

INSPECTION REPORT

MAYESPARK PRIMARY SCHOOL

Ilford

LEA area: Redbridge

Unique reference number: 131304

Headteacher: Mrs J Hadrill

Reporting inspector: M G Carter
20714

Dates of inspection: 19 - 22 March 2001

Inspection number: 230545

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 with nursery class
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Mayespark Primary School Goodmayes Lane Goodmayes Ilford
Postcode:	IG3 9PX
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Cllr F Maravala
Date of previous inspection:	none

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr M Carter 20714	Registered inspector	Mathematics Music	How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
Mr T Page 9958	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents? Attitudes, values and personal development. Finance.
Mrs B Knowles 14706	Team inspector	English Art and design Design and technology Religious education Equal opportunities	Provision for spiritual, moral social and cultural development. Resources.
Mr N Hardy 29262	Team inspector	Science Foundation Stage Information and communication technology Physical education.	How good are the curricular and other opportunities? Staffing
Mrs M Docherty 19774	Team inspector	Geography English as an additional language	
Mrs V Birkett 30184	Team inspector	History Special educational needs	Accommodation.

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is in its third year since opening in 1998. It is housed in a remodelled building and currently has 190 pupils up to the age of seven. There is a part-time nursery class with the equivalent of 26 full-time pupils. The school serves a suburban area of Ilford and its pupils come from mixed socio-economic backgrounds, with slightly more from disadvantaged backgrounds than is typical. Twenty per cent of pupils presently claim free school meals and this is close to the national average. There are sixteen pupils identified as having special educational needs and this is lower than the national average but six of these pupils have a statement of special educational need and this is above average. Two thirds of the pupils speak English is an additional language and on entry to the nursery about half the children speak and understand very little English. A substantial majority of the pupils have ethnic minority backgrounds. The largest groups have Indian and Pakistani heritage but there are also minorities with Caribbean, African and other heritages, including a small number of mid-European refugees. The proportion of children with typical or better attainment for their age is well below that which is usually found on entry to nursery education and the results of baseline assessments conducted on entry to the reception classes are below national and local averages.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a very effective school. Since opening it has quickly grown in reputation and size and is soon to enlarge into the junior age range. A large majority of pupils are achieving the expected national standards by the age of seven, although fewer than is typical achieve high standards. The pupils' progress through the nursery and reception years and the infant years is good and the initial difficulties that many have in speaking and understanding English are quickly overcome. The pupils are very interested in learning and their parents are very supportive of the school. Good teaching and the good leadership of the headteacher largely foster these features. Delays in acquiring adequate resources have affected the school's ability to teach the full curriculum for information and communication technology. Otherwise, the school's provision is broad, appropriate and fosters the pupils' moral, social and cultural development well. Funding is above average, reflecting the school's start up costs, but funds have been largely used effectively and overall provide good value for money.

What the school does well

- The pupils make good progress and those with English as an additional language quickly acquire satisfactory competence.
- The teaching is good overall.
- The staff have a strong commitment to improve, there is good concern for each pupil and their self-esteem is nurtured well.
- The pupils' behaviour is good overall and they are very understanding of each other.
- The availability and use of assistant staff is good and helps specific pupils to make progress.
- The pupils' attitudes to lessons, their parents' views of the school and the support given at home provide a positive climate for learning.
- Provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

What could be improved

- Attainment and progress in information and communication technology.
- The achievement of the oldest, higher-attaining pupils in English, mathematics and science.
- Procedures for improving attendance are insufficiently effective.
- The governors' involvement in planning the school's development.
- The guidance for teachers about helping non-English speakers and about information and communication technology.

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 not been inspected previously; there are no junior pupils; and there have not been any National Curriculum tests so far.

STANDARDS

The school has not previously had pupils old enough to take the National Curriculum tests. Judgements are based on the work and the learning of the seven-year-old pupils, who are currently the oldest at the school. There is a good proportion of pupils whose attainment is similar to the expected national level for seven-year-olds. In mathematics, 86 per cent of the Year 2 pupils have achieved the expected standard and this is close to the national average for 2000. However, in the core subjects of English, mathematics, and science the overall performance is below average because

so few pupils exceed the expected level. When taking into account the below average attainment of pupils on entry, the very high proportion with English is an additional language and the high proportion who joined after the age of five, the pupils achieve well overall and have made good progress. Newcomers to English gain basic skills quickly and pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress. In written work, the pupils' standard of presentation is weak and they could be better. In information and communication technology, standards are unsatisfactory because the subject has not been taught in full. In art and design, standards are good. In design and technology, the standard of the limited amount of work seen was satisfactory. In the remaining subjects of history, geography, music, religious education and physical education, attainment is satisfactory.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Parents confirm their children like the school. In lessons, pupils are interested to learn.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. The school is free of oppressive behaviour and the pupils are largely obedient and respectful of adults and each other.
Personal development and relationships	Satisfactory. The pupils learn to form good relationships and are generally responsible but sometimes lack independence.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory. Some pupils have extended absence and there has been much illness.

The pupils have a strong enthusiasm for the school. They feel secure and generally enjoy their learning. They learn to respect each other and there is a good climate of multicultural harmony. Pupils learn to help each other, particularly those whose English is at an early stage of acquisition. No bullying was seen or reported. The pupils learn well the skills to make friends. Although they are responsible and generally conscientious, they are less good at using their initiative and being independent. Attendance suffers from a number of pupils who take extended holidays abroad and from illness last year.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years
Lessons seen overall	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.

Teaching is good overall; none was unsatisfactory. In 43 per cent of the lessons, the teaching was satisfactory. In 40 per cent, it was good. In 16 per cent, it was very good and in one lesson, it was excellent. Because of this good profile of teaching, the pupils learn well in most lessons and make good progress. The teaching of English and mathematics is generally good. The teachers work hard to meet the needs of all the pupils, especially the high proportion of pupils for whom English is an additional language. Teachers and class assistants support these pupils, and those with special educational needs, well. There is a good consistency of approach in teaching and the skills of literacy and numeracy are taught well in the nursery and reception age groups. More could now be done to raise the proportion of pupils who achieve beyond expected levels and to make the teaching of pupils with English as an additional language more consistent, despite the good learning of these pupils currently. Teachers manage and organise their classes very well and the well-kept discipline promotes good behaviour. The good teaching methods are well thought out and in addition to the effective use of homework, help the pupils to have a deep interest in their work and a clear awareness of their own progress. However, the pupils' standard of presentation in written work is weak and teachers do not encourage accurate presentation sufficiently.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory overall and relevant to the pupils. Literacy has had an appropriate emphasis and together with numeracy is planned from the appropriate frameworks. However, the curriculum information and communication technology has not been taught fully.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. All the requirements of the national code of practice are met. Pupils are appropriately identified and progress monitored, but some targets are not sufficiently clear.

Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. Most pupils make good progress in English language acquisition and gain sufficient competence by the end of the age of seven because of the good availability of early support, although there is no written whole school policy.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision is good for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils but there are occasionally missed opportunities for pupils to reflect and consider their emotional response in lessons.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. The monitoring of personal and academic development is good. The procedures to improve attendance have not been sufficiently effective.

Parents have very positive views of the school, its accessibility and the information it provides, including reports. Parents give generally good support for their children's learning at home and some offer help in school. The curriculum is enhanced by a number of visitors and visits and a homework club is provided. In some subjects, the rich multicultural backgrounds of the pupils are used to increase relevance and gain interest. However, the school has not met the statutory requirements for information and communication technology and is rectifying this currently. It has also improved the balance of aspects of science taught. The good provision for learning English language is enhanced by class teachers through the careful introduction of new vocabulary associated with the subject being taught. The pupils' behaviour is carefully monitored to eliminate any oppressive actions. The school is a safe and orderly community.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. There has been a strong emphasis on developing a consistent approach to teaching and the school's aims are very well reflected in its ethos. Staff development is good.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. Governors are involved well with monitoring and the curriculum, but could help more with development planning.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. Several monitoring and evaluation systems are in place. Each pupil's progress has not yet been measured systematically to provide numerical indicators of progress.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. Extra funding is used for its purposes and value for money is sought. However, the funding for information and communication technology has been delayed.

