

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **HARRY ROBERTS NURSERY SCHOOL**

London

LEA area: Tower Hamlets

Unique reference number: 100888

Headteacher: Ms J Priestley

Reporting inspector: Mrs T Chakraborti  
12603

Dates of inspection: 8 – 10 May 2000

Inspection number: 187019

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Nursery
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 5
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Harford Street London
Postcode:	E1 4PZ
Telephone number:	0207 790 6711
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Appropriate authority:	Tower Hamlets Local Education Authority
Name of chair of governors:	Norman Willmott
Date of previous inspection:	February 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Tusha Chakraborti	Registered inspector	Personal and social development Language and literacy Mathematics	What sort of a school is it? How high are standards? How well are pupils and students taught? How well is the school led and managed?
Judi Bedawi	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Liz Kounnou	Team inspector	Knowledge and understanding of the world Creative development Physical development	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils? Assessment

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## **REPORT CONTENTS**

	<b>Page</b>
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>6</b>
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>	
<b>HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?</b>	<b>10</b>
The school's results and achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
<b>HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	

## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Harry Roberts is a local authority nursery school, situated in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets. Majority of its children come from the adjacent housing estate, the fifth most deprived ward in London and there is a high degree of social disadvantage. The level of unemployment is very high and many families live in overcrowded conditions. It is about the same size as other nurseries with 54 full-time and 50 part-time children. Approximately three quarters of children are from Bangladeshi origin and many are in the early stages of learning English. The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals is 30 per cent. The attainment of children on entry to the nursery is below that expected of children of this age.

## **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

Harry Roberts is a good nursery school and provides a good quality of education that is well matched to the learning needs of the children. It continues to have a high commitment to equality of opportunity and celebrates the diverse cultures and languages that make up its pupil population. The quality of teaching is good. The school is well led by the headteacher supported by deputy headteacher, staff and governors. The overall effectiveness of the school is good and it provides good value for money.

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

- Children make good progress in most areas of learning.
- Behaviour throughout the school is very good.
- Relationships between the staff and children and between children themselves are very good.
- The school's provision for its children's personal and social development is very good.
- The school supports and monitors its children's academic and personal development very effectively.
- The quality of teaching is good and all staff constantly strive to improve children's attainment in all areas of learning.
- The overall leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher is an effective leader and has a clear educational direction for the school. She is well supported by the staff and governors in planning for the future.
- The school provides effective links with the parents. Parents are supported efficiently to be involved fully in their children's education.

### **What could be improved**

- Improve children's speaking skills.
- Improve the school prospectus by providing the parents with detailed information about the school.
- Make efficient use of the large underspend fund to raise the standards of attainment further.

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

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in February 1996. Since that time the school has successfully addressed most of the key issues identified in the last inspection report and has improved considerably. Curriculum planning has improved. It is thorough, effective and is appropriately implemented by all staff. All children are assessed very effectively and their progress is recorded systematically. Assessment findings are used efficiently to inform future planning. Improved curriculum planning ensures that children are provided with a range of activities in all areas of learning. Well-structured staff development programme, good curriculum planning and very effective assessment procedures ensure that all children build on previous learning and make good progress. Policies are in place. Differentiated planning and careful grouping of pupils ensure that higher attaining pupils are challenged adequately. As identified by the last inspection report, the school has revised the school prospectus. However, the prospectus still does not meet the required standard and does not provide the parents with sufficient information about the school and the curriculum areas it offers.

## STANDARDS

The table summarises inspectors' judgements about the achievements of pupils in relation to the national early learning goals by the time they leave the school.

Performance in:		<b>Key</b> well above average    A above average        B average                    C below average         D well below average    E
Language and literacy	C	
Mathematics	C	
Personal and social development	B	
Other areas of the curriculum	C	

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Children have good attitudes to school and learning. They show interest in their work and enjoy class activities.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is very good. Children are friendly and respect people and property.
Personal development and relationships	The provision for personal development of children is very good. Relationships between adults and children and between the children themselves are very good. They work and play together well.
Attendance	Satisfactory.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

<b>Teaching of pupils:</b>	
Lessons seen overall	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.*

The quality of teaching is good overall, with some very good teaching. It was at least satisfactory or better in all lessons, of which 50 per cent were good and 23 per cent very good. The quality of teaching is maintained at the same level since the last inspection. Very good behaviour management and assessment procedures are used to ensure that children learn well and make good progress.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Broad and balanced curriculum, in line with the Desirable Learning Outcomes.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good provision. Children make good progress in relation to their prior attainment. All children receive good quality support from teachers as well as the nursery nurses and support staff.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The school has a very high proportion of children who speak English as an additional language many of whom are in the early stages of learning English. Support provided by the school for these children is good and ensures that children learn English through all areas of the curriculum.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The school makes good provision for this area. Children are encouraged to reflect upon their actions and consider how they affect others. They are clearly taught right from wrong.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares for its children very well.

The quality and effectiveness of the partnership that the school enjoys with its parents is very good. The relationships are well established between parents and carers and all staff at the school. The school has very good procedures for monitoring children's academic and personal development which ensure that children make good progress. It is well aware of the linguistic needs of the children and appropriately supports children to acquire necessary language skills. The school offers good pastoral care for its children.



## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher provides effective leadership and is well supported by the deputy headteacher and staff.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors have good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and work closely with the senior management.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school evaluates its performance through the evaluation of its development plan. The headteacher and the deputy headteacher have begun to set targets to evaluate their own performances.
The strategic use of resources	The school makes effective use of all staff, time, accommodation and learning resources.

Adequate and well trained staff and adequate learning resources support children's learning 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>• Their children like school.</li> <li>• Children are making good progress.</li> <li>• Behaviour in the school is good.</li> <li>• The teaching is good.</li> <li>• The school expects children to achieve their best.</li> <li>• The school works closely with parents.</li> <li>• The school helps their children to become mature and responsible.</li> <li>• The school is well led and managed.</li> <li>• The school provides interesting range of activities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some parents are concerned that children do not get sufficient homework.</li> <li>• Some parents feel that they are not kept well enough informed about their children's progress.</li> <li>• Some parents do not feel comfortable approaching the school.</li> </ul>

The inspection team agrees with the parents' positive views. However, the team did not find any evidence to confirm the concerns about homework and information about children's progress.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and achievements**

1. All children are assessed in the areas of learning on their entry to the school. Results of this early assessment show that the majority of these children attain below the expected levels. A good start is made to their school life and children make good progress throughout their stay in the nursery. By the time they reach the statutory school age, most of them attain standards that are in line with the Desirable Learning Outcomes for children of this age.
2. Children attain good standards in personal and social development. They relate very well to each other, to staff and other adults in the school. They are well motivated in their play and take turns sensibly. They understand the rules and are aware of right and wrong. They share with and support each other in learning, such as in role play and in outdoor play activities.
3. In language and literacy, children listen well and some are able to respond confidently during story time. They enjoy taking part in rhymes and songs. Many know the names of the letters and recognise initial letter sounds. Some are able to retell the stories they already know in correct order. Some older children write their names and sometimes describe their drawings or their own experiences in a full sentence. However, children's speaking skills are insufficiently developed and only a few children are able to talk about their own experiences or retell stories. Most children attain satisfactory standards in this area and make good progress in acquiring language skills, especially writing.
4. In mathematics, children are able to count to ten and recognise shapes like circles, triangles and squares. Many recognise and create patterns and play matching games. Most children understand mathematical language, such as large, small, in front of, behind. They are familiar with number rhymes, songs, stories and counting games, such as 'Handa's Surprise'. Children achieve satisfactory standards and make good progress in mathematics.
5. Children's knowledge and understanding of the world are developing well. In science activities children working in the wild area make close observations of frogs and other living things. They grow plants from seeds and understand that plants need water to grow. In technology children make models with boxes and a range of other materials, learning how to join materials with glue or sellotape. Children use information technology independently. They are able to use a large ball mouse confidently to move a pointer on the computer screen to highlight and select various objects. They are able to go back and repeat the sequence many times.
6. In creative development, children achieve standards in line with those expected for this age. They make good progress throughout their time in the school. They paint pictures and gain experience of a good range of colour tones and shades. Some children are able to control the brush and paint recognisable shapes, others have less control but nevertheless happily make patterns with the paint.

7. Children have plenty of opportunities to play with musical instruments. They use a range of symbols to represent music on a stave and are familiar with a good range of nursery songs and rhymes and many join in enthusiastically with the words and actions. A few children watch passively and play little part in this activity. There are many opportunities for children to use their imagination and to act out stories, such as using toy animals to act out the story of Handa's Surprise.
8. In physical development, children achieve standards in line with those expected for children of this age. They use the climbing apparatus and are able to run, climb, balance and jump with increasing confidence. Older and more confident children can control their bodies when jumping from high climbing apparatus onto a crash mat. A few children are able to attempt a star shape as they jump.
9. Throughout the school children with special educational needs and those in the early stages of learning English make good progress.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

10. Children develop good attitudes to school and enjoy a very positive introduction to many new learning experiences, within a happy and very supportive environment. The quality of children's behaviour and all relationships in the school community are very good. Attendance is satisfactory.
11. Children enjoy coming to school and most arrive on time. They usually settle quickly into routines, for example, politely greeting their teacher on arrival, selecting their name card and being marked in the register. If children feel at all unsure, then parents and carers are welcome to stay until they feel more settled.
12. The development of independence is considered very important. Children are free to decide the activities they become involved in. Staff keep a very careful watch on each child's level of involvement and interests, ensuring that they take part in all aspects of learning, gently guiding and encouraging them in activities that they appreciate least. Children often show good level of concentration, impressive for those so young. A good example was seen where a small group of pupils with little proficiency in English language worked on drawing and mark making. They were very reluctant to stop for the end of session story.
13. The children learn to share equipment readily and understand that they have to take turns. They listen carefully to and quickly follow their teachers' instructions. They are eager learners and rightly proud of the work they produce.
14. Behaviour is very good. It is supported by a very good policy that offers clear guidance to staff who use positive behaviour strategies very well. The children are provided with clear boundaries and usually do their very best to behave properly. All staff have high expectations of the children's behaviour that are fully realised. On occasions when children behave inappropriately, staff gently take them to one side and explain why such behaviour is unacceptable. The children accept this guidance and try hard to improve. Parents are always informed and involved if there are any concerns. There is no evidence of aggressive behaviour or bullying.

