

## INSPECTION REPORT

**SMITHY STREET PRIMARY SCHOOL**

STEPNEY  
LONDON E1

LEA area: Tower Hamlets

Unique reference number: 100941

Headteacher: Barbara O'Carroll

Reporting inspector: Ms Frances Forrester  
11590

Dates of inspection: 15 – 18 January 2001

Inspection number: 198154

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Smithy Street Stepney London
Postcode:	E1 3BW
Telephone number:	020 7702 7971
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Ros Coffey
Date of previous inspection:	October 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
11590	Frances Forrester	Registered inspector	Foundation stage curriculum English Religious education.	The characteristics and effectiveness of the school. The school's results and pupils' achievements. English as an additional language. Teaching and learning. How well the school is led and managed.
9502	Rosalind Hall	Lay inspector		Pupils' welfare, health and safety. Partnership with parents and carers.
20875	James Howard	Team inspector	Mathematics Art Design and Technology Physical Education	Pupils attitudes, values and personal development Special educational needs. Quality and range of opportunities for learning.
25787	Edmond Morris	Team inspector	Science. Information technology. Geography. History Music Equal Opportunities	

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Smithy Street Primary School is situated in East London. It caters for boys and girls aged five to 11. Most pupils start school with only a limited understanding of English. Although they speak confidently in their mother tongue, they have low attainment for their age group, particularly in English. Of the 226 pupils on roll, 218 are learning English as an additional language. Main languages are Bengali (Sylheti), Punjabi and Arabic. The number of pupils on roll is less than at the last inspection in 1997. The school serves a disadvantaged community, which has a lack of safe places to play. A high percentage of pupils are entitled to free school meals. Several pupils join the school each year at other than the usual time for first admission. Thirty-two pupils have special educational needs and, of these, 4 have educational statements. The school benefits from 'Excellence in Cities' funding, which will provide learning mentors for pupils.

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

Smithy Street Primary School is a very effective school that is popular and over-subscribed. Pupils achieve well and the school successfully strives to provide its pupils with the skills and experiences that will benefit their future lives. Class teachers and support assistants work hard to give very effective support to the high number of pupils who speak English as an additional language, as well as to those who have special educational needs.

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

- There is very strong leadership from the headteacher and senior management team.
- Pupils have very good attitudes. They work hard and their behaviour is good.
- There is a noticeable absence of oppressive behaviour, including bullying and harassment.
- Relationships between pupils, and between pupils and the staff, are very good.
- The quality of the teaching in many lessons is good, and often very good.
- The school promotes moral and social development very well.
- The school provides a very high level of additional support staff.
- There is good provision for the pupils who have special educational needs.

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

- There is unsatisfactory specialist teaching support for the pupils who are learning English as an additional language.
- Standards in information technology are too low for seven year olds and pupils have inadequate opportunities to use new technology, including computers.
- Standards are too low for the eleven year olds in design technology. Pupils do not work with tools or understand the link between design and the purpose of a product.
- Although the school works very hard to encourage pupils to attend regularly, there are many who are absent through ill health or because of family travel overseas. Consequently, the annual figures are 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**

The school has developed well since the last inspection in 1997, and it is well placed to make further improvements. Pupils' standards of attainment and the quality of teaching are much better. The school ensures full coverage of the National Curriculum, which was not the case in the last inspection. Improvements have been made to social and moral developments, which are both now very good. The school has successfully increased its resources, and they are very effectively organized and accessible to teachers. In the last inspection, the school was very well managed and benefited from strong leadership. This is still the case, but teachers with co-ordination responsibilities in English, mathematics and special educational needs are having a more positive

impact on the school's improvement. Very good standards of provision in the nursery and reception classes were praised and inspectors said children made good progress. Although the present inspection team agrees that the provision is very good, we observed that the children were now making very good progress. Although pupils' standards were previously high in art, they are even better now; the pupils are very good and much more creative than in most other schools.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	Compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	Year 1998	Year 1999	Year 2000	Year 2000
English	E	E	E	D
mathematics	D	C	E	E
science	C	D	E	D

**Key**

well above

average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

The children have low standards when they first start school because most of them do not speak English. Many are not familiar with number. They benefit from very good teaching and a wide range of learning activities so that, by the time they join the reception class, they have made very good progress and they have a good foundation for the future. The school works hard to allow pupils to reach their full potential. The results of the National Curriculum tests for seven year olds have improved over the last two years in English and mathematics. When these results are compared with schools that have similar circumstances, they are very good, especially in mathematics. The teachers' assessments in science show that pupils' standards are very good. When the school's results in reading, mathematics and science are compared with all schools nationally, the results are above average except for the standards of writing, which are not as good. The 11 year olds' test results have fluctuated over the past four years, but they depend on the ability of each group. The results were much better in 1999 than in 2000 but there were more pupils in the class last year with special educational needs. There was only a small group of pupils who managed to reach the expected standard in English and science. In mathematics, very few achieved the standard expected for 11 year olds. The particularly small group last year suffered from lack of consistent teaching and a number of supply teachers. Boys and girls attain equally well. Inspection findings indicate that standards are improved in all subjects except the standards of seven year olds work in design and technology and the 11 year olds' computer skills that are too low. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. They receive a good level of in-class support and, by the time they leave the school, reach standards in line with their abilities.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils often have boundless enthusiasm for school. They are well motivated and interested in their activities.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils have very good behaviour. They show respect for others' cultures and religions, and they are very polite to visitors to the school.
Personal development and relationships	Very good provision is made to ensure that pupils' personal development and relationships throughout the school are very good.
Attendance	Although there are a number of long absences when pupils visit family in countries overseas, there is also much absence through illness. The



	daily rate of attendance is unsatisfactory.
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The school successfully promotes very good attitudes among its pupils and a strong sense of morality underpins the aims and objective of its work.

### TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Good	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 school has improved its standards of teaching, and there are now more good lessons than before. Overall, almost three-quarters of lessons were good or very good. There was one excellent lesson during the inspection. The teachers who work with the nursery and reception classes are very good, and children are learning quickly and achieving well. Basic skills in literacy and numeracy are well taught. There was one unsatisfactory lesson during the inspection and one that was poor. Both of these lessons were when support teachers gave language support to a small group within another teacher's class. The impact of their support was ineffective and, in the case of the poor lesson, pupils lost interest and their productivity was poor. Most of the teachers have a good knowledge of the National Curriculum. Their planning is very detailed and they put great effort into making their lessons interesting. They have very good relationships with their classes and they often talk about experiences in their own lives to give good examples and to share their feelings. In the best lessons, teachers use a quick-questioning technique to keep the lesson pace lively. For instance, in a lesson for 11 year olds, the teacher followed up an earlier discussion on fox hunting in a literacy lesson by bringing into school the morning paper with a report of the House of Commons decision to ban hunting. Throughout the school, the methods teachers use, and the way that lessons are organised with support teachers and other staff successfully working together as a team, are strengths of the teaching.

### OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school has very good provision for children who are under five. The school provides a broad, balanced and relevant range of learning experiences for its pupils, including visits to places of interest.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The provision is very good. Pupils are very well supported in their classes and they make good progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Class teachers successfully compensate for the weak specialist support in class lessons. Support assistants and a bilingual instructor give pupils very good support.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	This is a strength of the school's provision. Very good moral and social development is implicit in the school's ethos. Spiritual and cultural development are good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school successfully cares for all pupils, and it provides them with very good educational and personal support.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher and senior management team provide very good leadership for the school.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The newly constituted governing body is very enthusiastic and anxious to give their support to the school. The chair of governors has a very good understanding of school governance.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school's shared commitment to improvement is demonstrated by its good procedures for monitoring and evaluating standards.
The strategic use of resources	The school provides a high level of staffing; accommodation is spacious and good, as are resources for learning.

The leadership of the headteacher, deputy and key members of staff is very good. There is sound governor involvement in the school. Because the governing body was only recently reconstituted, roles and responsibilities and a committee structure have not yet been defined. All legal requirements are met. The school successfully promotes a good partnership with parents. The school's organisation and management of its resources is excellent. The school's efficiency is good. The school successfully applies the principles of best value.

## 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>• Pupils' standards of work and the good progress they make.</li> <li>• Pupils' attitudes and their good behaviour.</li> <li>• English classes for parents with limited fluency.</li> <li>• That the school acts promptly to address parents' concerns or suggestions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Equipment in the playground to keep pupils fully occupied.</li> <li>• The amount of information given to parents</li> <li>• The amount of homework.</li> <li>• Children's safety in Smithy Street.</li> <li>• The length of dinner times.</li> </ul>

The inspection team agrees with parents' positive comments. The playground is sparse, but the school has already ordered new equipment to keep pupils purposefully occupied. This will immediately improve the situation. The team feels that the school does everything in its power to keep parents well informed, including offering translations to ensure parents understand the progress their children have made. The school provides a suitable amount of homework for the age group. The team agrees that the speed of traffic passing through Smithy Street could be a cause for concern. The school has successfully staggered dinnertime arrangements and the time is not too short.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Children have low standards when they first start school in the nursery, because most of them speak only Bengali or Sylheti. They have very little understanding of English and most of them have a limited understanding of number. This is confirmed by initial assessments, which are conducted by the school as soon as the children are admitted. They have also had only very limited play experiences because many live in flats. Prior to their admission, home visits provide valuable assessment information. There is very good bilingual support in the nursery which helps children of all abilities to understand their work. The children also benefit from good teaching and a wide range of learning activities that has a positive impact on their learning. The nursery is a stimulating environment; lots of play activities and focused teaching regularly takes place, which motivates children to gain an increasing aptitude to learn. By the time they are ready to start the reception class, they have made very good progress and they already understand simple instructions and questions. Although they may still require considerable support with their acquisition of English, they listen well and they are enthusiastic about school. They are sociable and have good relationships. Their creative and physical development is good, and they have a well-developed understanding of the world for their age.

2. In the reception class, children also make very good progress. They again benefit from good teaching and a broad and relevant range of learning experiences and lessons. This very successfully prepares them for the National Curriculum, and they make a good start to their education. The teacher successfully promotes children's learning by providing good quality experiences to extend and develop the children's basic skills. The reception class is well organised and the teacher has very high expectations of her class. By the time they are ready to start Year1, most children attain the early learning goals in personal, social and emotional development, language and literacy, mathematical development and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. In creative and physical development almost all children exceed the goals. Children's ability to communicate in English varies. Many make good progress and, by the time they leave the reception class, their pronunciation is almost correct and they can confidently respond to what they see and hear with short simple responses. Other, less confident, children still need much bilingual support in their lessons. They always communicate in their own language when they talk to their friends. The very few children with special educational needs are successfully supported and they make good progress. They are well prepared for the next stage of education and are confident to attempt new activities.