The school is well led and managed. There is a good climate of commitment to improve and there are good systems for staff development and performance management. The role of subject co-ordinator is currently under-developed. Statutory responsibilities for the curriculum are not yet met fully in the case of information and communication technology and, although otherwise of good quality, the school's prospectus and governors' annual report to parents omit some required information. The governors use the services of the local education authority to advise on obtaining the best value from expenditure and are aware of the appropriate principles. The school's development plan is satisfactory and identifies appropriate annual priorities, but governors are not involved at the early stages of planning.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They feel very happy about approaching the school with questions or problems. • Their children like school. • The school is well led and managed. • The children are expected to work hard. • The pupils are well behaved. • The teaching helps the pupils to make good progress. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A small number of parents would like to see more extra-curricular activities.

Parents are generally very pleased with the school and feel its reputation is growing. They feel particularly happy with the way they are welcomed and the headteacher's openness. Inspectors agree with most of the points made here by parents. They found that that the children are happy, like school, make good progress and are well behaved. The teaching is good overall although teachers could insist on better standards of presentation of written work. The school has good systems to keep parents informed. There are only a small number of extra-curricular activities, which is similar to the situation in many schools with infant pupils.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. Since opening in 1998, the school has not had pupils of an age to be assessed through the National Curriculum tests, nor has there been a previous inspection by which to evaluate the school's trends in performance. The seven-year-old pupils are due to be formally assessed in the coming summer term. Judgements about standards are based on inspection evidence.

2. In the core subjects of English, mathematics and science the overall standard is below average nationally. This is because the proportion of seven-year-olds that exceed the expected national level for their age is smaller than is typically found. However, the achievement of these pupils since entering school has been generally good and a large proportion of them attain the expected level by the age of seven. On entry to Year 1, the attainment of a typical five-year-old is below the level expected in these subjects and there is a high proportion of pupils with English as an additional language. Nearly half of the current Year 2 group joined the school after the age of five. These factors indicate that progress in Years 1 and 2 is good from the generally low starting point indicated by the assessments of four-year-olds made on entry to the reception year. The proportion of high attainment in Year 1 is larger than that in Year 2 but is still lower than the average. The attainment of pupils on entry to the nursery class is usually well below that which is typically found. Progress in the nursery and reception years is good. By the end of the reception year, a large majority of the children attain average standards in physical, personal, and social development, meeting the appropriate nationally agreed early learning goals. In mathematical development; communication, language and literacy; creative development; and knowledge and understanding; although much improved, many still have attainment below average. Those with English as an additional language make good progress in acquiring communication skills.

3. Standards in art and design are good and pupils make good progress. The contribution of an artist in residence has elevated much of the school's work. In information and communication technology, on the other hand, standards are poor. This is because the pupils have not been taught the full curriculum for the subject. There are now advanced plans for this to be corrected. Standards in religious education are satisfactory overall, with strong aspects such as learning about a broad range of religions. In design and technology, there is little evidence by which to judge standards but photographs and work displayed indicate satisfactory skills and knowledge. In geography, history, music, and physical education, standards are satisfactory and pupils make sound progress.

4. The progress of pupils with English as an additional language is good and is monitored thoroughly. Targets are set for these pupils to chart their progress in English language acquisition. By the age of seven, the large majority achieve the nationally expected standards, particularly in speaking and listening, and this represents good progress from the very low baseline on entry to the school. However, the small proportion of higher attaining bilingual pupils often do not achieve their full potential. Scrutiny of the records of English language targets and progress towards them indicates that pupils are making steady progress in acquiring skills and moving towards fluency in speaking by the time they are seven. Monitoring indicates that the pupils usually improve by at least one stage of language acquisition each year. Such progress is evident for pupils at all stages of English language acquisition. The school's inclusion policies help the large majority of these pupils to have attainment similar to the national and school average by the age of seven in most subjects.

5. Pupils with special educational needs make at least satisfactory progress. They have individual education plans that outline their learning needs, although some of the targets within these are not sufficiently specific. In some subjects these pupils make slower progress because the tasks set are not always sufficiently different from those for other pupils. The school is committed to providing sufficient high quality support and this is effective in helping the pupils to gain skills. For several, progress has been good enough for them to be removed from the register of pupils with special educational needs. From the baseline assessment made on entry, the school appropriately identifies and monitors the progress of pupils with particularly low or with generally high scores every six months.

6. Although not statutorily required, the school has set targets for the proportion of pupils reaching the expected level by the end of the infant stage. The progress towards these has been monitored closely and the targets revised upwards. The targets are appropriately challenging and the monitoring is based on the regular evaluation of the National Curriculum levels attained by the pupils.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

7. The pupils' attitudes are very good. They are eager to please, and do their best. They sustain a good level of interest in what is going on both in class and around the school. They listen attentively and embrace new experiences with enthusiasm. For example, during a very successful lesson given by a visiting artist when pupils were introduced to new ways of "drawing a picture" using chalk and charcoal, tissue paper, and sand, the pupils relished the opportunity for free expression, produced imaginative interpretations and maintained good classroom behaviour.

8. Behaviour is good, and there have been no exclusions. Pupils invariably behave well in lessons and around the school. They are courteous and treat resources and the school buildings with respect. Pupils, and parents, agree that school is an enjoyable experience. Pupils from all backgrounds integrate well, and there is no evidence of bullying or oppressive behaviour. They support each other when working in pairs or small groups, and generally wait their turn and put their hands up when they have something to say in a classroom discussion.

9. Personal development is satisfactory overall. Baseline testing shows that approximately one third of pupils who enter the reception classes have relatively low personal and social skills. Others join the school in Years 1 and 2 who have had disruptive and sometimes traumatic personal experiences that have had a negative impact on their personal development. These pupils make good progress because of the good support provided, particularly the emphasis placed on valuing the contribution of every pupil. Relationships are good amongst the pupils, and with teachers and other adults. The pupils are generally polite and caring. Attendance is unsatisfactory, being below the national average. Some families take extended holidays that are authorised by the school. There is also a relatively high level of recorded illness.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

10. Teaching is good overall. No lessons were unsatisfactory. Forty-three per cent were satisfactory, 40 per cent were good, 16 per cent were very good and one lesson was excellent. This profile is somewhat better than the national average for 2000 and shows that in over half the lessons the teaching is good or better. Although there is some variation between teachers, the quality of teaching is good throughout. It is very slightly better in Year 1 than for other years. The quality of the teaching is directly reflected in the quality of the pupils' learning and the progress they make.

11. The school has a very strong emphasis in providing high quality teaching and this is outlined in the policy for teaching and learning, which is of very good quality and gives good guidance, for example, about methods and organisation. It has been developed in a number of staff meetings and was updated at the beginning of the school year. Teachers largely use the guidance it provides well and this has led to an effective approach to teaching and learning, although sometimes it is not followed rigorously. The headteacher and others closely monitor teaching and this leads to the setting of targets for increased effectiveness.

12. Although there are exceptions, teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach is generally good and most know about pupils' common misconceptions and errors. Where there are uncertainties, the practice of planning lessons jointly for each year group helps to overcome them. There have also been a good number of demonstration lessons provided by specialists, including some from outside the school. For example, an artist in residence teaches pupils and inspires both them and the teachers. In music, class teachers observed a visiting specialist teacher consolidating the pupils' knowledge of letter sounds through songs and rhythm. Being a Leading Mathematics Teacher, the mathematics coordinator has successfully helped the teachers to develop good knowledge and understanding of the subject through demonstration lessons and training meetings about the National Numeracy Strategy. Teachers in the nursery and reception age groups have a good knowledge of the appropriate curriculum and this is clearly shared by the non-teaching staff. The work done to improve all the pupils' spoken English is especially good.