15. The quality of relationships is very good. Children who are lacking in confidence or who are shy are supported and encouraged, so that they quickly make friends. All children mix easily together and racial and social harmony prevails. Very high regard is paid to mutual respect. Adults value each child and the children relate very well to them. They are eager to share their achievements or to ask for help when it is needed. The children treat their environment with respect and care. One little boy, totally unprompted, helped to sweep up rubbish with a dustpan and brush during 'tidy up' time. The children behave very sensibly, observed as they waited patiently to wash their hands before lunch, a routine that took much longer than usual due to one set of washrooms being temporarily closed for maintenance.
16. The attention paid to children's personal development is very good. Every opportunity, formal and informal, is used to ensure that children gain an understanding of maturity and responsibility in their actions and in the way that they treat each other. Pupils are expected to take responsibility and do this readily, for example, looking after the plants in the garden and making sure that they put toys away.
17. Attendance registers are properly maintained. However, there is a high incidence of holidays taken during term times. Although attendance is not mandatory at this age, any prolonged absence hinders pupils' progress in basic learning skills, particularly for those with little proficiency in English.
18. Parents are very pleased with behaviour and the good attitudes promoted by the school. Since the last inspection, overall standards have been well maintained.

#### **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?**

19. The quality of teaching is good overall. Teaching was very good in 23 per cent of lessons observed. It was good in 50 per cent and satisfactory in 27 per cent of the lessons.
20. In most lessons good pace and very good class management make a positive contribution to children's attainment and progress. Teachers assess the children very effectively to ensure that they build on their previous learning and make consistent progress in all areas of learning. The nursery nurses and support staff support the children's learning very efficiently. All staff have a good understanding of the areas of learning as outlined in the Desirable Learning Outcomes. Planning is satisfactory and covers all areas of learning which provides a balanced experience of the curriculum for all children. However, short-term planning does not always ensure that all children have the opportunity to explore the planned activities.
21. Staff make good use of the resources to support children's learning. For example, the expertise of the nursery nurses and the learning support assistants, some of whom are from the same background as the children, are used successfully to enhance children's language skills and the knowledge and understanding of the areas of learning. Bilingual staff make valuable contribution to the education of children, who are in the early stages of English, by providing support in their mother-tongue which is Sylheti for most.
22. Teaching of children with special educational needs is good. Very effective use is made of the nursery nurses and learning support assistants to support children with special

educational needs. The quality of teaching by these staff is good and makes a significant contribution to the progress made by all children.

## **HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?**

23. The overall quality and range of opportunities for learning are good and have improved since the previous inspection in February 1996. The two key issues in this area have been addressed successfully. Longer-term aims are set out in great detail in the Tower Hamlets Early Years curriculum document, 'Planning for Progress'. The school has worked hard to ensure that termly planning draws successfully on this document and provides activities that will build on children's previous experiences. Very thorough assessment and tracking of individual children provides the staff with very good information about children's progress. This information is used very well to plan activities each term that are designed specifically to make sure that all the children have opportunities to achieve the Desirable Learning Outcomes in each area of learning. From these good starting points staff have planned exciting activities. For example, to interest the children in plants and growing things all the trees around the school have been labelled with large bright labels, and as a result some children are beginning to notice the different shapes of leaves on different trees. Other children have worked busily in the garden digging over the ground, looking with fascination at worms they find wriggling in the soil, and then planting rows of onions and tomatoes. A few higher attaining children have carefully made labels to mark out the rows. Each term children learn the stories in a few core books; playing with toy owls they act out the story of Owl Babies. Other children use cut out pictures to make up their own stories.
24. The curriculum is organised in a way that gives children complete choice in the activities they will take part in. Very careful tracking and observations by all the staff, and the high quality of all the activities ensure that children are involved in learning for most of the time. Children in the nursery choose to take part in activities because they are interesting and staff sensitively allow children to move on to another activity when they have had enough! Children develop independence and have very good opportunities to use their initiative as a direct result of the freedom that they are given. Occasionally some children choose to take part in activities that are less challenging for too long. This is particularly the case for a few older and potentially higher attaining children. Planning for the shorter term is undertaken fortnightly, and clearly sets out the range of activities that will be available in each area of the nursery. The activities are well linked to the learning intentions that were identified in the medium-term plans. However, generally the learning intentions are repeated on shorter-term plans, and the small steps that children will make towards these intentions within each fortnight are not clearly identified. As a result some opportunities are missed, for example, specific vocabulary for each focus activity is not set out. This means that, sometimes, staff do not give sufficient emphasis to the development of spoken English.
25. Children with special educational needs are well catered for, good individual plans have been drawn up to meet their needs. Clear individual targets are identified that children can work towards in small measurable steps. Staff have regular meetings to talk about all children's achievements, and all staff are equally responsible for making observational notes which are shared. As a result of this very good understanding of the needs and

achievements of each child in the nursery, children with special educational needs make good progress.