3. The school works hard to promote pupils' learning and to allow them to achieve their full potential. The results of the National Curriculum tests for seven year olds have improved over the last two years in English and mathematics and they are now average. When these results are compared with schools that have similar circumstances, they are well above average and mathematics is high. The teachers' assessments in science show that pupils' standards are well above the national average. When the school's results in reading, mathematics and science are compared with all schools nationally, the results are above average except for the standards of writing, which are below average.

4. The 11 year olds' test results have fluctuated over the past four years, but they depend on the ability of each group. For instance, the results were much better in 1999 than in 2000 but there were more pupils in the class last year with special educational needs that could not reach the expected standards for this age group. When these results are compared to all other schools nationally, there were only a small group of pupils who managed to reach the expected standard in English and science. In mathematics, very few achieved the standard expected for 11 year olds. The particularly small group last year also suffered from lack of consistent teaching and a number of supply teachers. These results were lower than in other similar schools. There are no

differences in the standards attained by boys and girls. The school's improvements are below the national trend, but it works hard to promote the highest standards possible. For instance, it has arranged to have regular booster groups for the 11-year-olds, to give pupils support, and this is helping them to raise their standards in English and mathematics. These strategies are proving successful, and pupils throughout the school make good progress. In both national tests and in pupils' work, the standards are improving. The school has agreed realistically challenging targets and it is making good progress towards achieving them.

5. In the last inspection, the standards of the oldest pupils' work were judged to be average in all subjects, except information technology where pupils were underachieving. The standard of art was better than in other subjects, and was above average. Although many pupils remain below average in English by the time they are seven, the current inspection findings suggest that, by the time they reach Year 6, most are on course to reach or exceed the standard expected nationally in most subjects. Given the limitations of the pupils' skills on entry to the school, they do very well to attain satisfactory standards in reading by the time they are 11. Pupils have a good grasp of letter sounds, and this helps them to tackle words that are unfamiliar to them even when they do not understand what they mean. Despite most pupils speaking English as an additional language, their reading skills are sufficiently developed so that even the less able pupils can cope with most texts. Pupils' standards of writing are mainly satisfactory by the time they are 11, and there are some good examples of competent writing that more able pupils have produced. Teachers encourage good handwriting and they expect the same good standards in work other subjects. Pupils throughout the school regularly practise forming their letters correctly, and older pupils develop their own personal style and use ink.

6. Standards in numeracy are in line with national expectations for the age group. By the time they leave the school, pupils of average ability are confident with number. The good rate of progress at both key stages is attributable to the consistency of the teaching, which is never less than sound, and to the planning of the curriculum, which ensures that knowledge is developed systematically. The school has successfully introduced the National Numeracy Strategy and this is increasing pupils' skills and confidence in working with number. Pupils have a good mathematical vocabulary, which they use well to describe what they are doing. Pupils learn to make sensible estimates and to check the reasonableness of their answer. They understand area and volume, and most can calculate them accurately. Pupils can create and interpret data in a variety of graphs.

7. Throughout the school, pupils attain appropriate standards in science, history, geography, music and religious education. In art, the standards are very good. The seven year olds' standards in design and technology are appropriate, but in the older classes they are too low. Pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to work with tools, and they do not understand the link between design and the purpose of a product. In information technology, the standards are too low throughout the school and pupils do not have enough opportunities to use new technology or computers.

8. Pupils of all ages have mixed linguistic ability, mostly because they are learning English as an additional language. The school keeps suitable records of pupils' developing competence in English and, when pupils reach Key Stage 2, their fluency levels are carefully assessed. Class teachers are especially careful to word their questions in such a way that pupils understand. They effectively deploy class assistants to work with small groups of pupils at their own level of ability and, where necessary, bilingual support is given. These strategies successfully ensure that pupils make good progress and learn well. With this very good support, most pupils achieve well and their acquisition of English is impressive. However, there are a high number who are at risk of falling behind because they lack confidence or because they have gaps in their education due to illness or lengthy absence due to family visits overseas. The school employs two specialist teachers who are expected to give additional teaching support to make sure these pupils achieve as well as their peers. This support is unsatisfactory, and impedes the school's work. Consequently pupils who are at risk of underachieving do not make enough progress by the time they are 11 to reach the national expectation.

9. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets identified

on their individual education plans. They receive a good level of in-class support and, by the time they leave the school, reach standards in line with their abilities.

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

10. As at the time of the previous inspection, pupils' attitudes and behaviour are strengths of the school, and are a significant factor in promoting the good progress pupils make. Very good relationships between pupils and adults, as well as between pupils, make the school a calm and caring community in which all pupils are valued and learn in an atmosphere free from any oppressive or disruptive influences.

11. Pupils are keen and eager to come to school. Their attitude to learning is very good and they display a great deal of interest in their lessons. For example, in a Year 1 science lesson, pupils were totally fascinated by and absorbed in their investigation into different light sources. They participated with great enthusiasm and thoroughly enjoyed comparing the effectiveness of a range of torches and other lights in the blacked-out hall. All the pupils in this class made very good progress in their learning during this lesson.

12. Pupils' behaviour around the school and in lessons is very good and they display a high level of self-discipline. They have a good understanding of the school rules as well as their own prominently displayed classroom rules that they negotiate with their teachers. A clear indication of the orderly manner in which pupils move around the school is that it was often impossible to tell when lessons had ended for breaks as the pupils went to the playground so quietly and calmly. During the course of the inspection there was a total lack of any oppressive behaviour or bullying. Pupils show a high level of care and respect for each other as well as for school resources and equipment. There have been no exclusions in recent years.

13. Relationships and the personal development of pupils are very good. They are polite and courteous both to each other and to adults. They show an appreciation of the contributions made by others during class and group work. For example, in a Year 5 science lesson, pupils working in groups made a number of joint decisions as to the materials they would use for making parachutes and listened carefully to the opinions of others as to the best way to conduct the experiment fairly. They helped each other with assembling the parachutes, measuring and cutting the strings and tying the knots. From an early age, pupils are involved in the daily routines of the school, undertaking class responsibilities such as taking messages and tidying up. As they progress through the school, they respond with maturity, care and pride to the opportunities provided for them to take responsibility. For example, Year 6 pupils help in the nursery during lunch and have 'buddies' in Year 1. This buddy system is particularly effective in developing the caring side of the older pupils as well as helping the younger pupils to settle in. They work together in reading and writing tasks and in social events such as a trip to the cinema and a joint Christmas party. An eye-catching display of the buddies in the entrance hall of the school shows the value and benefit of this enterprise. Older pupils take a great deal of pride in showing visitors around the school, providing refreshments for the visiting bank workers and undertaking office duties such as answering the telephone. All of these planned opportunities help develop the sense of belonging and responsibility that is most evident in the school.

14. In common with their classmates, pupils with special educational needs display very good attitudes to their work. They are fully integrated into all aspects of school life.

15. Pupils' attendance at the school is unsatisfactory. Levels of sickness are higher than average and in addition a number of pupils each year take extended holidays to Bangladesh. This has a detrimental effect on the continuity of pupils' education. However, each morning the majority of pupils arrive punctually; the very few pupils who are late are challenged and recorded appropriately.

## HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

16. The quality of teaching in the foundation year is always good and often very good. This is a similar judgement to the last inspection. The teachers in the nursery and reception class have a very good understanding of the needs of young children. For instance, in the nursery, many play opportunities are organised outside and in class to compensate for lack of safe play space in the community. Teachers understand the importance of providing an appropriate range of activities in each session. They ensure children are kept highly active and that they have many informal opportunities to investigate, create, and practise basic skills. In this way, teachers ensure children practise and repeat and initiate their own activities as they consolidate their learning. A further strength is the very good team spirit that underpins the school's work as members of staff plan, review and evaluate successfully the work and progress of individual children. For instance, both classes plan the activities in the outside play area together.

17. Deployment of the staff is very effective, with support staff being responsible at times for an area of learning. Very good relationships are established between the children and the staff, who know and understand individual children well. Thoughtful and relevant questioning techniques are used to extend thinking and to probe children's understanding. In the reception class, the teaching is more tightly structured than in the nursery. The teacher provides a range of stimulating and motivating opportunities that covers all the areas of learning. There is a good working partnership between teachers, nursery nurses and class assistants in both classes. They work successfully with groups or individuals and effectively guide the children to promote learning. The foundation year teachers make sure their explanations of activities are precise and clear. They encourage children to make choices and to think for themselves. Teachers actively encourage older pupils to play with children in the nursery at dinner times, and this provides good role models. All members of the foundation year staff have high expectations of the children. There is vitality, a sense of fun and a clear sense of purpose, which creates an exciting learning environment for young children.

18. In the last inspection, the quality of the teaching was satisfactory or better in all lessons. In four out of ten lessons it was very good, and a small number of lessons were excellent. Teaching at Key Stage 2 was better than at Key Stage 1. The school has improved its standards of teaching and there are now more good lessons than before. Overall, almost three quarters of lessons were good or very good. There was one excellent lesson during the inspection. The quality of teaching in both key stages is very similar. Although the percentage of good teaching has improved since the last inspection, there was one unsatisfactory lesson and one that was poor. These were both lessons giving language support to a small group within another teacher's class. The impact of the support teachers' intervention was ineffective and, in the case of the poor lesson, pupils lost interest and their productivity was poor. In the group work, insufficient structure to the activity meant pupils were not being given appropriate language support.

19. Throughout the school, the methods teachers use, and the way that lessons are organised with support teachers and other staff effectively working together as a team, is a great strength of the teaching. Good evaluations at the end of the lessons provide opportunities to review pupils' progress. The consistently good quality of the teaching in English and mathematics has a significant impact on the standards attained. In art, the high standards produced are the result of good quality teaching. The school recognises that teachers' competence in new technology is variable and training has been planned to address this. The school provides a high staffing ratio and the special needs co-ordinator regularly monitors lessons to check the impact of support staff. In some subjects, the co-ordinator monitors the quality of the teaching too. Where this is most successful there have been significant improvements in the progress pupils make. In English and mathematics, where teachers provide focused activities for pupils of different levels of attainment and good support in small groups arranged by ability. This ensures that pupils who have difficulty understanding the language, or with learning a particular skill, are given immediate attention before they fall too far behind.