13. The teaching of English and mathematics is good. The national strategies for literacy and numeracy have been adopted well and provide effective guidance for teaching. There has been further enhancement of teaching effectiveness through the subject coordinators, although in English some aspects of coordination are not completed due to temporary responsibility. In science, teaching is satisfactory with a good emphasis on experimentation but too little teaching at a higher level. In art and design, teaching is good and enhanced by the work of an artist in residence, which has a positive effect on the school. In geography, music, and physical education, teaching is satisfactory and in history, and religious education, it is good because of the enthusiasm generated by the school's multicultural nature. In design and technology, it was not possible to judge the quality of teaching. In information and communication technology, only one lesson was seen. This was of satisfactory quality but the pupils' learning has been poor, due to delays in the programme of study being taught fully.

14. Teachers manage the pupils very well. They apply the school's behaviour and discipline strategies well and there is

a climate of respect in the classrooms. Positive encouragement and rewards are used effectively. When the few pupils with behavioural difficulties distract others, this is dealt with well, sometimes by sensitive and timely withdrawal using support staff effectively. There is minimum distraction and the pupils are helped to maintain good self-esteem. The pupils are usually appropriately grouped for different subjects and the teachers share the lessons' learning objectives with them. There are also appropriate targets set for individual pupils and groups are often chosen by identifying the particular learning needs that they have in common. The progress of these "focus" groups is carefully monitored. Such features promote satisfactory teaching of basic skills. In the nursery and reception year groups, basic skills of literacy and numeracy are well taught and the pupils learn these well and are beginning to use them to communicate. For example, in a lesson in the nursery class, clapping was used to help the children count to 21 and signs are used to help them learn the days of the week in English.

15. Homework is used well and is often related to what the pupils are learning at school. Sometimes the homework is particularly relevant to the pupils' backgrounds and supports their learning about cultural diversity. Often it encourages the children to practise basic skills such as reading or writing. For example, a soft toy is taken home on occasions and the pupils write a suitable diary for its visit home. In the classrooms, teachers benefit from a good provision of support assistants, who are well trained and often very effective in supporting the needs of individual pupils or groups. They are well deployed by the teachers and provide good quality records of the progress made by the pupils they have worked with. Teachers maintain good liaison with the assistants especially when their work has involved withdrawing pupils from lessons.

16. Teachers generally have good expectations of the pupils' behaviour and their learning. The work set in lessons is often appropriately different for pupils of different abilities. However, there are occasional weaknesses. There is sometimes not enough insistence on a good quality of presentation of written work. In a small number of lessons the pupils were not shown enough how to lay out writing or numbers. The marking of the pupils' books, while usually regular and encouraging, sometimes omits pointers for improvement. In a minority of lessons, teachers insufficiently challenge the highest attaining pupils. For example, in a Year 2 lesson introducing the use of the multiplication sign, a small number of higher attaining pupils already knew about this and needed work that was more advanced from the next level of the National Curriculum.

17. The large majority of the lessons are made interesting and maintain the pupils' interest well. In a small number, whole class introductions are too long, the pupils have too little time to complete their work, or the final discussion is cut short. In the best lessons, the pupils are told about the time allocated for their work. However, the teachers use questioning well to help evaluate what the pupils have learned and sometimes these are directed appropriately at pupils of different abilities. Nevertheless, despite the good target setting and recording of pupils' past learning, occasionally teachers do not use this information enough in the non-core subjects because they are keen to ensure that the work planned in the units for that term is taught fully. The content of the planned curriculum sometimes takes precedence over what the pupils need to learn next.

18. In lessons the pupils acquire skills, knowledge and understanding at a good rate and make better progress than expected because of the good features of teaching. The teaching helps the pupils to maintain very good attitudes to their learning, which in turn promotes good efforts and concentration. The target setting and sharing of learning objectives aids the pupils' awareness of their own learning effectively. On a small number of occasions, the pupils of higher attainment become less interested when the discussion or work insufficiently challenges them.

19. The school's employs a specialist teacher for the high proportion of pupils with English as an additional language. There is also a bilingual classroom assistant to support pupils in the nursery and reception classes. There is good liaison between them and the classroom teachers. Support is provided using teaching partnership approaches. In this way, the specialist staff are able to influence planning, teaching and record-keeping approaches. For example, work is planned to give these pupils good speaking and listening opportunities and maximum access to meaning using practical activities and real objects. Reception children were using real teddy bears and enlarged texts to investigate the characteristics of a non-fiction book on bears, focusing on adjectives to show the difference between types of bear. They looked at the book's contents page to demonstrate its purpose. Further support was given by the teacher, using the whiteboard to form questions and statements to distinguish types of bear and this was very effective. This approach, while clearly beneficial to pupils who need additional support to access meaning in English, was very helpful to all the pupils and good progress was seen in the class-made books produced by the end of the session. The teaching and learning of pupils with English as an additional language is good. Although teachers are well aware of these pupils' needs, there is no written whole school guidance and consequently some opportunities are missed, such as the ways in which geography may be used to enhance the pupils' language awareness.

20. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by the provision of appropriate extra help and by the way in which class teachers prepare appropriate tasks and include these pupils fully, sometimes asking well-matched questions in whole class discussions. Individual education plans include targets of mixed quality. Consequently, a proportion of the lessons have insufficiently specific outcomes identified for these pupils. The quality and quantity of

support is generally good and teachers liaise with and deploy class assistants well. Overall, the learning of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory and in some cases good. The school is aware of the need to identify pupils who may be gifted or talented and currently monitors the progress of pupils who entered the school with above average attainment.

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

21. The curriculum is appropriately broad with all the required subjects contained in the National Curriculum being taught during the school year. Currently, however, there is an under representation of the teaching of information and communication technology and its use in other subjects across the curriculum is not well developed. Very early in the life of the school, the governors and head teacher made the decision to devote above average percentages of time to the teaching of English and mathematics. Given the limited previous experiences of children and the limited ability of some pupils to understand and speak English, this was a sensible step. It did, however, result in below average amounts of time being spent on the teaching of other subjects, which has had a slight negative effect on the pupils' attainment in those areas. Currently, there are no formal monitoring systems in place to determine the exact amount of time spent on each subject. Schemes of work are in place for all subjects and some revisions of these are taking place, for example, in science where gaps in the previous schemes used have now been filled. The topic approach used in the non-core subjects adequately identifies the knowledge to be taught but is limited in its promotion of continuity and progression in the development of skills and understanding. The guidance for some subjects is yet to be reviewed and revised. Not all subjects have policies in place to provide guidance for teachers and support staff. Several recently written policies remain to be ratified by the governors.

22. The focus on English and mathematics provides an appropriate use of time to meet the needs of all pupils especially for those needing to extend their understanding and speaking of English. The time spent in teaching is satisfactory but there is some loss of time, especially at the beginning of sessions and the ends of breaks. An appropriate curriculum is in place for children in the nursery and reception classes but currently the coverage of information and communication technology is unsatisfactory for pupils in Years 1 and 2. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory with considerable time and effort spent in meeting their needs. Most support appropriately occurs in the classroom. On occasions, it is less effective when the pupils are withdrawn from lessons to receive additional support in language development, sometimes at the expense of their learning in other subjects. The National Literacy Strategy has been satisfactorily introduced and is providing an appropriate structure to enable teachers to plan effective lessons and for pupils to improve their learning. Consequently attainment is rising. The introduction of the numeracy strategy is bearing fruit and indications are that its systematic approach is resulting in improved attainment across the school. The provision of extra-curricular activities is limited with a homework club and some musical activities. This is barely satisfactory but the school is developing plans to increase this when it expands into the junior key stage in the coming year.

23. There is an appropriate equality of opportunity for pupils to join in learning and additional activities in most areas. The school does not yet sufficiently monitor the effectiveness or resultant loss of learning opportunities when pupils are withdrawn from lessons. Inspection evidence indicates that more able pupils are not always sufficiently challenged to extend their learning. This results in too few pupils attaining higher levels in English, mathematics and science at the end of the Year 2. Pupils with English as an additional language are offered support to develop their literacy skills in English and to meet the linguistic demands of other subjects in the curriculum. The teaching framework of the National Literacy Strategy supports this work. There are occasional missed opportunities to help pupils acquire English and a consistent approach is more likely to be achieved when the school has developed a written bilingual policy and common ways of working. These have been identified as priorities in the school development plan for next term.

