fall behind in their learning. This is also put in writing so parents are given plenty of warning.
27. At the parents' meetings, some parents explained that many parents had families living abroad and needed to take extended leave when relatives are ill. They confirmed that the school was rigorous in monitoring this and discouraged absences in excess of one month. They were well aware that their children could be taken off the school roll and said that the headteacher was sensitive to extenuating circumstances. Three children have lost their place at the school for exceeding the (exceptional) one month limit recently. There are signs that this approach is having a positive effect and the number taking extended holidays has reduced. However, the practice of taking shorter holidays in term time to avoid the peak (and therefore more expensive) periods has increased. The monitoring of attendance is good, but would be improved by the use of an electronic recording system. The governing body takes a keen interest in attendance and is understood to be considering this.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

The school should now:

- improve pupils' library research and retrieval skills throughout the school (*paragraphs 24 and 25*);
- continue to take measures to discourage parents to take holidays in term time (*paragraphs 26 and 27*).



## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	21
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	15

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
4.5	43	43	9.5	0	0	0

The table gives the percentage of teaching observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR–Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	19	197
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	n/a	91

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR–Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	61

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	171

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	13
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	8

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.3
National comparative data	5.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	1.5
National comparative data	0.5

Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	14	14	28

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	11	12
	Girls	13	14	13
	Total	26	25	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93 (83)	89 (80)	89 (78)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	12	12	12
	Girls	13	12	12
	Total	25	24	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	89 (79)	89 (83)	86 (79)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	14	13	27

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	12	13
	Girls	11	10	13
	Total	22	22	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	81 (89)	81 (85)	96 (96)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	12	14
	Girls	11	9	13
	Total	22	21	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	81 (81)	78 (89)	100 (100)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (72)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

**Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	10
Black – African heritage	30
Black – other	9
Indian	0
Pakistani	5
Bangladeshi	88
Chinese	3
White	22
Any other minority ethnic group	6

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

**Teachers and classes****Qualified teachers and classes: YR-Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	9.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	16.1
Average class size	28.7

**Education support staff: YR-Y6**

Total number of education support staff	12.5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	155

**Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	11.5

Total number of education support staff	2.5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	89

Number of pupils per FTE adult	6.6
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*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

**Exclusions in the last school year**

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	1	0
Bangladeshi	1	0
Chinese	0	0
White	0	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

*This table gives the number of exclusions of pupils of compulsory school age, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.*

**Financial information**

Financial year	1998/99
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	£
Total income	799064
Total expenditure	777628
Expenditure per pupil	3600
Balance brought forward from previous year	37155
Balance carried forward to next year	58591

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	227
Number of questionnaires returned	134

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	78	20	1	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	64	28	3	1	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	72	25	3	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	58	31	4	1	1
The teaching is good.	72	27	0	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	58	28	13	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	69	22	7	1	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	84	15	1	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	76	20	3	0	1
The school is well led and managed.	84	13	0	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	74	21	1	1	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	58	22	14	2	3

### Summary of parents' and carers' responses

These responses show very strong support indeed for the school and were generally echoed at the two parents' meetings that were very well attended. There was a minority parental view in the questionnaires that there were insufficient out of school activities, but inspectors found there was a good range.