20. Throughout Key Stage 1, teachers have a good knowledge of the National Curriculum. They manage their classes very well and have consistently high expectations of behaviour. They

have good relationships with their class and often have a good sense of humour. In very good lessons, teachers challenge pupils' thinking by ensuring the lesson has a brisk pace and activities are thoroughly planned to take into account the available time. For instance in a very good literacy lesson in Year 1, the class discussion promoted confidence amongst the pupils. Increasing amounts of homework throughout the school is having an impact on pupils' attainment. Work is marked regularly, and consistent use is made of praise and constructive comments.

21. At Key Stage 2, most of the teachers have a good knowledge of the National Curriculum. Their planning is very detailed and they put great effort into making their lessons interesting. They have very good relationships with their classes and they often talk about experiences in their own lives to give good examples and to share their feelings. In the best lessons, teachers use a quick-questioning technique to keep the lesson pace lively. For instance in Year 6, the teacher followed up an earlier discussion on fox hunting in a literacy lesson by bringing into school the morning paper with a report on the House of Commons decision to ban hunting. The teacher encouraged pupils to read the report.

22. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. Their needs are correctly identified and teaching is well focused towards reaching the targets identified on their individual education plans. Learning support assistants provide valuable support and this ensures pupils progress well.

23. Support for pupils who are learning English as an additional language is organised within classes, often for pupils who have individual education plans because they have special educational needs. The support for bilingual learners is very well organised by class teachers. This is generally as groups within classes, and is directly related to the work of the class as a whole. Good practice is developing in a number of ways. For example, some teachers valuably prepare pupils in advance for the Literacy Hour shared text and identify key words in their lists of spellings, which are then reinforced in the group work. This was well done in a Literacy Hour in Year 6 using repetition in a discussion about the arguments for and against homework. Some members of staff are very skilful in ensuring that pupils in their group make a contribution to the plenary session, thus developing their confidence and self-esteem. The use of support staff is appropriately flexible. On occasion, bilingual class support is suitably provided in class for newly arrived pupils with little understanding of the English language. However, the specialist teaching support for pupils who are learning English as an additional language is unsatisfactory and, at worst, poor. Although supervisory support is given and some is bilingual, the impact of the teachers' intervention is very limited. These staff rely on class teachers to plan their work and they do not take an active part in assessment procedures. Although their job descriptions make them responsible for identifying and developing additional curriculum materials that will support the teaching programmes, there is no evidence of this taking place. There is no liaison with parents of pupils who are at risk of underachieving to keep them informed about their child's progress and achievement.

24. The noticeable strengths of the good teaching are:

- Interesting topics
- A brisk pace to lessons
- Probing questioning
- The detailed planning for lessons
- Very successful classroom management
- Good knowledge of pupils' individual abilities
- Strong knowledge of the subject

25. The school is highly committed to providing equal opportunities for its pupils. All pupils are fully included in the life of the school enabling them to benefit from the many learning and social opportunities provided. Teachers ensure that boys and girls work co-operatively together and are given equal status. Books and other resources are carefully monitored to check for any stereotyping or bias. School staff and visitors, for example, the bank workers who partner pupils for information technology sessions, provide positive role models and value the contributions made by

pupils of all ethnic backgrounds, their cultures and religions.

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

26. The curriculum is broad and balanced and fully meets the requirements for the teaching of the National Curriculum and religious education. The school has made considerable strides in developing its curriculum since the time of the last inspection when the curriculum failed to meet all statutory requirements. It is receptive to educational developments and has successfully introduced the national strategies for the teaching of literacy and numeracy. The school makes considerable efforts to offer a culturally diverse curriculum relevant to all its pupils.

27. Since the time of the last report the school requirements of the National Curriculum have altered quite radically. Nevertheless, the school has adapted well and has successfully built on the provision of four years ago. The quality of planning has improved and teachers are supported in their work by policies and schemes of work in most subjects that clearly identify what should be taught at particular times in a pupil's time in the school. This ensures that knowledge is developed systematically. There is still some way to go in ensuring that all subjects are covered in sufficient depth. Work in information technology and music, for example, is limited. The school recognises this and has identified it as a priority in the current school development plan. A particular strength of the curriculum is the links made between subjects, so that new learning in one subject consolidates previous learning in another. Year 1 used the stimulus of the book *My Many Coloured Days* to produce paintings, and Year 6 pupils are planning to produce a model of a fairground carousel in design and technology, using their knowledge of electricity, learned in science, to power it.

28. The curriculum is well focused on the requirements of the National Curriculum. Personal and social education are carefully planned, and form an important part of the school's curriculum. The school's policy is not to teach sex education specifically, but to respond sensitively to pupils' questions. Due account is taken of the ethnic diversity and religious traditions of the pupils. Teaching about drugs is based on the identified needs of the pupils. They acquire accurate information about the harmful effects of alcohol and tobacco and learn the importance of a healthy lifestyle.

29. The strategies that the school has adopted for the teaching of literacy and numeracy are effective. Planning is good in these subjects and the quality of learning of pupils of all abilities is now good. The school provides a range of additional learning activities. There are plans to broaden the range of these significantly and introduce after-school clubs, including a 'homework club' to support learning outside the school day. Although games skills are adequately taught during physical education lessons, the school has no teams and pupils have no opportunities to take part in organised competitive sports.

30. The school offers all pupils equal access to the curriculum. Teachers plan to take account of the range of ability and competence in English in their pupils, and to ensure that all are able to access the curriculum according to their needs. Curricular provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. The school complies fully with the Code of Practice. Pupils are carefully assessed and their needs are accurately diagnosed. They receive good support in school and from outside agencies. The quality of individual education plans is very good and activities are well matched to the targets they set. Pupils are well supported in class and this enables them to follow a broadly similar curriculum to their peers. Records are very well maintained and progress is carefully monitored. All reviews and statutory assessments are properly carried out.

31. The school has very good links with the community, which contribute to pupils' learning. A 'partners' scheme has been established with a bank, which benefits pupils' work in reading, mathematics and information communication technology. Valuable links are established with Tower Hamlets Adult Education Service to teach English to parents. Links with a school in Bath have resulted in joint projects by the two schools and pupils have performed at the Bath Festival. Recently the school took part in *One World Week* and their work is currently displayed in



Cirencester. The school is connected to the Internet, but has not yet established links on a global scale that would further extend pupils' knowledge and understanding of other cultures.

32. The school has developed good links with partner institutions. It is part of a local consortium of schools that meet regularly to share ideas and offer each other curriculum support. Good links are established with local secondary schools to facilitate ease of transfer for pupils at 11.

33. The school makes good provision for the spiritual development of its pupils. It has maintained the good standard of provision which was reported in the last inspection when it was considered a strength. Opportunities are provided in assemblies for pupils to reflect on values such as kindness, honesty and the importance of showing respect for others. In a junior assembly, pupils were encouraged to think about caring for other people regardless of race or creed. A well-chosen range of music is very effectively used to create a calm and reflective atmosphere at the beginning and end of assemblies. A wide range of stories is read during the literacy hour to help pupils to develop knowledge of themselves and to value other people's lives and beliefs. For instance in religious education, pupils are introduced to other faiths such as Sikhism, Buddhism, Christianity and Judaism.

34. The provision for pupils' moral development is very good. It is actively supported by all members of the school community and is a strength of the school. Members of staff provide very good role models in their dealings with each other and with the pupils. Pupils are taught right from wrong from the moment they join the school and are encouraged to reflect on their behaviour and the impact it can have on both adults and other pupils. School rules are kept simple and are readily understood by all. Each class also negotiates its own set of rules that are prominently displayed to remind pupils of their importance. Personal, social and health lessons are used to explore issues and reflect on ideas. This was clearly seen in a Year 6 lesson reflecting on a story about travellers and how bullying can occur when a pupil appears different from the others in a class. The pupils responded very sensitively with much thoughtful writing and comments showing a great deal of empathy with the child in the story.

35. The high quality of relationships throughout the school supports the pupils' social development very well. Pupils willingly take responsibility and are provided with many opportunities to look after resources and each other. For instance, Year 6 pupils are given a high degree of social responsibility that includes looking after younger children in the nursery and being buddies to pupils in Year 1. They also organise the timetable and provide refreshments for the volunteers from the National Westminster Bank who work with them in reading and information technology. Pupils in other classes are given responsibility in organising themselves and carrying out small tasks in the classroom. Pupils co-operate well in class and play sensibly together in the playground. Paired and group work in lessons helps to promote social skills and collaborative learning. The school has plans to develop a range of extra-curricular activities to provide further opportunities for social interaction.

36. The school has also maintained its good standards of cultural development since the last inspection. A variety of different styles of music is regularly played and, in art lessons, pupils are introduced to the work of different famous artists such as Van Gogh and Picasso. The school regularly participates in art competitions because the pupils are so artistic. The school sees it as important to take pupils to places of interest, for instance, last year pupils visited the Millennium Dome. The school welcomes local initiatives. Examples are Indian musicians who visited the school to play traditional music and a joint venture when pupils from many other schools composed a piece of music and performed it in the Royal Festival Hall. Music resources for lessons are multicultural.

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

37. The school has continued to provide very good educational and personal support to all its pupils. Each child is known well by the staff as an individual and their welfare is a priority. The

school has very good procedures for Health and Safety. The premises manager efficiently undertakes a weekly inspection of the site, and risk assessments are in place. The headteacher is the appropriately named person for child protection, and members of staff have had relevant training. There is appropriate coverage for first aid, and records of incidents are kept.

38. Attendance is recorded accurately and is monitored carefully. Absence is followed up and a system of first day calling is in operation. The main reasons for low attendance levels are high incidence of sickness and extended holidays to Bangladesh. The school stresses to parents the importance of taking these holidays at times of least disruption, and rewards encourage pupils to aim for maximum attendance and punctuality.

39. The systems to promote good behaviour are very good. Each class formulates its own rules in line with the school policy, which gives pupils an understanding and an ownership of them. Rewards in each class are valued and all staff focus on positive reinforcement and have high expectations of behaviour. All members of staff act as very good role models to pupils. Rare incidents of poor behaviour are dealt with effectively and are monitored. Through regular discussion, pupils are made aware that bullying or racism is not tolerated and no incidents of this nature were seen during the inspection.