24. Provision for the pupils' personal, social and health education is good overall but with some areas which still need attention. Pupils are very well behaved and cooperate well in lessons working together harmoniously. Teachers know their pupils well and meet their needs both in educational and social terms. The provision of sex education is not backed by a policy, although the pupil's questions are answered when they arise. Drug awareness education is being developed and, with outside help, is being improved.

25. Parents make a positive contribution to the pupils' learning and the school encourages them to become more involved through the provision of literacy and numeracy workshops. Homework is provided and pupils regularly take reading books and spellings home to learn. The school uses the skills of local people well, for example, in the use of local artists to raise standards in art and design. Representatives of different religions are also welcomed into school. Links with local businesses are less well developed. Relationships with other local schools are satisfactory and the head teacher regularly attends meetings of the local schools' forum and meets with the headteacher of the local secondary school.

26. There is a good range and quality of opportunity offered through the curriculum and other activities to promote

pupils' knowledge and insight into the values and beliefs of others and to develop their spiritual awareness at a level appropriate to their age and development. Consideration for one another and the acknowledgement of self-worth of each individual underpins the ethos of the school. Woven into the religious education syllabus is the appreciation of others' religions. This is exemplified by a lesson on Sikhism in a series of stories of other faiths. In the story of Guru Gobind Singh and the five Ks, a Sikh member of the class was able to explain the meaning of the symbols and their relevance to her family. Elements of awe and wonder were apparent in a science lesson when the class teacher showed pupils the root system of a pot plant. In a lesson on the Christian story of creation, pupils explored their emotions on reflecting on the possible extinction of the whale, while they used oil pastels to express these emotions and listened to evocative music. Assemblies are run on religious lines, with the celebration of achievement by pupils or by a class sharing with the school of what they have learnt. There are stories from holy books. For example, from the Bible came the story of Moses in dramatic form. Special moments of quiet reflection with a lit candle when pupils listen to words from a holy book are an effective inspiration for reflection.

27. There is good provision for the moral development of pupils. They develop a moral code, learning to make reasoned judgements on moral issues. Respect for others and good manners are part of the ethos of the school and staff are effective role models. Intolerance of and absence of bullying indicates good moral behaviour with equal opportunities for all. The behaviour code forms the basis of the Golden Rules, which are displayed in the entrance hall and in all classrooms and which are agreed by the pupils. Where a disagreement occurs, discussion and resolution are the basis of agreement.

28. The school provides a good range of experiences whereby pupils appreciate their own culture and the diversity and richness of others'. There is an opportunity for Asian drumming held weekly for pupils and many links with families with English as a second language, for example, family literacy opportunities. Parents act as classroom helpers and interpreters, for example, for Albanian refugees. The children were involved in the creation and performance of a traditional dance inspired by the animals in the zoo. Midday helpers are trained in traditional playground games. Art is encouraged in many ways, for example, by bringing in local artists, one of whom has worked with children in producing the mosaic arch by the entrance to the school.

29. The school is good at encouraging pupils to relate positively to one another but more could be done to encourage them to take responsibility and feel that they are a voice in the school that will be listened to. When pupils are asked to work together, they cooperate with each other sensibly. This was illustrated by the assembly presentation to parents by a Year 2 class, where pupils brought elements of dance and song and reading together sensibly without rehearsal. Pupils responsibly carry out duties, for example, taking registers to the office, tidying the corridor and present pupils are deployed to look after new ones. On one occasion, a child acted as interpreter on the phone to summon the parent of a child who was ill. Overall, provision for social development is good.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

30. Overall, the school has good procedures to ensure the health and safety of its pupils during the school day. Child protection procedures are clear and staff are aware of what they should do. All the necessary equipment checks are undertaken, trained personnel administer first aid, and there are sufficient non-teaching staff to supervise playground activities. On cold days, there is an imbalance in the effectiveness of heating the school building. There are some exposed hot water pipes, which become too hot to touch occasionally.

31. The school is successful in promoting good behaviour and sustaining a multicultural community that is free of oppressive behaviour. This is underpinned by good adult role models, celebration of success, and focused support. Pupils agree to rules, which are displayed in classrooms, are proud to wear stickers and stars awarded for good work and behaviour, and having their names recorded in the "Golden Book". Procedures to promote good attendance have been insufficiently effective. The school has been slow to agree an attendance policy, which is still only in a draft stage. Nevertheless, registers are well maintained and regularly monitored, and the educational welfare officer makes regular visits to assist the school with enquiries. Despite the relatively late start to the school day, a small number of pupils arrive after registration.

32. The school has effective assessment procedures. All pupils entering the reception classes undertake baseline tests, and formal assessments are made at other times. These assessments enable pupils to be grouped by attainment in specific subjects. Each pupil is set targets, and is given a target card written in an easy to understand style. Pupils with English as an additional language are closely monitored and each class with pupils in the five to seven age range has focus groups of pupils who need the most help. The weakness in the assessment system is that once higher attaining pupils have been identified, they are often not set sufficiently challenging work.

33. Regular assessment, and the range of incentives for pupils to perform well, combine to enable teachers to get to know their pupils well. This supports the good progress most pupils make and is effective. Pupils who have special

educational needs make satisfactory progress.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

34. Parents' views of the school are very positive. All parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire agreed that behaviour is good and that they would feel comfortable about approaching the school if they had questions or a problem. Approximately one third of parents either did not express an opinion about out of school activities or disagreed that an interesting range of activities was provided. Inspectors agree with the positive comments, and confirm the small number of extra-curricular activities but consider that this is no different to the provision made by the majority of schools with infant age pupils.

35. The school works hard to establish effective links with parents. There is a wealth of good quality information circulated to parents to enable them to support their children's education at home. Translations of many of these documents are provided. The school arranges open meetings every term, parents are told of their children's individual targets, and their views are recorded. A daily dialogue is maintained through pupils' home/school diaries, and there are many opportunities for parents to come into school. Pupils' annual reports are easy to understand and identify areas for improvement. Class teachers stand in the playground before and after school and are available to talk informally with parents. Parents of nursery children come into the nursery classroom to deliver and collect their children and have the opportunity to talk with staff. At all levels throughout the school, the staff establish a friendly, open rapport with parents.

36. School newsletters and governors' newsletters keep parents informed of what is happening in school, although the school prospectus, and the governors' annual report do not contain all the statutory requirements. There is a relevant home/school agreement, which reminds parents of the school's aims.

37. A particular strength is the lengths that the school goes to enable parents to support their children's education. These include admission and induction meetings, and formal workshops. The school has also arranged adult literacy and numeracy classes with a focus on the curriculum being taught to their children in school. These classes are particularly accessible as the school provides creche facilities, and an interpreter. Two coffee mornings are arranged each term, where parents have the chance to meet representatives of support agencies, such as the educational welfare officer and the school nurse. Approximately half a dozen parents regularly help in school. There is also an active "Friends of Mayespark" association which arranges social and fundraising events.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

38. The leadership and management of the headteacher and senior teachers are good. There is a clear emphasis on the development of high quality teaching and this has been established well by the headteacher, leading to a consistent and shared approach to teaching and educational provision, in which the school's aims and values are reflected very well. Teaching and all staff have a strong commitment to improve the quality of provision and enable all the pupils to succeed.

39. These features have been established through a clear programme of staff induction, training and monitoring, recognised in the school's recently achieved status of "Investor in People". The teachers have been appointed largely on aspects of their commitment to pupils and to the school's approach to teaching, although there is now a need to extend the available curriculum expertise for Key Stage 2. Newly qualified teachers quickly become effective through the provision made for them that extends beyond that recommended. New teachers to the school have mentors and interviews with the headteacher soon after joining the staff and there is a programme of staff development partly stemming from the monitoring of lessons. A good programme of training has also been provided for classroom assistants and other non-teaching staff.