26. A good range of extra-curricular activities is provided for the children including a wealth of visits. Children have visited the National Gallery and Canary Wharf, where they found they could see their school. They have visited Queen Mary's College looking at the building with fascination, and Bethnal Green Museum is among the many other places of interest that children have been taken to.
27. The school makes very good provision for personal, social and health education through a well established key worker system. The work of the school is underpinned by the very good work in this area. As a result almost all children are happy and contented, they learn to share and negotiate, and even at lunchtime this good work carries on, with children sitting in special places to eat in a group with an adult. As a result children learn social skills, listening to each other and waiting politely to start their meal.
28. The school has developed good links with the community through the good links established with families. Parents are very supportive of the school. Close liaison with other local nursery schools provides staff with good support. Teachers from the local primary school visit the nursery before children transfer so that the children know a familiar face. Links between the staff of the nursery and the primary school staff are not strong, however a new headteacher in the primary school is beginning to develop closer links.
29. The school meets statutory requirements by providing a curriculum for children under five that is clearly based on the Desirable Learning Outcomes for children of this age. Children with special educational needs are fully involved in the activities that the nursery provides.
30. Provision for children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Taking each aspect separately moral, cultural and social development are good and spiritual development is satisfactory.
31. The school makes sound provision for the development of spiritual awareness. The regular singing together as a whole school is clearly a special occasion for all the children. They proudly come out to the front of the room to lead the singing. Opportunities occur incidentally in lessons, mainly due to the exciting nature of the activities that are planned. For example children putting their hand into a large bag wriggle and giggle with anticipation. Particular excitement occurred when an ant was found crawling on a piece of tree bark from the bag. Looking for creatures under logs generated many gasps of delight, and then children whispered very quietly so as not to scare a frog they found. A parent spontaneously singing 'There's a worm at the bottom of the garden' created a wonderful atmosphere when a worm was turned up as children dug over the soil. The children joined in happily singing and digging together.
32. Provision for children's moral development is good and permeates the life of the whole school. There is a clear and well-understood set of values, which underpins all school activities. Children generally respect and take care of the school's resources and are trusted to work with them independently. From the time they enter school children are made aware of what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. Staff work together as a real team and ensure that the school's policy for behaviour is used well, intervening to

explain why actions are not appropriate, and encouraging children to negotiate when they want something that another child has. For example children watering the garden with a limited number of watering cans were encouraged to ask each other if they could have a turn next. The children with a watering can were expected to agree and hand them over when they had finished their turn. As a result all the children worked happily together and all were busily involved all the time.

33. Provision for children's social development is good. All staff provides very good role models and act with consistency and promptness to reinforce moral and social values. Children have very good relationships with the staff and with one another, and have many opportunities during the school day to use their initiative. The school encourages children to help one another and this is particularly evident when new children join the school. For example older children who have acquired a little English help to translate for younger children who understand little English.
34. Provision for children's cultural development is good and the school takes an active approach to this area of the curriculum, weaving many opportunities for children to study their own and other cultures into activities. Throughout the school photographs and displays celebrate the rich cultural diversity of the nursery children. Books in dual texts are freely available all around the school, displays are often in two languages and number rhymes are often sung in English and Sylheti.

#### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

35. Overall, care and attention paid to pupils' daily welfare are very good. The well established 'keyworker' system along with the very close staff teamwork ensure that all children receive very good support in their work and personal development. The assessment of children's attainment and progress and academic monitoring procedures are now very good. This represents very significant improvement since the last inspection when there were key issues related to these areas. The monitoring of behaviour is very good. Measures to monitor and improve attendance are satisfactory.
36. Of note is the significant contribution made by all support staff who are fully involved in all aspects of planning and monitoring. The school is particularly fortunate in having experienced bi-lingual staff who do much to raise the attainment and enhance the progress of the very considerable number of children who arrive in the nursery with little or no English. Story time provides a very good example of the work done, with teacher and nursery nurse working very closely together. Each page of the story is read first in English, and then immediately translated into 'Bangla', for the additional language children. All the children remain engrossed in the story asking questions and contributing very effectively in their respective languages. The nursery nurse often responds in English and in the home language, dependent on the understanding of the child concerned.
37. The monitoring of behaviour, procedures to prevent any harassment, and personal development is very good. Records of any concerns are kept by the child's keyworker and fully discussed at the daily team meeting. Relevant action is decided, often including realistic targets to improve any inappropriate behaviour or attitudes. The headteacher is also aware of any ongoing concerns. Parents are kept fully aware and their participation is sought to resolve any problems. Class discussion groups at the end of sessions are

used to focus very appropriately on school expectations and aspects of behaviour or personal development and this works well. These whole-class sessions are also used positively to celebrate and praise those who have improved their behaviour or other aspects of personal development. Staff provide good informal guidance to children as the need arises.