40. The procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are comprehensive and thorough. Class teachers are methodical in their record keeping. There is good assessment in the Foundation Stage, English, mathematics, and science, but assessment in the rest of the curriculum is undeveloped. Information is used well to pinpoint the progress of pupils, to determine their grouping and to identify those who need further support. For example, as a result the school has identified a group of Year 5 pupils to attend extra 'Springboard' lessons to raise their levels of numeracy. Pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 are given individual targets for literacy and numeracy, and these are shared with parents. In her monitoring of planning, the headteacher checks that issues raised by assessment are being addressed. The senior management team analyses National Curriculum test results, and is supported well in this by statistics produced by the local education authority. As a result of this analysis, targets are set and the curriculum modified if necessary.

41. The procedures for the identification, assessment, monitoring and review of pupils with special educational needs are good. Their progress is carefully tracked, and when necessary, appropriate action is promptly taken. Full and effective use is made of external agencies, as the need arises.

42. As a result of the detailed monitoring of attendance, behaviour, social and academic development of pupils, members of staff are well placed to support all pupils as they progress through the school.

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

43. Parents have very positive views of the school, which they expressed at a well-attended meeting and in returning the questionnaire. At least two thirds of parents strongly agreed with all the positive statements in the questionnaire; this is an improvement on the last inspection when support was good but less wholehearted. In particular parents strongly agreed that their child likes school, that the teaching is good, that the school expects children to work hard and that behaviour is good. These views were also reflected in the opinions expressed in the meeting. A few parents in the meeting, and in their answers to the questionnaire, stated that they have concerns about the amount of homework set and about the range of activities provided for the school outside the curriculum. The judgements of the inspection team were that the school's provision for both of these areas is satisfactory.

44. Parents receive very good information about the school. All written information is translated, and parents receive an up-to-date prospectus and termly letters about the curriculum. If parents drop into school with a query or concern, interpreters are readily available. Meetings for parents are always well attended; the meeting for parents with the registered inspector is an example of this, as was an induction meeting for new parents whose children were about to start in

the nursery, that took place during the inspection week. All meetings are accessible to parents because of the translation that runs seamlessly between English and Bengali. Similarly, interpreters are available at the parents' consultation meeting, and the school takes care that parents understand the contents of the annual report on the individual pupil's progress. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are kept fully informed of their child's progress. They are involved in regular reviews of provision and their views are considered when making any decisions.

45. The contribution of parents to children's work at school and at home is good. Education is seen as a priority, and parents are interested in educational issues. The majority of parents hear children read regularly and ensure that children complete their homework. Parents are invited into school to open afternoons and assemblies and, during the inspection, a parent visited the nursery to talk with the children about a family quilt. Parents help with trips, and some support creative work in school. There is a well-established class for parents to learn English, which operates for two mornings each week in conjunction with Tower Hamlets College; as a result of this, many parents are able to support their children's learning more effectively.

46. The effectiveness of the school's partnership with parents, and the way in which the headteacher and staff are sensitive to the particular needs and aspirations of this community, are strengths of the school.

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

47. The leadership and management are good. The headteacher's strong leadership promotes a very good partnership with parents, and she has a clear vision for the school. Together with the active involvement of the deputy head and the senior management team, she provides successful management for the school. This is having a positive impact on school improvement and on raising standards. In the last inspection, the school's management was judged to be very good, but there were a number of legal requirements that were not being met. These have since been addressed. The headteacher and deputy make a very good team. The school is very committed to making improvements. The members of staff who have key roles for the co-ordination of English, maths, science, the foundation year and special educational needs are having a very positive impact on the development of their subjects. These very effective co-ordinators have specialist knowledge of their subject but some co-ordination roles are not developed because staff are less confident or have only recently been appointed. There is sound governor involvement in the school. It has taken some time for the full complement of governors to be recruited but, despite this, the governors have monitored standards at governors' meetings. English and mathematics co-ordinators suitably monitor the curriculum and, when needed, they have time away from their class to help them manage their roles.

48. The chair of governors has a very good understanding of the importance of good governance. Newly appointed governors are most enthusiastic and very anxious to give their full support to the school. Because the governing body was only recently reconstituted, roles and responsibilities and a committee structure have not yet been defined. The chair of governors regularly visits the school to meet with staff. The governors are very proud of their school and they have a good working relationship with the headteacher and senior staff. All statutory requirements are met. The school successfully achieves its aims and it provides a very good ethos where pupils are made to feel truly valued. The school is consistent in its promotion of very good moral values and respect for others. Staff and pupils are well motivated and committed to their school.

49. There is an appropriate number of teachers and support staff for the number of pupils on roll and for the large percentage of pupils who are learning English as an additional language. The staff form a well-integrated team committed to the school's aims of providing a high level of support for all pupils. This makes a significant contribution to the good quality of the teaching. The teachers work closely together. The school is committed to staff development and ensures there is a good programme of training, which includes local courses. Induction procedures are in place to support newly qualified teachers. The school has a draft policy for performance management, but the

headteacher and her deputy have still to be trained for this initiative.

50. The school has good accommodation. Classrooms are large and airy and very good use is made of wall space for mounting interesting and attractive displays that reflect pupils' learning and achievements. The school's accommodation has a number of very good features. These include generous rooms for storing resources and two adequately sized halls. The building is exceptionally well maintained, but the playground is sparse and in need of development. The school has recognised this for some time and it plans to use recently allocated funds from central government to make the area more inviting for pupils. The school has no playing field. The school building is not suitable for any people who have difficulties climbing stairs. Pupils and staff respect the premises and there is no sign of litter or deliberate damage. The accommodation is very good for teaching, learning and recreation and the staff use space well.

51. The school's organisation and management of its resources is excellent. Efficient financial management has enabled the school to extend its resource provision, and there is a suitable range of good quality resources in all areas of the curriculum. Classrooms and library are well stocked with books. There is a good range of resources for the children who are in the foundation year and in the nursery or reception class. The computer suite is not readily accessible to pupils, and some computer resources require maintenance.

52. The school's efficiency is good. The last inspection report said that day-to-day administration was of a high standard. Spending decisions reflected the priorities in the school development plan. The school's administration is still very good but the school development plan does not forecast expected expenditure and there are no procedures in place for monitoring or evaluating outcomes. The quality of financial planning is good. Between the previous inspection and the current one, the school has been recovering from a substantial deficit, which has now been removed, partly as a result of increased government grants. The school successfully uses its budget to enhance class support. The amount spent per pupil is higher than the national average, but within the average expenditure for the inner city. Specific grants and funds to raise standards are efficiently used and the funding for pupils with special educational needs is used appropriately, primarily to provide additional teaching and support staff. The high levels of support provided have a very positive impact on the progress of these pupils. The school actively applies the principles of best value.

53. The school uses a significant amount of its budget to employ bilingual support staff and two specialist teachers to work with pupils who are at risk of falling behind their peers because they are learning English as an additional language. The quality of the support staff in lessons is undoubtedly very good, but the specialist teaching support is not. There are good job descriptions in place, which were originally agreed with the local education authority, but these are not reflected in the work of the specialist support teachers. The monitoring and support systems in the school have been unsuccessful in achieving a consistent level of quality in this provision which is essential for the high numbers of pupils who are learning English as an additional language to achieve as well as their peers. The school is clearly committed to providing every opportunity for all its pupils to achieve a good degree of success and fluency in English. The teachers work hard to compensate for the unsatisfactory specialist support they receive.

54. The management of the provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Records are well maintained and pupils' progress is carefully charted. The governing body is well informed and committed to helping the school to meet the needs of all its pupils. The special needs co-ordinator is forward thinking and plans very well for future developments. Funding for pupils with special educational needs is used appropriately, primarily to provide support staff. The quality of the support that is provided has a very positive impact on the progress of these pupils. The quality of the provision represents very good value for money.

55. The school analyses the results of National Curriculum tests to make sure it is giving value for money. It provides a very good education for its pupils because of the commitment and hard work of the headteacher, deputy, class teachers and their assistants, and nursery nurses. Pupil

expenditure is successfully used to benefit pupils and provide them with a wide range of opportunities. Taking this into account, the school gives very good value for money.

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

56. In order to raise the school's standards further, and to sustain the very good provision for pupils who are learning English as an additional language, the governors, headteacher and staff should:

1. Ensure a closer match between the job descriptions of the specialist support teachers and their class practice by introducing rigorous monitoring and evaluation to make sure their work includes the following:
  - assessing the learning needs for pupils who are at risk of underachieving, and using this information to inform their own planning;
  - identifying and developing additional learning materials which will support the teaching programmes;
  - liaising with the parents of pupils who are at risk of underachieving, to involve and inform them of their children's progress and achievement.
2. Raise the standards of information technology by;
  - improving teachers' competence through a programme of systematic training;
  - planning leaving experiences which give pupils a greater depth and understanding;
  - introducing assessment and recording procedures;
  - making greater use of new technology and computer skills in other subjects.
3. Raise the 11-year-old pupils' standards of design and technology by:
  - developing a more systematic approach to teaching pupils how to work with tools as they progress through the school;
  - promoting an understanding of the links between design and the purpose of the product.

### **Minor issues**

- Improve the range of musical opportunities throughout the school.
- Identify expected costs in the school development plan so that outcomes can be evaluated.

## **PROVISION FOR PUPILS WHO ARE LEARNING ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE**

57. The school's very good support for pupils who are learning English as an additional language is fundamental to its aims and traditions. The school's leaders and managers are totally committed to raising the attainment of the high numbers of pupils who are learning English as an additional language. A team of support assistants, including a bilingual instructor, provides very good support that is having a significant impact on pupils' learning. The school employs two specialist teachers who are intended to assist class teachers to plan their work to ensure it is carefully matched to pupils' needs. This is particularly aimed at the pupils who are at risk of falling behind their peers. Although these pupils often benefit from bilingual translation from class assistants and a bilingual instructor, the specialist teaching support is ineffective and sometimes poor. For instance, the specialist teacher may only work with a small group in a literacy lesson, without assessing pupils' progress and does not participate fully in the planning for other lessons, including the foundation subjects. The bilingual assistance that is offered in the foundation year makes it possible for young children to respond with confidence and helps them to contribute to the lesson in the same way as their peers. Parents welcome this support and they are grateful that

they too can often communicate in their own language, which helps them to understand daily routines. This most successful introduction to school is built on carefully throughout the school.

58. The school's budget is stretched, and a decision was made to reduce the non-contact time that is allocated to the deputy head in order to maintain a high level of support for pupils with learning needs. Last year, when the local education authority devolved funding for support teachers, the management welcomed the decision. Agreed job descriptions are in place that are clear and well defined. However, although the teachers provide pastoral support, their role in school does not match the job descriptions. The competent class teachers have high expectations of their classes and they successfully compensate and insist pupils concentrate hard and work independently. However, the limited specialist support means that new arrivals at an early stage of English struggle to understand. As pupils get older, most become increasingly confident to express their thoughts in English, for instance, in a class debate in the literacy lesson, 11 year olds gave their opinions on foxhunting.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	48
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	19

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2	27	42	25	2	2	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)	30	196
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		151

FTE means full-time equivalent.

#### Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	32

#### English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	218

#### Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	20
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	19

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	8.0
National comparative data	5.2

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.4
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
	2000	13	12	25

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	12	11	13
	Girls	11	10	11
	Total	23	21	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	92 (63)	84 (67)	96 (73)
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	13	13
	Girls	11	11	11
	Total	22	24	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	88 (70)	96 (67)	96 (70)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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
	2000	7	12	19

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Total	10	6	15
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	53 (63)	32 (74)	79 (70)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Total	10	6	12
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	53 (59)	32 (74)	63 (74)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	80 (75)

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

The size of the group at Key Stage 2 is too small to allow reliable conclusions to be drawn from the differing performances of girls and boys, and this breakdown has been omitted from the table immediately above.



### **Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	2
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	214
Chinese	0
White	8
Any other minority ethnic group	2

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

### **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	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	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.*

### **Teachers and classes**

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	12.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	15.8
Average class size	28

#### **Education support staff: YR -Y6**

Total number of education support staff	8.0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	158

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1.0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	30

Total number of education support staff	2.0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	65

Number of pupils per FTE adult	10
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*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Financial information**

Financial year	1998/99
	£
Total income	614,144
Total expenditure	593,998
Expenditure per pupil	2,652
Balance brought forward from previous year	(8,023)
Balance carried forward to next year	12,123

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

**Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	226
Number of questionnaires returned	157

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	91	7	1	0	1
My child is making good progress in school.	81	17	2	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	82	14	3	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	65	24	4	3	4
The teaching is good.	86	11	0	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	77	19	1	2	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	73	23	1	1	3
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	86	11	1	1	2
The school works closely with parents.	75	20	1	1	3
The school is well led and managed.	78	20	1	1	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	77	18	1	0	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	65	22	3	3	6

**Other issues raised by parents**

Concern for children's safety in Smithy Street.

Dinner times are too short and meals are not good.

## **PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES**

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

59. In the nursery and reception classes, children make very good progress. They benefit from very good teaching and a broad and relevant range of learning experiences and lessons. This very successfully prepares them for the National Curriculum in Year 1, and they make a good start to their education. Both teachers and their support staff successfully promote children's learning by providing good quality experiences to extend and develop the children's basic skills. The nursery provides a very good range of play activities that help compensate for the lack of safe playing areas in the school's immediate locality. The activities are well organised and the teacher has a very good understanding of the needs of young children which successfully promotes their learning and personal development. The very high expectations of the reception teacher ensure children make very good progress. By the time they are ready to start Year 1, most children attain the early learning goals in personal, social and emotional development, and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. In creative and physical development, almost all children exceed the goals. Most children are unlikely to attain the expectation for their age group in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development. Nevertheless, they make very good progress.

60. Children's ability to communicate in English varies but most choose to communicate with their friends in their own language. The very few children with special educational needs are successfully supported and they make good progress. All children are successfully prepared for the next stage of education and are confident to attempt new activities.

#### **Personal, social and emotional education**

61. Children's progress in their personal and social development is very good in both the nursery and reception classes. As a result, they are well on course to attain the standards expected of five year olds nationally. The development of children's personal and social skills is a major strength in the nursery. The nursery is a stimulating environment; with lots of play activities. Focused teaching regularly takes place, which motivates children to gain an increasing aptitude to learn. Children are sociable, and they have good relationships. The caring atmosphere is made explicit through the very good examples set by adults in their relationships with each other and their attitude to children. High standards of behaviour, based on mutual respect and an awareness of the needs and rights of others, are expected. Young children settle quickly into the nursery routines because of the well-organised induction programme that includes home visits. Children work well together, share resources fairly and take turns appropriately when using the equipment. Even the youngest children in the nursery show a high degree of independence and self-control. Children can make considered choices about the resources to select in a variety of situations. The daily dinnertime meal is particularly well used to emphasise the importance of good manners and care and consideration for others. It has a very positive effect upon pupils' social development.

62. Children show a well-developed progression of social skills as they enter the reception classes where social and personal development is again given emphasis. All children develop a positive self-image and recognise that each person has something special to offer. Members of staff are good role models as they courteously encourage and support children's learning. Children sustain concentration when working with adults and when working alone. In both the nursery and reception classes, they show great responsibility when clearing up the equipment. All children treat the school's property with care and respect. Behaviour is very good and children have a clear sense of right and wrong. Opportunities are planned in all classes for children to express their feelings in a variety of situations; for example, during story-time and in the nursery, a karaoke session where they responded with obvious delight. Children's awareness of their place in the wider community is enhanced by visitors and by special events such as the celebration of festivals. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are fostered appropriately.

## **Communication, language and literacy**

63. In both the nursery and reception classes, children make good progress and, by the time they leave the reception class, their pronunciation is almost correct and they can confidently respond to what they see and hear with short simple responses. Other, less confident, children still need much bilingual support in their lessons. They always tend to communicate in their own language when they talk to their friends. Although children are fluent in their mother tongue when they first enter the nursery, they have little or no English, which limits their progress in all areas. Very good bilingual support is provided in the nursery that helps children of all abilities to understand their work. By the time they are ready to start the reception class, they have made very good progress and they already understand simple instructions and questions. Although they may still require considerable support with their acquisition of English, they listen well and they are enthusiastic about school.

64. Children make a start to reading in the nursery, learning how books are organised and listening with interest to stories and poems. They recognise their own name, and they are encouraged to share books at every opportunity. In the reception classes, pupils recognise basic familiar words in their school reading books. Opportunities are planned for letter recognition in the nursery and, by the time they move into the reception class, the children know the names of a number of letters. A systematic approach to teaching writing skills is adopted in the reception class and children begin to use letter sounds as a strategy in reading. In the reception class, children write simple sentences, using their knowledge of letter sounds and spellings. They have increasing control of their handwriting. Children in the nursery have many opportunities to express themselves on paper in drawing and painting. More mature children are keen to experiment with their own signs and symbols to record their observations.

## **Mathematical development**

65. The nursery plans opportunities for regular counting and number recognition, and offers mathematical provision during both indoor and outdoor free choice activities. Opportunities to extend mathematical vocabulary and understanding are fully exploited and regular practice and consolidation of skills are ensured. This practice is continued successfully in the reception classes. In the nursery, many children can recognise and count numbers to ten. They acquire appropriate mathematical language as they sort and order equipment. Members of staff use mathematical terminology at every opportunity, to increase the children's knowledge. In the reception class, children count to 20 and they are familiar with some two-dimensional shapes. They recognise and name, for example, circle and square. There are opportunities for children to learn to sort and match through the use of puzzles and games. They are familiar with pattern making and make sequence patterns using coloured blocks and beads. Children know a range of counting rhymes and songs, which enhance mathematical learning. Most days, there are activities that enable children to compare, sort, match, order, sequence and count, and also handling activities such as building and balancing.

66. In the reception classes, children can count on and put numbers into order, for instance from the largest to the smallest. They organise objects into sets and record their answers accurately. They can explain the way they work out their answers. They have an appropriate awareness of "forwards" and "backwards" and they use these words as they count. Reception pupils are familiar with larger numbers through everyday activities such as registration. They begin to understand the basis of simple addition and subtraction operations through focused teaching.

## **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

67. Children make very good progress in their knowledge and understanding of the world. The nursery provides a stimulating environment and a wide range of indoor and outdoor activities to exploit children's natural curiosity and enthusiasm. Children are developing a wider understanding and knowledge of the world around them. Nursery children demonstrate they are developing good

skills as they build model beds for a project on Goldilocks. They assemble models using a variety of construction kits and talk about their observations. They join, cut and glue confidently with a variety of materials. Nursery children begin to gain an understanding of the past as they celebrate birthdays and special events and festivals. In the reception class, children recognise old local buildings and they know they were built in the past. Children are developing competence on the computer keyboard and an understanding of the functions of a computer. There are opportunities for children to develop their skills of prediction and scientific enquiry as they experiment in the water and sand play. Through a range of topics, children in both the nursery and reception class develop their inquiry skills well, for instance, in studying weather conditions and growing beans in a jar.

### **Physical development**

68. Children are likely to attain good standards in physical development that are higher than those expected of five year olds nationally. In both the nursery and reception classes, children have ample opportunities to develop good co-ordination and to move with control and an awareness of safety. They improve their co-ordination during outdoor play. In the nursery, they climb and slide confidently on the large apparatus, and run and jump with control in the space provided. Nursery and reception staff develop children's confidence effectively and teach them the safe and correct way to approach an activity. In the nursery, a quiet and calm style motivates children to take on challenges and achieve success. Nursery children show increasing control of tools such as scissors and paint brushes. Reception class children show increasing dexterity and control as they participate in regular hall sessions where they learn simple physical routines such as carrying gymnastic mats safely. They are learning to stop on command and to work as a member of a small group on a large mat. For instance, the children had very good attitudes in a hall lesson. The reception teacher challenges them in such a way that they develop skills and improve hand-eye co-ordination, whilst using their initiative and extending their imagination. They successfully develop skills in movement, a sense of space and health and bodily awareness.

### **Creative Development**

69. By the time they enter Year 1, children are likely to attain good standards that exceed the early learning goals in creative development. They make very good progress. Nursery children have many opportunities to experiment with textures and colours. Adults support these activities effectively, and they try to extend children's language by talking in greater depth about the materials and techniques used and giving the children the opportunity to respond accordingly. In the nursery and in the school's musical assemblies, children in the foundation year learn songs by heart, including many with actions. They have an increasing awareness of pulse and rhythm. Nursery children are given daily opportunities to observe and reflect on what they see, hear and feel. The large sandpit, which can be used by a number of children to work together at the same time, extends the range of creative opportunities possible. Pupils' paintings and drawings in the reception classes are lively and detailed and they use colour very well. Reception class children communicate their feelings and ideas with increasing skill and confidence, using a wider vocabulary than that in the nursery.