40. The school's policy for performance management is in place fully and well integrated with the other systems for monitoring, evaluation and improvement. There is regular evaluation of assessments of the pupils' attainment and particular groups are identified such as those who are newcomers to English or those whose achievement is less strong than others. Although internal test results are available, there is no system yet to measure accurately the progress made by each individual pupil. There is some inconsistency in the roles of subject coordinators. Some of the non-core subject coordinators have few means of knowing what the standards in their subject are through the school or if the curriculum is being taught fully. Most have some input to the school development plan. The school has not yet appointed a deputy headteacher but the senior management team is involved fully with monitoring and evaluation and helps to identify weaknesses and plan for the school's growth.

41. The school development plan is satisfactory and has an overview of developments for three years at a time, with more detailed developments for the current year. It sensibly includes a number of whole school issues as well as a

small number of "focus" subjects for development. Teachers make appropriate contributions before it is finalised but governors have little involvement at the early stages. The plan is costed, agreed by governors and staff, incorporated into budget setting and monitored by governors. However, while the school is keen not to attempt too much development in a term, and because the role of subject coordinator is inconsistent, the school's provision for some subjects, for example, information and communication technology, is not well prepared for extension next year into the junior key stage.

42. The school ethos is one in which equality of opportunity is given prominence in practice as well as in theory. All staff share this awareness; cleaners, support staff and teachers and the school is a community where people are valued and treated equally. Every curriculum policy considers equal opportunities. Most letters and documents are translated into the three main languages represented in school. It is possible to call on interpreters at meetings. There are multilingual signs around school and as the register is called, the child is greeted in his home language. There are bilingual assistants in classrooms. Pupils with special educational needs have equal access to the curriculum but the upper floor of the building is inaccessible to the physically handicapped. Occasionally, pupils are withdrawn from lessons, for example, for violin tuition, when they miss the class lesson. In Year 1, pupils were withdrawn from numeracy for extra reading. A monitoring system of such withdrawals is needed to help provide the best arrangements. Boys and girls have equal access to the curriculum, but there is no role model for boys amongst the teaching staff so the school monitors the progress of boys and girls.

43. A long delay in establishing information and communication technology as part of the curriculum has meant that the school has not taught the statutory curriculum fully. Many reasons are cited including; a heavy focus on literacy, and associated classroom support; insufficient time because of the demands of establishing a new school; a lack of staff expertise and financial prudence. Whilst funding has been allocated in the current school budget, and an impressive computer suite has now been installed, financial planning to provide for the subject has been unsatisfactory. Currently, the school is not sufficiently aware of future admission levels, or whether to provide for a two or three-form entry. This uncertainty considerably reduces the scope of the governing body to plan for adequate accommodation and educational provision in the medium term. Nevertheless, the governors are well involved with the school and take part in monitoring to gain knowledge of the school's main strengths and weaknesses.

44. The management of the provision for pupils with English as an additional language is generally good. However, the school is only now considering the writing of a whole school policy and guidance for staff. Nevertheless, there has been effective staff training and discussion and teachers are well aware of the pupils' needs. Currently, specialist support is planned for particular pupils based on the assessment and record-keeping data provided by teachers. Language targets are set and reviewed each half-term and are used to inform teaching and are displayed in classrooms for easy reference for pupils and staff.

45. The management and administration of the school's provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. A part-time teacher works with the headteacher to implement all the elements of the national code of practice. Reviews are regular and supported appropriately by outside agencies when needed. The provision of adult support is good, but the quality of the pupils' individual education plans is variable, sometimes providing over-general targets that are hard for staff to plan for. The coordinator monitors the progress of the pupils and the work of the support assistants through the regular written reports and review meetings, to which parents are invited. Resources are adequate but spread around the school, making their access difficult for some staff

46. The day to day administration of the school's finances is good. Budget-tracking, including the appropriate allocation of specific grants, such as those designated for special educational needs, is made easy by the use of the local education authority's model and is accessible by computer. Office procedures are soundly based and well organised, and the school secretary provides good support to the headteacher and governors.

47. A recent financial audit made a number of recommendations concerning financial policies and presented an action plan, which the school is implementing. There is a heavy reliance on the local education authority to advise about obtaining the best value, from expenditure and this arrangement works satisfactorily. Whilst the service removes a workload from the school, it reduces the scope of governors to provide an objective overview.

48. Resources are generally at least satisfactory to support the curriculum and have been well chosen. In all subjects, the resources will need to be updated quickly in readiness for teaching pupils in the seven to eleven age range. In physical education and religious education, resources are satisfactory and the school is well equipped with good outdoor facilities for the nursery class and adequate ones for the reception classes. English is well resourced with attractive new reading books but the library is under-stocked and under-used currently. For mathematics, there is a good range of resources, mainly based in classrooms. These are well used to help pupils understand and learn. Resources for science teaching are barely adequate. For the teaching of information and communication technology, resources are new and of good quality but not yet in use. For the teaching of music, there is a range of percussion instruments, including appropriate ethnic ones. There are sufficient resources for the full music curriculum to be taught.

In history and geography, resources are adequate but audits are soon to be taken and money has been allocated for resources. Art and design and design and technology are adequately resourced to teach the National Curriculum programmes of study.

49. All classrooms have good resources for newcomers to English; including whiteboards, books with enlarged texts, to give these pupils the opportunity to develop their literacy skills through shared reading and writing activities. The school is building up its store of stories with multicultural settings and dual texts, giving teachers the possibility of drawing on pupils' cultural and linguistic experiences to enrich their own and others' learning. For example, in a story-telling session children were given the opportunity to greet each other in their family language, including a refugee from Kosovo who greeted her new friends in Albanian. The teacher shared her experience of living and working in Thailand and added a Thai greeting to the children's repertoire of greetings. In a history lesson on Mary Seacole close reference to the map of the world charted Mary's journey from her birthplace in Jamaica to her training in England and her nursing during the Crimean War. Children whose extended family lived in Jamaica were able to identify and talk about the island with good knowledge and the teacher pointed out where the Crimean War took place, linking it to current events in the Balkans.

50. Staffing is generous and classes are small resulting in better than average provision for all pupils. Additional support for pupils with special educational needs and for those with English as an additional language is at satisfactory levels. Teaching staff are appropriately trained in the primary phase and in several cases their subject specialisms are used in their coordinator roles. Additional training for both teaching and support staff is well planned and helps to improve the quality of education provided for pupils.

51. The interior accommodation in the school is very good. The premises were recently refurbished specifically to meet the needs of a primary school, and the well maintained building provides a pleasant working environment. The corridors are wide and carpeted and provide areas where pupils may be taught individually when the need arises. The rooms are supplied with blinds to provide shade in the summer months. Some badly fitting windows reduce the effectiveness of the heating system and temperatures need to be monitored to ensure consistency throughout the school. The school has had modifications to accommodate pupils with wheelchairs and there is a toilet for the use of the disabled.

52. Outside, the provision is not as good but school is currently designing activities to offer more stimulation for the pupils. Seats are also to be provided. There is a large grassed area, which pupils will be able to use in the summer. The local education authority has plans to landscape the gardens leading up to the school, which will improve the external appearance of the school.

53. In view of the generally low attainment of pupils on entry to the school; the fact that the large majority achieve well and meet expected standards by the age of seven; and the good progress made by pupils with English as an additional language, the school is very effective. Whilst funding appears high against national averages, much of the cost relates to setting up a new school. In these circumstances, the school is providing good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

54. In order that the school should continue growing in size and effectiveness, the headteacher, staff and governors should:

- ❑ improve standards and provision in information and communication technology (paragraphs 13, 21, 22, 41, 43, 48, 76, 85, 99, 106-107)* by:
 - promoting the full use of the National Curriculum programme of study;
 - increasing staff knowledge and the guidance available for teachers;
 - implement procedures for the recording and assessment of pupils' use of computers;
 - increasing its use to support learning in other subjects;
- ❑ increase the proportion of high attainment in English, mathematics and science (paragraphs 2, 4, 13, 16, 18, 23, 32, 70, 73, 76-78, 80, 82, and 84) by:
 - raising expectations of the highest attaining pupils;*
 - improving standards of presentation;
 - promoting the use of work from a higher National Curriculum level; *
- ❑ improve attendance (paragraph 31) by:
 - the prompt contact with parents of absent pupils;*
 - ensuring that all parents are regularly reminded of procedures for absence;
 - formalising the attendance policy;*
- ❑ improve the governors' long-term planning for the school's growth (paragraphs 36, 40-44, 48, 51, and 106) by:
 - the involvement of governors at the earlier stages of development planning;
 - ensuring that all statutory requirements are met;
 - applying best value principles when assuring that current funding benefits current pupils; *
 - widening the domain of the school's monitoring programme to include issues such as heating, withdrawal from lessons and curriculum coverage in the non-core subjects; *
- ❑ provide a written whole school policy and guidance for teachers about the teaching and integration of pupils for whom English is an additional language* (paragraph 44);