38. The monitoring of attendance is satisfactory. Most children are brought to school on time but any late arrivals are marked in the register. Parents are aware that they should send a message to the school if their child is ill. Many families in the local area still follow the long established cultural tradition of regularly returning to visit relatives living abroad. They are usually away for several weeks or even in some instances, months. This has a negative impact on the children's attainment and progress, particularly in learning English as on return, previous learning is usually forgotten. The school follows the local education authority policy which is to grant 15 days extended leave in exceptional circumstances. After the absence of further ten days, names of the absent children are taken off the registers and new children are admitted.
39. Procedures for child protection are good. There is a trained designated person and local authority guidance is followed. Staff are aware of procedures and some have also been trained. Any sensitive records are separately and securely kept. Notes are kept of any concerns and advice and guidance sought from external agencies when needed. Currently the school has no children on the 'at risk' register, nor does it have any 'looked after' children.
40. Daily routines are well managed and organised. There are qualified first aiders at hand to deal with any minor accidents and an accident book is properly maintained. Lunchtime is supervised efficiently with adults eating with the children. On leaving the school, children go to a number of different primary schools, as there are not enough places at the nearest school. Links with the local primary school is developing well, since the appointment of a new headteacher in this school.
41. The school follows local authority guidance for health and safety and all required procedures are in place. Records of fire drills are properly recorded and held regularly as are other required tests. Risk assessment is undertaken including the assessment of possible hazard when children go on visits. A small number of areas for attention, including the need for soft landing surfaces under and around portable large outside play equipment, were brought to the headteacher's attention. Some parents have also expressed concerns about traffic on the road outside the school.
42. The school has worked hard to address the issues raised in the last report regarding assessment and the monitoring of academic progress. The procedures for monitoring and assessing pupils' academic progress and personal development are very effective. A very good system of noting observations of individual children who take part in activities has been devised. Portfolios of children's significant achievement are now established, with dated work samples, photographs and sometimes comments from the children themselves. All staff are responsible for recording these observations, many of which are further discussed at regular evaluation meetings. In addition significant achievements are noted in a team booklet. The observations are collated and transferred to individual children's records, which are updated assiduously by one member of staff from each team. Curriculum leaders use the information gathered to make regular audits of children's overall experiences in the areas of learning. The information they glean from



these audits is then used to guide the learning intentions drawn up in medium-term planning. Staff meeting agendas always contain a slot for discussing children, where further information is shared by the whole staff. This very good system extends to children with special educational needs. The collective responsibility and very good team work ensures that the individual development of all children is tracked very carefully throughout their time in the school, and that all staff are fully aware of the needs of all of the children. This work is a strength of the school and results in very good records of achievement that are shared with parents and passed to the child's next school. The records provide a comprehensive outline of children's achievements in each area of learning. Children with special educational needs have clear targets included in their individual education plans.

### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

43. The quality and effectiveness of the partnership that the school enjoys with its parents are very good.
44. Relationships are well established between parents and carers and all staff at the school. The staff successfully ensure that the transition from home to more formal education is as productive as possible for the children and their families. The keyworkers who are responsible for individual children throughout their time in the nursery offer the main link between home and school with the result that partnership works very effectively. Communications are enhanced through use of bi-lingual staff.
45. All parents are warmly welcomed into the school. Many of them help with learning activities such as reading and translating stories to the children, helping with design and technology, with the garden or assisting when the children go on trips. The school strongly supports adult learning through external funding providing, for example, English and computing classes. Parents relish the opportunity to improve the quality of their own education and so help their children to share and enjoy learning. Classes are very well attended and parents make impressive progress within a few months of starting to learn English.
46. The quality of information provided to parents is satisfactory overall. Although translated, progress on developing the prospectus is unsatisfactory. Essential basic information including the year to which it relates, the telephone number and address of the school and the name of the headteacher and the chair of governors is not included, nor is the admissions procedure explained. It is not easy to read because there are large sections of text with very few clearly identified headings so that information cannot be found easily. The language used is sometimes difficult to understand, for example, 'gross motor skills'. It is not a parent friendly document and does not reflect the many exciting and stimulating opportunities and initiatives offered by the school. The annual governors' report also does not include sufficient information that would be appreciated by parents.
47. All children receive a very full report of their achievements on transfer to primary school at age five. The school feels that with so many families speaking Sylheti, it is more appropriate to explain children's progress verbally at the very well attended parents' conferences. Staff readily provide parents with much information on a regular informal basis, at the start and end of sessions and this is greatly appreciated. Training sessions

are provided for parents on 'how to value children's work'. This is extremely positive and has raised parental awareness, pride and understanding of the progress that their children make.

48. The school promotes homework well through allowing children to take reading books home on a regular basis. There are also 'story bags' containing various activities and toys linked to the most popular books. The success of the English classes means that an increasing number of parents are able to become involved with their child's learning at home. For parents who do not have any written language skills, the school has a small stock of audiotapes.
49. Parents feel fully involved in the life of the school and appreciate the quality of partnership offered. They express a high level of satisfaction with the standards achieved. The school continues to maintain a very good partnership with its parents.