### **ENGLISH**

70. The school's results in the National Curriculum tests in English for seven year olds have improved over the last two years. When these results are compared with schools that have similar circumstances, they are well above average. When the school's results in reading are compared with all schools nationally, the results are above average, but the standards of writing are below average. The 11 year olds' test results have fluctuated over the past four years, but they depend on the ability of each group. For instance, the results were much better in 1999 than in 2000, but there were more pupils in the class with special educational needs in 2000, and these could not reach the expected standards for this age group. The group of pupils was smaller than usual and the percentage of pupils who managed to reach the expected standard in English was distorted. The class also suffered from lack of consistent teaching and a number of supply teachers. When these

results are compared with schools with similar characteristics, the results were poor. The results of boys and girls have been analysed and they were very similar. The school's improvements are below the national trend, but class teachers work hard to promote the highest standards possible. For instance, the school has arranged to have regular booster groups for the 11 year olds, which give pupils good additional support, and this helps them to achieve as well as they can and to raise their standards. In the last inspection, the standards of the oldest pupils' work were judged to be average in all subjects. These standards are much the same, and most pupils reach average standards by the time they are 11 and leave the school.

71. Pupils' listening skills are very good. They listen attentively to instructions and answer questions thoughtfully in lessons and in school assemblies. From an early age, pupils enjoy listening to stories. Speaking skills develop appropriately as pupils become more confident. In the youngest classes, pupils revert to their mother tongue when they talk to their friends or discuss their work. Although many younger pupils have only a limited vocabulary in English, they try hard to express their views and ideas clearly. They think carefully about what they want to say, and their class teachers and assistants assist them in formulating sentences. By the time they leave the school, many speak confidently in a class discussion, although they tend to be less confident to project their voices appropriately when speaking to an audience. When reading extracts from books, pupils of all levels of ability are expressive and they adopt suitable and interesting voice tones. In class discussions, they ask sensible questions and take account of the answers they are given when formulating their own.

72. Given the limitations of the pupils' skills on entry to the school, they do well to attain satisfactory standards in reading by the time they are 11. Pupils have a good grasp of letter sounds, and this helps them to tackle words that are unfamiliar to them even when they do not understand what they mean. Most pupils enjoy reading fiction as well as information books. They have several books at one time, including literature from the public library. For instance, a more able seven year old enjoys reading the story of Winnie the Pooh. Seven year olds enjoy reading and, when they cannot work out a word, the teacher has taught them to use 'robot talk' and to slowly use letter sounds to decipher the unknown word. In Year 6, more confident readers regularly read the newspaper. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, read with increased fluency and accuracy as they get older. By the time they are 11, they develop a critical appreciation of a wide range of books and they are able to talk about different authors with confidence. They all enjoy Harry Potter books, but they also find information books about animal life or sport interesting. They successfully use both the local and school libraries. During the inspection, even the least able reader fluently read a book about dolphin relatives. Despite most pupils speaking English as an additional language, their reading skills are sufficiently well developed so that even the less able pupils can cope with most texts in the literacy hour.

73. Pupils' standards of writing are satisfactory by the time they are 11, although there are some good examples of very competent writing that more able pupils have produced. By the time they reach Year 2, pupils' writing includes familiar short phrases, and the teacher promotes careful spelling and punctuation. Handwriting is well proportioned. In the younger classes, writing is successfully promoted through regular opportunities to write freely, with the teacher correcting spelling errors in pencil. For instance, one good example of free writing was pupils' short accounts of a dinosaur. In older classes, pupils structure and organise their writing well. They write in a variety of forms, making good use of a wide range of vocabulary to add interest to their work. These include planning their personal autobiography in Year 4 and discussing newspaper reports in Year 6. In older classes, pupils regularly use a dictionary, for instance to note word families. One example seen linked 'pedis' -- of the foot -- to 'pedestal', 'pedestrian' and 'pedal'. Pupils achieve as well as they can, and they make good progress. The good class teaching and support from class assistants, bilingual assistants and an instructor help to motivate pupils and help them to avoid unnecessary mistakes. The school specifically teaches English grammar. As a result, pupils have a better than average knowledge of grammatical structure. The oldest pupils use simple punctuation correctly and many use a wider range, including apostrophes, with accuracy. Pupils know spelling rules, and most apply these correctly. Most pupils have fluent, joined and legible handwriting. However, the high standards of presentation apparent in most English lessons are not

evident in work in all subjects. Literacy skills are used appropriately in other subjects. By the time pupils reach Key Stage 2, they learn and use specific vocabulary relating to each subject. They use correct terminology, for example, when describing world faiths in religious education.

74. Pupils' very positive attitudes to learning are a significant factor in the good progress they make. They behave very well and they are enthusiastic when the lesson is especially interesting. During group activities, pupils collaborate very well and they show good levels of concentration and co-operation. The good quality teaching is having a significant impact on pupils' learning and the progress they make.

75. The quality of the teaching is good. Out of nine lessons observed, most were at least good, one was satisfactory and one was poor. At Key Stage 1, one out of three lessons observed was very good. At Key Stage 2, the quality of teaching varied but most lessons were good, very good or excellent. One lesson was satisfactory and one poor. In the best lessons, the teachers have a good understanding of the National Literacy Strategy. They are skilled at questioning pupils, and they inspire them to learn and to work as hard as they can. For instance in an excellent lesson in Year 5, pupils practised reading with expression as part of their work on 'Beowulf and the dragon'. They readily used different tones as the teacher promoted an understanding of the differences between the spoken and written word. When the quality of the lesson was only satisfactory, the teacher was not fully conversant with the objectives of the literacy hour. The shared text work lacked inspiration and, as a result, pupils were not effectively motivated. In the poor lesson, during the shared text activity, support was only supervisory and, apart from informal comments to pupils to prompt them to respond to the class teacher's questions, the support was ineffective. The support teacher used activities that were planned by the class teacher, rather than responding to the needs of children at the risk of under-achieving. There was no evidence for instance, of language assessments being noted to inform future planning for activities. In the focused teaching, the class teacher used a white board to note pupils' ideas, but the support teacher's questioning failed to motivate the group to learn. The group's attitudes deteriorated, pupils began to yawn and to fidget, and they produced very little work. Another adjacent group distracted one pupil who had very little knowledge of English and who was finding it difficult to follow the lesson. By the end of the activity, these pupils had failed to achieve and their progress was unsatisfactory.

## **MATHEMATICS**

76. Standards of attainment are in line with national expectations by the end of both key stages. The previous inspection report found similar standards. The 2000 national test results showed an unusual picture. The results for seven year olds were very high and for eleven year olds very low. Neither result reflects the overall standards in the school. Last year's seven year olds were a particularly strong cohort and it had been expected that they would do well. The 11 year olds were a small cohort with several pupils with special educational needs. Even so, their results were disappointing. Since 1996 there had been a steady increase in the proportion of 11 year olds reaching the standards expected. Last year's results were poor, but evidence shows that standards are set to rise again this year. However, whilst the majority are on course to attain the expected level for their age, fewer than average are on course to attain higher levels. Booster classes are run for pupils whose current attainment is below average. Pupils make good progress in these sessions, benefiting from the smaller classes and this is further aiding the improvement in standards.

77. Pupils enter the school with below average attainment and many have a limited command of English. At both key stages pupils make good progress. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and progress well. The support available for pupils for whom English is an additional language varies in quality, but they, nonetheless, make good progress.

78. Pupils receive a well-balanced mathematics curriculum that provides coverage of all the required strands of the National Curriculum. An appropriate emphasis is placed on the development of numeracy, but opportunities are missed to consolidate knowledge through work in other subjects.

79. At Key Stage 1 pupils learn to recognise numbers and to place them in the correct order. Pupils can read and write numbers correctly and can count both forwards and backwards. They recognise repeating patterns and are beginning to understand place value. By the end of the key stage almost all pupils have a sound basic understanding of number and a good recall of addition and subtraction facts, but many still lack confidence. Pupils can name common two- and three-dimensional shapes, and most can describe their properties using correct mathematical terminology. Pupils can present data accurately in the form of a block graph or a pie chart, for example, to show the results of a survey of favourite colours. Teachers plan work that is well matched to the range of ability within their class, thus ensuring that knowledge builds on what pupils already know and understand.

80. By the time they leave the school, pupils of average ability are confident with number. The good rate of progress at both key stages is attributable to the consistency of the teaching, which is never less than sound, and to the planning of the curriculum, which ensures that knowledge is developed systematically. The school has successfully introduced the National Numeracy Strategy and this is increasing pupils' skills and confidence in working with number. Pupils have a good mathematical vocabulary, which they use well to describe what they are doing. They have a good understanding of place value and some older pupils know their multiplication tables. However, many are not sufficiently secure in their knowledge of these and this leads to unnecessary mistakes. Pupils learn to make sensible estimates and to check the reasonableness of their answer. They understand area and volume, and most can calculate them accurately. Pupils can create and interpret data in a variety of graphs.

81. Standards in numeracy are improving because pupils are encouraged to think mathematically. Teachers encourage pupils to know number facts 'by heart', and older pupils of high ability are able to work fluently in their heads and to employ a range of appropriate strategies to solve problems.

82. Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good. They enjoy the subject and work with enthusiasm. The majority sustains concentration appropriate for their age, and older pupils demonstrate very high levels of perseverance and concentration. Pupils form excellent relationships and work well co-operatively and collaboratively. They treat equipment with care and share resources sensibly. The standard of presentation is good and most pupils take pride in the appearance of their work. These positive attitudes are a significant factor in the good progress achieved.

83. The quality of teaching of mathematics is good. Teachers plan work carefully and pitch their teaching appropriately for the range of prior attainment in their class. It is a feature of most teachers' planning that they cater well for all pupils, including not only those with special educational needs but also the more able. Good use is made of classroom assistants to support lower attaining pupils. Teachers know the pupils in their classes well and prepare thoroughly a range of suitable activities to allow all pupils to make good progress. The quality of teaching has a direct bearing on the good rate of progress that is achieved. Teachers have a sound knowledge and understanding of both the subject and the requirements of the National Curriculum. They explain clearly, question pupils effectively, set a brisk pace and encourage efficient thinking. They are skilful in introducing and reinforcing mathematical vocabulary so that pupils are able to use it with accuracy and understanding. Teachers' expectations are realistic, and sufficiently challenging to motivate and enthuse the pupils. Where teaching is particularly effective teachers emphasise the importance of using existing knowledge and thinking clearly. This was well illustrated in a Year 4 lesson, where pupils were taught to utilise their knowledge of multiplication to discover corresponding division facts, and apply this knowledge to tackle increasingly complex problems. The National Numeracy Strategy is providing a clear structure for the systematic development of knowledge and understanding and teachers implement it well. All lessons contain some good direct teaching, and teachers strike an appropriate balance between mental and written mathematics. Lessons have a clear purpose and objective. Teachers mark work carefully, but not all use marking to make it clear to pupils how their work could be improved. Teachers make efficient use of resources, such as



measuring equipment and number lines, and teach pupils to use them correctly and appropriately.