Items marked * have already been identified for development by the school.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	64
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	41

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1	16	40	43	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	26	190
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	38

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	6
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	2	16

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	138

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	16
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	12

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.7
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.8
National comparative data	0.3

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	20
Black – African heritage	7
Black – other	6
Indian	59
Pakistani	26
Bangladeshi	1
Chinese	0
White	60
Any other minority ethnic group	11

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– Y2

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	11
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	17.3
Average class size	23.8

Education support staff: YR – Y2

Total number of education support staff	16
Total aggregate hours worked per week	264

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	36

Number of pupils per FTE adult	13
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	378308
Total expenditure	360817
Expenditure per pupil	5638*
Balance brought forward from previous year	25305
Balance carried forward to next year	42796

* based on the 64 pupils on roll in January 1999.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	210
Number of questionnaires returned	57

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	84	14	0	0	2
My child is making good progress in school.	74	19	4	0	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	74	26	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	58	35	4	2	1
The teaching is good.	70	26	2	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	61	30	5	2	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	86	14	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	82	12	2	0	4
The school works closely with parents.	70	26	0	0	4
The school is well led and managed.	82	11	0	0	7
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	72	23	0	0	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	35	35	12	2	16

Other issues raised by parents

Parents are generally very supportive of the school and particularly the way in which they feel welcomed. They support their children's education and offer help at home. A number also help at school and with the organisation of a friends' association. The school provides a number of helpful opportunities for parents including English sessions.

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

55. Most children enter the nursery at around the age of three and a half, spending three and sometimes four terms there before joining one of the reception classes. This provides approximately eighteen months pre-school experience. Entry to school is on two occasions during the year; older children enter in September with the younger children starting in January of the year in which they are five. Shortly after the admission of the children to the nursery, the school completes an assessment of their skills. This indicates a broad range of ability but overall the attainment of children is well below average due partly to limited prior experience but also to a large proportion of children with English as an additional language. The children make good and sometimes very good progress in the nursery. The nursery provides a good start to education, especially for those with limited educational and social attainment. The reception classes also make good provision and the children continue to make good or better progress towards achieving the goals expected nationally in personal and social development, language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development and physical development. A small minority of the pupils exceed these levels and are working within the first level of the National Curriculum. The vast majority continue to work towards the nationally agreed early learning goals for this age group, indicating that while progress is good attainment remains below average levels by the start of Year 1.

56. There is good guidance on what needs to be included in the curriculum for nursery and reception age pupils and teachers have a good knowledge of its contents. Planning is appropriately detailed and covers all the nationally agreed areas of learning. The activities provide a broad and balanced programme of work for all the children in this key stage. The work done to improve the quality and range of the spoken English for all pupils is especially good. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because their needs are identified early and they are effectively supported. Assessment of pupils' work is carried out regularly, especially in the nursery, but is yet to be completed consistently in the reception year. Satisfactory records are kept and progress is tracked carefully. Resources are good in many areas although those for physical development in the reception classes are unsatisfactory. Displays of the pupils' work provide an interesting and colourful environment for children to learn in.

Personal, social and emotional education

57. Most pupils make good progress in the nursery and the reception classes. Attainment for the majority of children by the time they enter full time education is average. At the time of the inspection, the pupils' behaviour was good, they cooperated well in pairs and in small groups, and were interested in the things around them, being eager to learn.

58. On entry to the nursery, the children are made to feel very welcome and quickly settle into their new routines and surroundings. The children largely enjoy coming to school and most are happy, secure and confident learners. The relationships between the children, their teachers and other adults in the school are very good. Throughout the three to five-year-old age range, the children clearly know what is expected of them and almost all behave very well. In both the nursery and reception classes, they have opportunities to choose their own activities and they respond positively to those that are specifically directed by staff. When given the opportunity, they use their initiative well, organise themselves and their activities and work enthusiastically, becoming absorbed in their tasks but at other times too much direction is given and children's independence is not developed fully. The curriculum is well organised and matched to the needs of most children. Occasionally, the needs of the most able children are not sufficiently met and they are provided with a limited challenge that does not always appropriately stretch them. Newcomers to English and those with special education needs are quickly identified and appropriate provision is made. The teaching and support staff work hard to create a variety of interesting and exciting learning situations in which children are able to express their ideas and feelings and consolidate their language skills. One display in the nursery was of wooden toys that fascinated children and led to many interesting discussions. The children have classroom responsibilities and effectively tidy away and look after their materials and resources, for example, hanging up coats, clearing painting materials and ensuring that books are put away properly. Parents are supportive and many make significant contributions to their children's learning.

59. The teaching is good. Many of the learning objectives and resources are specifically tailored to meet the needs of all the children and are presented in interesting ways. The curriculum is well organised. The staff throughout the three to five-year-old age range provide very good role models. They have high expectations of behaviour and of the quality and rate of work provided by children. Both teachers and support staff use a wide range of effective strategies to ensure that pupils remain interested in what they are doing and work hard. Staff are very patient, unfailingly polite and show a great deal of concern for all the children.

Language, communication and literacy

60. The children make good and sometimes very good progress in their acquisition of speaking, listening and reading skills. Even so, by the end of the reception year a good majority of the children achieve standards that are still a little below those expected nationally. The children learn a good range of nursery rhymes and counting songs designed to improve their speaking and listening skills as well as their understanding of English. By the time that children leave the reception classes, a large minority have begun to read, some with expression and understanding. They read the words as they follow familiar stories and they can recall accurately the sequence of events that have taken place in the story. Children learn letter sounds and how to link these together to make new words. Nearly all the children by that stage realise that writing carries meaning and they use these skills in their writing tasks. In the reception classes, children begin to write their own simple stories although for some, this is beyond their level of skill and understanding. For those whose speaking skills and their knowledge of spoken English are below average, writing is difficult and development sometimes lags well behind expectations. Teachers and support staff continue to work hard to develop children's speaking and comprehension skills by encouraging them to extend their answers and explain what they mean. This is often effectively done.

61. The teaching is good. The teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of how to enhance the children's progress in literacy. An appropriately high priority is placed on the children's ability to listen and speak about what they can see and do. Throughout the nursery and reception classes, the teachers provide a language rich environment and this reinforces what has been taught and extends the children's learning. The children are engaged in good quality learning experiences throughout the day. Good use is made of time during lessons to teach language skills and activities are planned for their relevance to everyday life experiences. Most lessons move with good pace and teachers have high expectations of the quantity and quality of work to be produced. The staff are very conscious of the limited vocabulary of many of the children, especially those for whom English is an additional language and endeavour to develop their language through real life situations. Areas such as the "Three Bears Den" add suitably to children's imaginations as well as their language skills. The children enjoy the language activities, behave well and cooperate happily with one another.

Mathematical development

62. The children make good progress. By the time they reach the end of the reception year, the attainment of the majority of children is still below the nationally expected targets but indications are that continued good teaching is closing this gap. A small number of children are working above this level. The children learn the names of simple shapes and are able to sort a range of objects by shape and colour. They learn counting songs and rhymes although few are secure in writing and counting to twenty and beyond. The children begin to learn the value of numbers through games such as dominoes. They begin to understand the difference between heavy and light and are able to estimate which object will weigh the most. The children are introduced to the idea of symmetry and a small number can give sound reasons for shapes being symmetrical. More able pupils begin to look at time and in an appropriate game of "What time is it Mr Wolf?" they place the clock hands in the correct place. Younger children learn to make hand signs for the days of the week to familiarise themselves with the order. The pupils' mathematical vocabulary is developed well and they are gaining a secure understanding of mathematical words such as "before" and "after" and "tall" and "taller" and "long" and "short".