### **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

50. The leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher provides clear educational direction and strong and purposeful leadership. Many new strategies have been put in place since the previous inspection to improve educational standards, such as, reviewing policies, revising and implementing appropriate planning and assessment and monitoring procedures. The chair of the governors and the headteacher work together well with the local education authority's school development adviser. They are supported effectively by the deputy headteacher and a committed team of staff.
51. The governors are aware of their responsibilities and are developing their roles. The chair monitors the effectiveness of the school through visits and regular contact with the headteacher. Policies and schemes of work have been reviewed and revised appropriately. There are coordinators for most areas of learning and their roles in monitoring their subject areas are developing well. Teaching is monitored effectively by the headteacher and the deputy headteacher. The monitoring process forms a part of staff development. The school development plan contains a strategic overview of the needs of the school and is an effective tool for bringing about improvement. It includes appropriate targets to address educational development.
52. Provision for children with special educational needs is managed very well by the coordinator. A range of policies in the areas of behaviour, equal opportunity and health and safety guides the work of the school and ensures equality of opportunity for all children. Children who speak English as an additional language are supported effectively.
53. The aims and values of the school are very clearly reflected in its practice. The school is clearly committed to high achievement.
54. All teachers, support staff and the nursery nurses are conscientious and work very effectively as a team, contributing to the good standards of teaching and the good quality of education provided. The school has an adequate number of teaching and non-teaching staff who are suitably qualified and experienced. Arrangements for the professional development of all staff are good and always linked carefully to identified whole school needs, in the school development plan. The headteacher has recently undergone the

training on 'The Leadership Programme for Serving Headteachers', evaluating her own performance. She shared her experience with staff and has set targets for herself and her deputy for further improvement of their management skills. New members of staff and newly qualified teachers receive good support. Teachers work very closely with all support staff. Lunchtime supervisors and playground staff make a positive contribution to the life of the school.

55. The overall quality and use of accommodation are good. The two main teaching areas are of a suitable size for the number of pupils using them at any one time. The administration areas are just adequate. Parents have access to a good size room that is well used for various activities and classes during the week. Display of children's work and imaginative organisation of classes contribute well to providing a stimulating learning environment. The very well used pleasant school grounds with mature trees provide much needed open space for physical activities in an area where many families live in refurbished tenement blocks. New trees have been planted to celebrate the new century. Grassy areas, permanent fixed play equipment, an enclosed wild area with a pond and the small garden where fruit, vegetables and plants are being grown provide the children with many opportunities for discovery and play. The school and grounds are kept clean and tidy. The fabric of the building is starting to age. There is, for example, evidence of water leakage in parts of the ceiling.
56. The provision of learning resources for all areas of learning is satisfactory. Resources are suitable for the ages and needs of the children and are used well. They are often used imaginatively, for example, when tables are covered with ready mix poster paint and used for hand painting, with children drawing images in the paint. The number of books is adequate and there are dual language books in several different languages, including Turkish. The children are able to access and use computers, developing their skills in using the keyboard and mouse. A suitable range of software is provided, keeping them interested and involved. The outside areas of the school provide valuable opportunities for the children to develop their physical skills and also widen their knowledge and understanding of the living world. Good use is made of outside resources, locally and in the wider community. Children go on many visits, for example, to the local library, Brick Lane Market, St Catherine's Dock, Hainault Forest and the National Gallery.
57. The local education authority retains overall control of the school's budget, and is responsible for all financial arrangements and monitoring. The headteacher is responsible for managing a limited delegated resource budget, and specific grants, for example, yearly standards fund. Day-to-day financial administration of this budget is sound, staff work well together and efficient tracking of the school budget takes place. The budget is used carefully to provide adequate resources and the standards fund has been targeted wisely for staff training. However, overall financial administration of the school's budget is weak. According to the local education authority's budget statement, as shown in the headteacher's form, a very high underspent fund is retained by the school from its delegated resource budget. The headteacher and the governors have no knowledge of this fund and, as a result, they are unable to make efficient use of this large underspend. Clarification regarding the precise amount of the underspend was sought by the inspection team from the local education authority during the inspection. No satisfactory explanation was available. Following the inspection, a breakdown of budget underspends for the last five years has been made available. This shows the 1999/2000 underspend to be still very high. The headteacher and the governors are yet to make good use of this fund to improve the quality of educational provision further.

## **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

58. In order to continue to raise the standards further, the headteacher, staff, governors and the local education authority should now:

- (1) improve children's speaking skills by providing all children more opportunities to be involved in class and group discussions;
- (2) publish a new prospectus with information for parents about all areas of the school's curriculum and work;
- (3) ensure that the large underspend is used appropriately to improve the educational provision and the standards of attainment further.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	31
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	21

### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	23	50	27	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*

<b>Pupils on the school's roll</b>	Nursery
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	80
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	24

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

<b>Special educational needs</b>	Nursery
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	19

<b>English as an additional language</b>	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	80

<b>Pupil mobility in the last school year</b>	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	Nil
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	Nil

### *Attendance*

#### **Authorised absence**

	%
School data	n/a
National comparative data	n/a

#### **Unauthorised absence**

	%
School data	n/a
National comparative data	n/a

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

### *Teachers and classes*

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	4.8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	16.7

Total number of education support staff	8.0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	195

Number of pupils per FTE adult	6.3
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*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### *Financial information*

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	18,452
Total expenditure	16,886
Expenditure per pupil	150
Balance brought forward from previous year	14,286
Balance carried forward to next year	15,852

***Results of the survey of parents and carers***

**Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	104
Number of questionnaires returned	42

**Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	88	10	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	62	38	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	81	14	0	0	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	31	19	2	7	40
The teaching is good.	81	17	0	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	55	36	0	0	10
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	71	12	2	2	12
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	62	31	0	0	7
The school works closely with parents.	69	21	2	0	7
The school is well led and managed.	69	24	0	0	7
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	74	17	2	0	7
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	64	26	2	0	7

**Other issues raised by parents**

Parents are concerned that there is no zebra crossing near the school.