84. The effectiveness of the National Numeracy Strategy has been evaluated through lesson observations, and teachers' planning is monitored on a regular basis. Overall, the school has made good improvements since the time of the last inspection and is well placed to develop further.

## **SCIENCE**

85. Attainment in science is similar to that found nationally for pupils aged seven and 11. This is a similar judgement to that of the last inspection. In 2000, the overall attainment of pupils aged seven, based on teacher assessment, was above the national average with the percentage reaching the higher than expected level well above the average. The 2000 test results for pupils aged eleven were disappointing with no pupils attaining a level higher than that expected for their age. Attainment was, therefore, well below the national average although the number reaching the expected level was above that found in similar schools. Inspection evidence indicates that the attainment of pupils currently in Years 2 and 6, particularly in investigational work, are in line with those found nationally. Pupils throughout the school are given many opportunities to carry out their own experiments and learn scientific principles through a practical approach. This is working well to improve their knowledge and understanding of science as well as making the work more interesting, enjoyable and relevant. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are making the same good progress as their classmates.

86. By the age of seven, pupils know a range of food groups and can identify the composition of a healthy diet. They can suggest suitable habitats for a variety of animals such as birds, tigers, crocodiles and ladybirds and have a developing knowledge of the conditions needed to sustain life. Through an investigation using earthworms they found that the worms preferred a dark, moist habitat when given the choice rather than dry sand or cotton wool. This experiment generated great excitement and pupils learned, not only about earthworms, but also useful investigational skills such as predicting and recording. Pupils can successfully identify different sources of light and test them for effectiveness. A Year 1 class did this in the school hall with blacked-out windows to find out which light sources provided sufficient light to read a book. The lights used included a candle, a camera flash, a variety of torches and a desk lamp. The pupils successfully recorded their findings in a table and made many sensible and thoughtful observations. At the age of 11 pupils have a good understanding of the need for fairness in their investigations. This was clearly seen in a Year 6 class experimenting with sugar and water to test the rate at which the sugar dissolved. They planned their work very carefully and all knew that only one variable could be changed at a time or the test would not be fair. For example, one group decided to change the water temperature, another the type of sugar and a third the amount of water used. All other factors remained the same so that the effect of the changes could be observed. This work also had good links to numeracy with pupils measuring quantities, timing their experiments and recording in tables and graphs. They have a good knowledge of the solar system and its planets, producing their own books packed with interesting facts. Pupils have been taught all aspects of the science curriculum by the time they leave the school and, with the appropriate focus on practical activities, become more questioning and have a deeper understanding of the subject.

87. The quality of teaching is always satisfactory and often good or better. Teachers plan their lessons carefully and share the lesson objectives with pupils to enable them to focus on the learning intentions. The correct scientific vocabulary is stressed and pupils, from an early age, learn to use it appropriately. Teachers manage their pupils well and create a good working atmosphere in the classroom that helps pupils to concentrate on their work without interruption. Many lessons are introduced in a lively and imaginative manner with pupils being set challenges to interest and excite them. A good example of this was seen in a Year 5 class experimenting with gravity and air resistance. The teacher challenged them to make the most efficient parachute from a range of materials and the pupils responded very positively and were eager to start work. They worked very well in groups, sharing ideas and demonstrating a good attitude to their learning. Teachers have a good subject knowledge, which enables them to make useful teaching points and deliver each lesson in an interesting manner. Pupils respond well to the good teaching and

behaviour in lessons is very good. They have a mature attitude to their work and are very keen to succeed. Work is neatly presented and they take a pride in their achievements. This was particularly noticeable in Year 6 where pupils had produced their own planet books that were of a very high quality and had obviously been made very carefully.

88. The scheme of work is based on a two-year cycle to ensure that all aspects are covered at three different levels as pupils progress through the school. Resources are good and used effectively by teachers although links to information and communication technology still need more development.

## **ART**

89. The last time the school was inspected, attainment in art was above national expectations at both key stages. Since then, these high standards have been further improved. From their early days in the school, pupils are given opportunities to paint and draw, both what they see and what they imagine, using a range of materials and media. They learn and experiment with colour, and older pupils use their knowledge to produce attractive illustrations, often to support their work in other subjects. Year 4 pupils, for example, used pen and ink to draw designs on vases as part of their study of Ancient Greece.

90. The quality of observational drawing is a particular strength. Pupils are taught to practise and refine specific techniques using their sketchbooks, and most produce work of high quality. Another strength is pupils' bold and imaginative use of colour. From a young age pupils are encouraged to experiment with their use of colour and to seek the exact shade to create the desired effect. The skill that pupils develop is well illustrated in Year 5 silhouette pictures where the background of an evening sky is created by subtle shades of yellow, orange and red. The school places high value on art, and pupils' paintings and drawings are displayed carefully. The quality of these displays does much to create a warm and colourful environment.

91. Appropriate emphasis is given to the enjoyment to be derived from art, and many pupils unhesitatingly name it as their favourite lesson. Three-dimensional work is also of good quality. Year 6 pupils have produced attractive sculptures of athletes in connection with their history work on Ancient Greece.

92. In addition to their practical work, pupils also learn about famous artists and use examples of their work for inspiration. Year 3 pupils produced good quality paintings in the style of Picasso. Another class sought to emulate the style of Philippa-Alys Browne in producing dramatic paintings of African animals. The range of artists studied makes a valuable contribution to pupils' cultural development.

93. Teaching is good, and as a result pupils of all abilities progress well. There is suitable emphasis on the teaching of technique and pupils are challenged to attempt increasingly demanding tasks. Insistence that pupils observe closely develops skills that are valuable in other subjects, such as science. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good and further contribute to the high standards achieved. Pupils are justifiably proud of their work. Their work has been displayed at various exhibitions, such as *Back in Time*, the Primary art exhibit at Queen Mary and Westfield College, and more recently, the *Hidden Art Schools' Project*.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

94. Few lessons were observed during the inspection as few were taking place. Consequently, judgements are primarily based on scrutiny of past work and planning and discussions with teachers and pupils. Standards are average by the end of Key Stage 1. This was also the finding in 1997, when the school was last inspected. At that time the subject was judged not to meet statutory requirements at Key Stage 2. This is no longer the case, and in that respect there has been improvement. However, standards are still below average and pupils make unsatisfactory progress.

95. At Key Stage 1, pupils understand the basic principle of design. They use simple tools and assemble, join and combine materials in a variety of ways. Year 2 pupils made shakers and modified their designs to affect the volume. Year 1 pupils produced simple puppets, using split pins to create moveable joints. However, this good start is not built upon as pupils progress through the school. Although isolated examples of good work were observed, there is no systematic development of skills. Pupils are not taught the techniques necessary to use the variety of tools available. As a result, they lack the skills to be able to make increasingly complex models.

96. Insufficient attention is paid to the importance of matching design to purpose. The artistic nature of design is well developed. Year 4 pupils, for example, considered design when decorating Greek vases but the emphasis was on appearance rather than function. Similarly, the process of evaluation does not focus sufficiently on how designs can be modified to achieve the purpose better.

97. Insufficient lessons were observed to be able to make a definitive judgement on the quality of teaching. However, there are certainly gaps in the planning and in some teachers' confidence to teach the subject effectively. One lesson with older pupils was effective. From a starting point of shelters, useful discussion ensued on why a specific shelter had been made in a particular way and why certain materials had been used.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

98. The standards attained in geography are as expected for the age and ability of the pupils. This is a similar judgement to that made in the last inspection.

99. Pupils in Year 1 learn basic geographical skills through drawing plans of their classroom and following simple maps as they walk round the local area. In Year 2 pupils learn about distant lands such as Bangladesh where many of their families came from. They successfully identify the similarities and differences to be found in clothing, food and transport. Pupils also compare localities in the United Kingdom such as Stepney and the Scottish Isles and can write about what they would see in these places. Older pupils in Years 3 to 6 further develop their skills in reading and following plans and maps although some of the work is repeated at the same level in consecutive years. The newly produced humanities plan for topics to be studied in these years will hopefully address this problem and result in more focused learning of geographical skills and knowledge. Geography is often successfully linked to other subject areas. It makes a good contribution to numeracy through studying scale and to history by using maps to locate such places as Greece and Egypt. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language make the same satisfactory progress as their classmates as they move through the school.

100. Only one geography lesson was observed during the inspection but from this evidence, and from teachers' planning, looking at pupils' books and displays in classrooms, the quality of teaching is at least satisfactory. Work is now planned to meet the demands of the new National Curriculum and cover all areas of study successfully. Resources are of sufficient quality and quantity to stimulate and interest the pupils in their learning about their own and other lands. Assessment procedures have yet to be fully developed to enable teachers to plan future work at a suitable level and to monitor standards effectively.

## **HISTORY**

101. Attainment in history is as expected for pupils aged seven and 11. This is a similar judgement to that of the last inspection, when standards were found to be in line with national expectations.

102. At an early age pupils are introduced to the idea of past and present through studying their own families and changes that have occurred to them and their immediate family over the years. They know where they were born and where their parents, and sometimes grandparents, came from. By the age of 11 pupils have studied a range of periods in history in this country and abroad and have a good sense of chronology. They have a good understanding of Ancient Greece through in depth studies of events and everyday life. This is due to the good teaching they receive from teachers who have a good knowledge of the period and present the work in a variety of interesting and informative ways. For example, pupils in Year 4 wrote good quality letters and diaries giving the thoughts of the Greek soldiers after their defeat at the battle of Thermopylae in 480 B.C. and those of Persian sailors following their defeat by the Greeks at Salamis. Their writing showed a very good understanding of the events and how the people lived at that time. Pupils learn to interpret historical evidence from a range of sources and to present their findings in imaginative ways with regard for different audiences. Year 5 pupils, studying the Anglo-Saxons, wrote articles for a newspaper or an archaeological review after watching and discussing a video. They were extremely interested in the work, which was very well planned by the teacher and really inspired them. Pupils often compare the periods they are studying with the present day and can identify the similarities and differences confidently. This was clearly seen in a Year 4 class in their work about the Tudors. Pupils could talk knowledgeably about the differences to be found in clothing, transport and sources of power since that time.