63. The teaching is good. Both the nursery and reception age teachers plan mathematical experiences well and provide an interesting range of activities that stimulate the children's interest in numbers and in where mathematics can be found in everyday life. Teachers have a good subject knowledge and develop children's vocabulary to enable them to describe what they are doing and why. The children respond well to mathematical activities and show enjoyment in the tasks provided.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

64. Children make good progress but by the end of the reception year, most children have not reached the expected early learning goals. This is often, due to their limited pre-nursery experiences. Teachers plan and provide a wide range of experiences for the children. An interesting science activity fascinated them as they poured water down a shoot to power water wheels. This generated much interest and discussion. Children set up a town activity mat, making buildings and a petrol station and holding imaginary conversations with the different characters in the streets. In these situations teachers interact well with children to develop their vocabulary and their imaginations. Children in the nursery are attracted to the computer and several show considerable perseverance and skill in the use of the mouse to operate the programs. In an experiment, the children discovered which things sank and which floated and started to predict likely outcomes of their investigations. Books are used well to interest the children and to help them to experience and learn new vocabulary, for example, the names of different insects. The creative aspects of their knowledge of everyday things are extended through their use of differing types of paper that they use carefully to make model people. A significant feature of all these activities is the opportunities taken to extend children's language and vocabulary. This is

done well across all the classes and all the areas of learning. The children show considerable interest in these activities and concentrate for quite long periods.

65. The teaching is good. The teachers plan a good range of interesting activities and lessons are well prepared and concentrate appropriately on the development of appropriate vocabulary. Children are supported well by all staff and all are helped to extend their ability to observe and to explain what they see. Where language skills are more limited, teachers and learning assistants ably support children and their vocabulary increases, often rapidly.

Physical development

66. The development of children's manipulative skills when painting, cutting and gluing is satisfactory and attainment is in line with appropriate early learning goals by the end of the reception year. The nursery has a very good outdoor play area with ample scope for children to learn to climb, jump, balance and play with balls and hoops. The resource for reception age children is more limited and this results in children's skills on larger equipment being less well developed. The children make good progress in handling a variety of small equipment such as brushes, scissors, and glue spreaders with increasing confidence. Some construction kits are available for use in making models, which they then describe. They cut card and paper with reasonable accuracy and use crayons and pastels with good levels of skill. In physical education lessons they develop their sense of balance well and control their movements effectively using the surrounding space sensibly. They can skip, trot and bounce following their teachers' instructions well.

67. The teaching is satisfactory. Children are provided with a range of challenging activities to develop their coordination and spatial awareness. The teachers plan appropriately and satisfactorily link current to past learning. Children enjoy physical activities and behave well.

Creative development

68. The children's attainment is below the national expectation although they have made good progress since first entering the nursery. They are developing a wide range of skills in art, and are beginning to choose a variety of media to make pictures. They use paint boldly and are beginning to understand the variety of colours that they can make from primary colours. Their observational skills are being appropriately developed and this is well illustrated in the quality of drawing and the use of colour in their drawings of bears. The children experiment with a variety of objects in printing activities and produce pleasing results. They listen closely to their teachers' instructions and act upon suggestions as to how they can improve their work. Music is satisfactorily developed with children experimenting with differing sounds made by striking pots, pans and drums to create a pattern of sounds.

69. The teaching is good. The class teachers and support staff work effectively as teams. Relationships are good between staff and children. The balance between teacher directed tasks and the activities that children can choose is good. Learning activities are practical, well thought out, interesting and relevant to the pupils' previous experience.

ENGLISH

70. The proportion of seven-year-olds attaining the expected national level in reading and in speaking and listening is similar to that achieved nationally; the proportion is smaller in writing. Although a majority of pupils are on course to achieve the expected level in the National Curriculum tests, only a very small number are likely to gain a higher level and this means that standards overall are below average. This judgement is based on a scrutiny of their current work and shows that the pupils gain appropriate knowledge and skills but seldom at a high level and often their written work is untidy.

71. Progress is good in speaking and listening. In speaking skills, the pupils' confidence increases well. A class assembly taken by Year 2 demonstrated this when the pupils confidently took the microphone, reading about their work on the environment to parents and other pupils. In lessons, there are many opportunities for speaking and listening. Teachers frequently seek oral responses from pupils and sometimes the class waits patiently for pupils of different ability to answer. Occasionally opportunities to communicate and investigate ideas through spoken English are missed. Teachers and adults are usually keen to introduce new vocabulary. Words such as "mournful" are explained and a teacher asked about its meaning, eliciting the answer "sad in her heart" from a Year 2 pupil who used clues in the text to predict the meaning. Pupils are trained to listen to the objectives of each lesson so that they can be sure of what they are to learn. After the best lessons, the pupils are able to express what they have learnt and how they have progressed towards meeting their targets. The pupils' listening skills were observed in a religious education lesson about the creation, when music formed the background to their exploration of emotions about the killing of whales. However, pupils do not always listen well and some were slow to respond, even when they were asked to recall their recent exciting outing to Shobery Ness. Standards in speaking and listening are satisfactory overall at the end of the key stage and represent good progress, especially for the high proportion with English as an additional language.

72. Progress in reading across the five to seven-year-old age range is satisfactory. Pupils enter Year 1 well prepared with targets for the development of reading skills. They have had a good experience of books in the language rich environment of the nursery and reception years at the appropriate level for their ability and their progress has been well charted. The more able pupils can recognise some familiar words and have some limited skills in sounding out others. They have an interest in books and treat them carefully. In Years 1 and 2, the pupils are grouped in lessons, and appropriate targets are set for each group. Guided reading groups now occur three times a week in addition to the literacy hour. Book bags are taken home daily and parents record hearing their children read. The school provides parents with helpful guidance about hearing reading and the value of sharing stories. All children have a reading record, which is regularly completed. Each classroom has a book corner, where children can relax with a book. By the age of seven, a good majority of pupils enjoy fiction and non-fiction books, some reading fluently and accurately and they are able to express their book preferences giving reasons. Many are able to establish the meaning of unfamiliar words using various methods such as phonics and picture cues. A few children are reading at a high level. Those with English as an additional language are given appropriate guidance and make good progress. Those with special educational needs are well supported and make satisfactory progress.

73. Attainment in writing among seven-year-olds is unsatisfactory because too few pupils reach a higher than average standard; the pupils' presentation and handwriting are of varied quality; and there is little work of a high standard. The school has adopted the National Literacy Strategy to which it appropriately allocates a high 38 per cent of curriculum time. The pupils benefit from jointly considering texts, which are especially relevant to the pupils' varied cultural interests. From these texts, the pupils learn about the meanings and use of words, the structure of stories and the ways that characters can be described. Too little sentence level work is provided in which pupils can learn grammar, although they are constantly reminded that sentences start with a capital letter and end with a full stop. In an extended writing lesson, children were constructing an information book about their outing to Shoeburyness. Aware of their individual targets, ideas were shared and the writing modelled by the teacher. They were encouraged to use interesting vocabulary in writing chapters, for example, about the journey and sandcastle competitions. This writing was successfully shared with the parents later in the week. Dictionaries are used well, as are the Year 2 word lists by which the pupils find out how to spell words independently. Despite such strategies, writing weaknesses include inconsistency in spelling; punctuation that is forgotten; and handwriting that is sometimes illegible. These weaknesses prevent the achievement of above average standards, although the Year 2 pupils usually make good progress. Sometimes writing is used appropriately in other subjects to extend the pupils' literacy skills and enhance their understanding of the others subjects.

74. Progress in Year 1 in writing is satisfactory and sometimes good. Pupils were sequencing the story of Elmer in their writing area. Some good writing about the Queen Mother and Martin Luther King was seen. There is good evidence of the help given at home, for example, in the half-term challenge to find out and write about a character. There is similar encouragement given when Charlie, a soft toy, is taken home and a diary is written for his visit. The pupils are learning to use dictionaries and beginning to punctuate their writing. Progress for those whose home language is not English is good and they are offered appropriate additional support and progress is monitored well.