## **PART D: AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

### **PERSONAL AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT**

59. Children's personal and social development is good. By the time children reach compulsory school age, the majority attain standards that are above the children of this age. They relate very well with each other, the staff and to other adults in the school. They are very well behaved and demonstrate good attitudes to learning. They take turns while answering questions and expressing their opinions in group discussions. Most are independent learners and work well independently or as part of a group. They are able to make appropriate selection of books, activities, toys and equipment. They recognise right and wrong and understand and follow school rules. They learn to respect different cultures and religions. Most children respond to a range of experiences very well. For example, in a story time session, while listening the story of 'Good Night Owl', they respond to the teacher's questions with good understanding and enjoyment. They display a great deal of interest, joy and wonder while planting in the garden or exploring living things in the wild garden.

### **LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

60. Children attain standards that are in line with the expected outcomes for children of this age. They listen well to the teachers and other staff. They take part in role play and some were seen acting out 'Handa's Surprise' using the names of the animals about which they have read in the story and speaking to each other in Sylheti. They enjoy taking part in rhymes and songs and some recite from memory. However, children's speaking skills are not adequately developed and many, especially the younger children, are not able to express their opinions or continue discussions using complete sentences or appropriate vocabulary.
61. Children enjoy books, handle them carefully and recognise that in English print is read from left to right and top to bottom. Most are keen to look at books and talk about the pictures. Older children are able to retell stories in correct order. They choose books to take home and understand that print tells the story. Most children recognise their names and letters of the alphabet. Older children recognise letter sounds and read simple texts using picture clues and initial letters.
62. Children's writing skills are developing well. Younger children enjoy mark making, describing their pictures, following listening to the story 'AHHH! Said Stork'. They are beginning to name, sound and write individual letters. Older children write their names and recognise that writing communicates meaning. Some of these children write full sentences using appropriately formed letters. Children make good progress.
63. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers work with all staff to provide children with good quality experiences. They use good questioning techniques to reinforce and enhance children's learning and assess their progress very effectively. Management of behaviour is very good. Resources are satisfactory and are used effectively to enhance children's literacy skills.



## **MATHEMATICS**

64. Standards in mathematics are in line with those expected of children of this age. Most children can count backward and forward to ten and some are able to count to 20. Progress in mathematical skills is promoted effectively through practical activities, such as counting, adding and taking away numbers using real fruits while reading 'Handa's surprise' or counting the number of shapes when making patterns. They sing number songs from memory. Many recognise shapes like circles, squares and triangles and create patterns by cutting and pasting different shapes. They learn the concept of measurement while joining poles together to make them longer or shorter. Many understand mathematical language, such as large, small, round, edge, longer and shorter using these correctly in their everyday play.
65. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Relationships are very good. Teachers, nursery nurses and support assistants plan together and have a shared role in assessment. In all activities adults look for meaningful ways to help children learn, for example, counting plants during the gardening activities and living things in the science activity. Resources are satisfactory, are readily available to the children and used effectively.

## **KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD**

66. By the time children leave the school they achieve standards in line with those expected for children of this age in this area. They make good progress throughout their time in the school. These standards have been maintained since the previous inspection.
67. In science activities children working in the wild area make close observations of frogs and other creepy crawlies. They are completely fascinated by the creatures and a few children make good observational drawings of woodlice, showing details such as the legs. Other children are involved in planting and caring for a vegetable garden. They have grown some plants from seeds and have cultivated the soil to plant onions and tomatoes. They understand that plants need water to grow and have been busy making sure that the precious plants have plenty of water.
68. In technology work children make models with boxes and a range of other materials, learning how to join materials with glue or sellotape. They learn how to make a cylinder by rolling paper and talk about the strength of the rolls, and they decorate models with mathematical shapes.
69. Children use information technology independently. They are able to use a large ball mouse confidently to move a pointer on the computer screen to highlight and select various objects. Two higher attaining children laugh together excitedly as they make an aeroplane on the screen grow bananas instead of wings. They are able to go back and repeat the sequence many times, roaring with laughter each time.
70. During the inspection no activities to develop history and geography skills took place, however the comprehensive longer-term planning indicates that children have appropriate experiences in this area of the curriculum at other times in the year.
71. Teaching in this curriculum area is consistently good, and a high proportion of very good lessons were observed. Staff work hard to provide a range of exciting and interesting

activities for the children who are frequently completely absorbed. For example, whilst gardening in the vegetable plot children were bustling about, cheerfully digging and watering. Some challenging experiences are planned, for example children looking at many different fruits talk about their senses as they look carefully, touch, smell and taste the fruit. The very good teaching is characterised by very good questioning which makes the children think, for example children are asked to predict which creatures they might find under the logs in the wild area. Good management and organisation ensures that the children are encouraged and supported and behave well at all times, taking turns and taking great care not to spoil anything in the wild area or the garden. Many of the activities are fun! As a result children persevere at them learning how to sustain concentration. Generally teachers, nursery nurses and learning support assistants have high expectations, particularly of children's social development. The activities are carefully planned and usually support other areas of the curriculum well. However, shorter-term planning does not break down the medium-term learning intentions into small steps for different ability groups. As a result opportunities to develop skills are sometimes missed, for example potentially higher attaining children describing the smell of each fruit are not challenged to expand their answers.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