103. Only two lessons in Key Stage 2 were observed during the inspection but from these, from looking at finished work by pupils, and from teachers' planning it is evident that the quality of teaching is at least satisfactory and it was very good in one of the lessons seen. Teachers have a good subject knowledge that enables them to interest and inspire their pupils. The planning is also good and often includes suitable links to work in other subject areas, particularly literacy, as pupils are encouraged to write in a variety of styles. Teachers manage their pupils well and this enables pupils to concentrate on their work and learn effectively. A good range of resources is used to make the subject come alive and give pupils an interest in history.

104. Subject planning makes good provision for the development of both knowledge and skills throughout the school and, together with the confidence of the teachers, ensures that all pupils learn effectively and make good progress.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

105. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are below those expected for pupils aged both seven and 11. This is a similar judgement to the last inspection and some of the same aspects of the curriculum, such as data handling and using control devices, remain underdeveloped. In some areas, notably word processing, standards have improved and pupils throughout the school have learned and can use a range of useful skills. However, their typing skills are not well developed and the majority of pupils can only enter text at a slow rate, which limits their output in the allocated time. Pupils in Year 6 are aware that they are not particularly well skilled in other areas and are lacking in confidence. Too few opportunities are taken to involve pupils in the subject and class computers were rarely seen to be used during the inspection to learn new skills or to enhance learning in other subject areas. Some equipment, for example the printer in Year 6, was not working at the time of the inspection and pupils were unable to print out their finished work. The school, however, has firm plans to address these shortcomings with a newly equipped computer suite in the near future.

106. Pupils in Year 2 are able to change the size and style of the font and can edit and save

their work. They use their class computers on a rota basis each week, and have some knowledge of using a CD-ROM for research work, for example finding out about different islands in the world. Pupils have some knowledge of the use of ICT in the wider world, such as the Internet. Their understanding of the use of ICT for data handling or for control is weak. In Years 3 to 5, pupils make slow progress and teachers miss many opportunities to use ICT on a regular basis to help pupils learn and develop new skills. In Year 6, pupils make good progress in word processing and have access to the Internet for research. They have made their own multimedia presentations about planets, incorporating text, graphics and sound. Regular volunteer visitors from the National Westminster Bank work with some Year 6 pupils each week and give useful help and advice. Other areas of the curriculum, such as using spreadsheets, control and monitoring, are not covered in sufficient depth to help pupils attain the expected standards for their age.

107. No lessons were observed during the inspection, so the quality of teaching could not be accurately judged. Very little evidence of the use of ICT was apparent in classroom displays or pupils' books, and computers were not being used on a regular basis in many classes. From teachers' planning and talking to pupils it is clear that some areas of the curriculum are only being taught superficially. For example, Year 6 pupils only had a hazy recollection of programming a floor robot, possibly a few years earlier. Pupils are extremely interested in ICT, and would dearly love to be able to use it more frequently to improve their skills and to learn more effectively in all areas of the National Curriculum. They handle equipment very carefully and work together well when given time on the computers.

108. Comprehensive and systematic staff training is shortly to take place to improve the competence of teachers and classroom assistants in the delivery of the subject. The planned computer suite with ten computers will further enhance the provision and enable staff to teach new skills more effectively. The curriculum needs to be carefully planned to give all pupils a greater depth of understanding in all aspects of the subject as well as more opportunities to use new technology and computer skills to support the teaching of other subjects. Assessment and recording procedures to monitor standards have not been developed sufficiently to help teachers plan suitable future work for their pupils. The school is now in a good position to raise standards.

## **MUSIC**

109. The standards pupils attain in music in performing and appraising are as expected for their age. This is a similar judgement to that made in the last inspection and, as before, there was insufficient evidence to make a judgement on attainment in composing. The school has a curriculum plan for the teaching of music but no scheme of work to support non-specialist teachers in the delivery of the subject. Such a scheme would provide a greater depth of coverage and improve the range of musical opportunities throughout the school.

110. Pupils of all ages sing tunefully and with due regard for phrasing and rhythm. They sing well in class lessons and in assemblies. From an early age pupils listen to music and sing from memory as was seen in a Year 1 lesson with pupils singing and moving to the song 'Little Train'. They joined in with great enthusiasm and, due to the teacher's good organisation and management skills, learned how to sing and move at different speeds. The weekly singing assemblies give all pupils opportunities to learn new songs and improve on their performance skills. The assembly for pupils in Years 1 and 2 appropriately included a song in Bengali led by a bilingual teacher and the pupils joined in with obvious enjoyment. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 also have a singing assembly in which they sing in a round very effectively and learn the correct posture for singing. They sang the song 'Raindrops' with good diction, secure pitch and good regard for dynamics. In class lessons pupils explore lyrics and melody as was seen in a Year 6 lesson where pupils successfully identified the mood of various songs played to them by noting key words from the lyrics. They were fascinated by the different styles that reflected the period in which each song had been composed. The very good teaching in this lesson ensured a very positive response from pupils, kept them interested and fully involved.

111. The quality of teaching is good with some very good teaching observed. The good subject

knowledge of some teachers helps them to give clear explanations and teach the correct musical vocabulary. For example, in a Year 4 class the teacher introduced a wide range of Italian terms to describe a piece of music. The pupils then suggested hand movements to match such terms as diminuendo, crescendo, piano and staccato and used these movements correctly to illustrate changes in a piece of music played to them. Good relationships are a strong feature with pupils behaving well in lessons and eager to be involved. As yet, pupils' work is not recorded to help them evaluate their own performance and that of others and to enable them to suggest ways to improve. Such recordings would also prove useful to assess standards achieved by individuals and groups of pupils as they move through the school.

112. There are limited opportunities for more able pupils to develop their musical talents as few of them learn to play tuned instruments. There are, however, some planned opportunities for pupils to sing to others in assemblies celebrating various festivals and in end of term concerts. A group of pupils also sang in a concert organised by the local authority at the Festival Hall. Music from other lands and cultures is included in the music played as pupils file in for assemblies and recently a group of Indian musicians were invited to play for the children.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

113. Standards in physical education are in line with national expectations by the end of both key stages. The picture was similar at the time of the last inspection. Pupils follow a broad and balanced curriculum, which provides a suitable range of experience. In addition to work in gymnastics, pupils are also taught games and dance skills. The school has no field, which limits opportunities for team games, but pupils are taught ball skills such as throwing and catching. The school makes good use of specialist coaching to develop skills in soccer and cricket. All pupils have the opportunity to learn to swim and, by the time they leave the school, almost all can swim 25 metres.

114. Pupils in all year groups are developing their co-ordination and improving their skills in a range of gymnastic floor movements. In a Year 5 lesson, for example, pupils demonstrated a high level of precision and control when developing a sequence of movements in pairs. In dance, pupils respond appropriately to music and move with increasing fluency. Through practice, they are able to refine and improve their performance. Pupils of all abilities are making satisfactory progress. They listen attentively and work with commitment and energy during their lessons. In a particularly successful Year 1 dance lesson, pupils' enthusiasm was a key factor in the very good progress made.

115. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, but is rarely better because pupils are not consistently taught the importance of planning and evaluating for themselves. Whilst teachers make use of pupils' demonstrations to illustrate good performance, they vary in how effectively they do this. Increased emphasis on the features that made an activity particularly successful would enable other pupils to develop the skills of evaluation more effectively. Similarly, pupils would benefit from greater emphasis on the teaching of technique at times when they are unsure what they need to do next to get better. No support for pupils with English as an additional language is provided during physical education lessons, and this results in pupils at an early stage of acquisition not always fully understanding the teacher's instructions. Due attention is paid to safety issues, particularly in moving equipment and the safe use of available space. All lessons observed included appropriate activities for 'warming-up' at the start of the lesson and 'cooling down' at the end.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

116. Very few lessons were observed during the inspection, and they were in the older classes. However, scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' planning shows that the school appropriately meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. Religious education is allocated an appropriate amount of time in the school, but it tends to be linked to a topic that also covers history and

geography. The school ethos promotes mutual respect and good relationships and provides a good basis from which to develop the pupils' understanding of the relationship between religious teachings and social and moral behaviour. Throughout the school, pupils are acquiring appropriate attitudes of consideration, respect and open-mindedness. The development of such attitudes enhances their learning.

117. By the time pupils are seven years old, they have a sound understanding of the importance of festivals such as Christmas, Diwali and Eid. They have a good knowledge of the lives and teachings of the leaders of three world faiths: Christianity, Islam and Judaism. Through their topic on Islam, they have an appropriate understanding of Mohammed's life and of the five pillars of Islam. They recognise the importance of the Qu'ran and other sacred texts. They have a developing understanding of the significance of writing words down. Good comparisons are made between pupils' own religious backgrounds and other religions and their celebrations and festivals.

118. Older classes successfully learn about symbolism, for instance the importance of special clothes, the crescent moon and a prayer mat. By the time they are 11 years old, pupils have developed a sound knowledge of six major world faiths. They study the traditions and practices of Christianity, Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism, and relate this knowledge to symbolism. In Year 5, pupils enjoyed celebrating a Sikh festival by preparing a *Langar* and sharing it with visitors to the class. In Year 6, pupils were being introduced to Christianity. They demonstrated a mature understanding of the importance of religious symbols in a variety of faiths. In their discussions, those that are Muslim applied their good understanding of the Islamic faith to Christianity. Pupils are respectful and, in lessons, they willingly contribute information about religious practices in their community. Most pupils make good progress in the acquisition of knowledge and understanding of religion and in the development of appropriate attitudes. Those who have special educational needs are well supported and they similarly make good progress. Pupils who are still at an early stage of English only make sound progress because the additional support they receive in lessons is not specifically planned by support teachers to meet their individual needs.

119. Throughout the school, pupils are well motivated and they respond readily to the work they are set. They show positive attitudes to the subject. Pupils exhibit curiosity and a willingness to deal with moral and spiritual issues. They listen attentively to stories and participate with interest when asked to discuss issues. Boys and girls work well together and make thoughtful contributions. Pupils with special educational needs, and those for whom English is an additional language, are carefully involved in all activities. Work in religious education throughout the school involves pupils thinking about their feelings in order to understand and to empathise with the feelings of others.

120. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers have appropriate knowledge of the subject and they skilfully link religious education to personal and social development. They carefully develop respectful attitudes as they cover religious elements of a theme. Lessons are carefully planned and organised, with the necessary resources easily accessible. Teachers tell stories clearly and expressively. They promote discussion effectively and work hard to encourage less confident pupils to express their thoughts and feelings in a large group discussion. Their good teaching is successfully promoting learning and helps all pupils to gain an understanding that religion has a practical application in people's everyday lives. Religious education makes a useful contribution to pupils' literacy skills in older classes where there are some examples of thoughtful and perceptive writing.