72. By the time children leave the school they achieve standards in line with those expected for children of this age in this area. They make good progress throughout their time in the school. These standards have been maintained since the previous inspection.
73. Children have frequent opportunities to paint pictures, although the paint is usually prepared for the children the colours are changed regularly so that children have experience of a good range of colour tones and shades. Some children are able to control the brush and paint recognisable shapes, others have less control but nevertheless happily make patterns with the paint. During the inspection children playing with paint squirted onto a table used their fingers to draw shapes in the yellow paint, for example squares and triangles. Some higher attaining children wrote their name in the paint and decorated other names with various patterns. The children predicted that the paint would turn blue when blue paint was added to the table, they were fascinated to see the paint turn green. A few children drawing plants outside in the sunshine with pencils include good details, for example they draw a stem and the leaves of the plant are clearly visible.
74. Children have plenty of opportunities to play with musical instruments. A music corner is set up in one area of the nursery and children were observed using the tape player to listen and sing along with music tapes, often joining in with the actions. There is a good display of children's own music where children have used a range of symbols to represent music on a stave. During the inspection a parent played piano in a whole-school singing session. The children are familiar with a good range of nursery songs and rhymes and many join in enthusiastically with the words and actions, a very good atmosphere is created as staff and children laugh and sing together. A few children watch passively and play little part in this activity.
75. There are many opportunities for children to use their imagination and to act out stories. During the inspection children used toy animals to act out the story of *Handa's Surprise*. Throughout the day many children play together creating an imaginative fantasy often talking in a mix of English and Sylheti. For example two boys took turns together to act

out a series of actions and events with the toy animals, talking excitedly together in Sylheti they call out “Help me! Help me!” in English as the snake attacks. Other children playing in the water use boats and other toys to act out a story together, happily splashing and swooshing the water about.

76. Teaching in this curriculum area is good, and a few very good lessons were observed. Staff work patiently with small groups of children encouraging them to make up stories and record them in a sequence of pictures. A nursery nurse teaching a group of children how to draw plants and flowers draws with them, modelling good techniques and encouraging the children to include details in their pictures. The positive encouragement she gives the children ensures that most succeed in making a picture that they are happy with. The very good relationships that all staff have with children create an atmosphere that allows children to use their imaginations freely. In addition a good range of activities are planned and prepared providing children with good opportunities to work and play creatively. As a result most children work confidently and happily with high self-esteem.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

77. By the time children leave the school they achieve standards in line with those expected for children of this age in this area. These standards have fallen slightly since the previous inspection when standards were good. However they continue to make good progress throughout their time in the school.
78. When children are working and playing on the large apparatus most run, climb, balance and jump with increasing confidence. During the inspection older and more confident children learned how to control their bodies when jumping from high climbing apparatus onto a crash mat. A few children are able to attempt a star shape as they jump. Younger and less confident children work on less challenging apparatus and are well supported by adults who encourage them to move along the apparatus and teach them how to move their hands and feet together in order to climb a low ladder.
79. Children have plenty of opportunities to use small apparatus, for example, during the inspection large and small balls were used to practise throwing and catching. Children work at a range of levels with some older children able to catch accurately and other younger children not yet succeeding in controlling the balls.
80. Children use their hands to control scissors, brushes, pens, pencils and other small equipment in very many activities around the nursery. As a result of the good opportunities that are provided children are learning to control these small tools with increasing skill, they cut out pictures with confidence and many children hold writing tools correctly. A few higher attaining children are able to write a few letters mostly correctly, and many children use pens to make marks successfully.
81. Teaching in this curriculum area is good, and some very good lessons were observed. Staff work well as a team to provide a safe range of climbing activities for the children. Large apparatus is changed daily to provide interest and increasing levels of difficulty. Challenging metal apparatus is set up on a grassed area with good attention to safety. Less challenging wooden apparatus is set up on the tarmac surface, staff take great care to ensure that the apparatus is set at appropriate heights. During the inspection large

climbing apparatus was used each day, however longer-term planning shows that children also have frequent opportunities to use large wheeled toys and other large apparatus. The apparatus is very popular with most of the children who chose to use it in large numbers each day. Good links with personal and social development ensure that children learn to take turns, work safely and to respect other children who are less confident. The good teaching is characterised by clear directions, close supervision and good management to ensure that children work safely; all apparatus is supervised carefully. The staff are particularly sensitive and supportive of less confident children, encouraging them to work at their own level and ensuring that they can succeed. Children are encouraged to use their imagination, for example sometimes the wooden apparatus becomes a bus with a driver tooting away as his passengers giggle and shout from behind. Sometimes children work outside alone, choosing not to work with the adults which provides a good opportunity for them to use their imagination. Some children were observed building a fantasy world with crates, however occasionally a few children are not involved in any purposeful play activity and for these children progress is limited.