75. The pupils' attitudes to work are good in at least half the lessons. In the rest, it is satisfactory. The pupils listen attentively and when asked, get on with their work sensibly, sometimes working together well in pairs. Older pupils sometimes help each other and, in discussion, a good majority of pupils gains confidence in speaking even when they have limited skills in English language. The pupils are usually conscientious about their work and about completing work at home. Pupils do not always pay enough attention to the presentation of their work and often forget to form letters, punctuate or spell accurately. Although a very few pupils have difficulty in behaving well, distractions are sensitively and effectively contained by the class teacher or support assistants and seldom disturb the learning of others.

76. The quality of teaching is good overall. There are equal proportions of very good, good and satisfactory teaching. Teachers are well prepared for lessons, which have been planned jointly with other teachers of the same age group. In this way, there is consistency in the curriculum between classes of similar aged pupils. The teachers have a secure knowledge of the subject. The organisation of groups and the individual targets set for writing are of good quality. The work set for groups of different attainment is, in general, appropriately matched but on occasions does not challenge the more able pupils sufficiently. For example, the use of information and communication technology for pupils to research as well as develop word-processing skills is limited. The marking of the pupils' work often provides good encouragement but sometimes gives no points for improvement. Teachers could do more to insist on high standards of spelling, handwriting, and presentation. Assessment is undertaken regularly by tests and by levelling work, which is discussed by teachers to share judgements across the year groups.

77. There is currently no subject coordinator. The headteacher and a class teacher are temporarily coordinating the subject. Nevertheless, standards are carefully analysed and weaknesses identified partly in order to form appropriate groups of pupils needing particular learning to be reinforced. However, work towards higher levels of handwriting and

presentation has not been identified as a priority. As the school moves towards having pupils in the seven to eleven-year-old age group, a strategy is required to ensure that the full curriculum is taught at the appropriate level from the beginning of the school year. Resources for English are attractive, with large text reading books and many new books, but the library is currently under-stocked. Resources, and staff development, are essential elements of the strategy to provide fully for the subject in the junior key stage.

MATHEMATICS

78. Standards among seven-year-olds are below average overall because there are very few pupils attaining a higher than the expected level for their age. Nevertheless, nearly 90 per cent of Year 2 pupils are achieving the standards expected and this is close to the national average for 2000 and to the school's prediction. There are no results of national tests or other data by which to compare the school's trends in performance.

79. In lessons, the pupils' learning is usually good and they are making good progress. Attainment on entry to Year 1 is generally below average but due to some good and very good teaching the pupils learn quickly. For example, in a Year 1 class at least a third have gained already a sound knowledge of tens and units up to 100. The past work of Year 1 pupils also shows good progress and covers a wide range of aspects of the subject. Most know the names of simple shapes and have tried tessellating pentangles. They have measured in non-standard units and can double numbers up to at least 30. They have a sound understanding of the operations of addition and subtraction and have improved their writing of numbers well.

80. In Year 2, progress is at least satisfactory and sometimes good. The progress of lower attaining pupils is often very good and the support they receive is very effective. In mental calculation, all the pupils know simple strategies for working out numbers and some higher attaining pupils are quick to recall the numbers that add together to make ten, although they are slower at doing this to 20. Nearly all the pupils have a reasonable understanding of the operations of addition, subtraction, and multiplication. Past work shows progress in all the aspects of the subject. The progress of the more able pupils is satisfactory but there is very little work of an above average level. For example, several pupils are clear about how to write money such as £5.02, and they can count in 2s and 5s forwards and backwards, but not in 4s or 10s yet. These examples, and many others, indicate that most pupils of Year 2 are reaching the expected level but there is very little consistent achievement at an above average level. Nevertheless, progress throughout Years 1 and 2 has been generally good.

81. Throughout the school the pupils have good attitudes to the subject and enjoy the lessons. The school's guidance to teachers is effective in promoting good standards of behaviour in lessons. The pupils are usually keen to answer questions and all, except those who are newcomers to English, are confident to express their thoughts and discuss what they are learning. The pupils are generally cooperative and sometimes offer help to each other spontaneously. Equipment and resources are cared for well and older pupils are responsible in helping to tidy these up. Relationships are harmonious and the pupils make good efforts to improve their knowledge and skills. They are appropriately respectful of teachers and other adults and these relationships provide the pupils with a good degree of self-esteem and encouragement to improve. They are usually conscientious about completing homework but the neatness and layout of written work is weak.

82. Teaching is never less than satisfactory and is good overall with some very good teaching. The training that teachers have received in teaching numeracy lessons has been excellent. There is good consistency in planning, good clarity of what the pupils are to learn and good use of the very effective support staff and of resources for learning, including the provision of mathematically stimulating displays in all the classrooms. Teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of the subject and the nationally recommended framework of what to teach. However, in a minority of cases, their understanding of pupils' common misconceptions limits the effectiveness of their explanations. Also in a minority of lessons, there is a lack of clarity about what the pupils already know and this limits the progress of higher attaining pupils. For example, in a Year 2 lesson, the pupils were introduced to the use of the multiplication sign, although a small number of pupils already knew this. The mental numeracy session at the beginning of all lessons is effectively taught and helps the pupils to learn and discuss strategies for calculating. In these sessions, the pupils who are newcomers to English are usually supported effectively so that such support is not needed as the pupils grow older. Teachers are good at providing appropriate work and help for pupils with special educational needs. They plan activities for the pupils, bearing in mind the targets contained in their individual education plans. Records successfully chart the progress made. The final session of each lesson is usually a whole class discussion and this effectively helps the pupils to review their learning. In the best lessons, the teachers ask pupils questions that enable some assessment of how much they have learned. Occasionally, support assistants helpfully record pupils' responses and at other times these assistants record the progress of particular pupils with whom they have been working. Within a picture of strong teaching and provision for the subject, the weaker aspects include a lack of challenge for the small proportion of more able pupils and the amount of help that teachers give to enable pupils to lay out and record their work neatly.

83. The subject is very well provided for in the school. There is a good provision of guidance for teachers and the training has provided a very good consistency and awareness of the subject and the pupils' needs. Even when there are no formal test results, the school is very active in identifying strengths and weaknesses and analysing predictions of standards to form groups for specific teaching. Numeracy techniques are used well to support the learning of other subjects, such as graphs and counting, and teachers often use numeracy teaching strategies in other subjects too. Systems are in place for training new staff as the school grows and these include demonstration lessons. The coordinator has produced an action plan from the monitoring and evaluation of standards. A large responsibility for her has been the provision of appropriate and sufficient learning resources as the school grows. This work has been effective and the school is well resourced for its current pupils. Much well targeted effort has gone into raising the achievement of the lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs. The school now needs to consider what is taught to the most able pupils.

SCIENCE

84. The standards of the current Year 2 pupils are below average, due in part to a previous scheme of work that gave insufficient emphasis to elements from the National Curriculum programme of study. The school has now taken effective steps to rectify this situation. Too few Year 2 pupils are on course to attain higher than expected levels to make standards satisfactory. Pupils in Year 1 are making good progress within the revised curriculum and attainment for this group of pupils is rising. There is no data or previous inspection report against which to measure progress and improvement.

85. In Years 1 and 2, science is now based on pupils learning to observe, make predictions, note what they see and draw conclusions. An example of this good practice was in a lesson on plant life in which pupils had to examine carefully the root systems, stems, bulbs, and leaves of plants. The pupils successfully extend their vocabulary and can name the various parts of plants such as petals and stamens. Most pupils record work satisfactorily but more able pupils are not sufficiently encouraged to extend their observations and recording. The focus of work is now on experimentation and, for example, pupils of Year 2 examine waterproof materials and carry out experiments on simple electrical circuits and they are able to draw conclusions about what they have seen. Information and communication technology is not used sufficiently to record evidence, find information, and present their results.

86. Pupils in Year 1 show a sound understanding of friction, which they confirm through varying experiments. They talk about and carry out experiments to determine the best conditions for plants to grow. This type of work interests pupils and they concentrate well and are eager to learn, responding well to teachers' questioning.

87. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and with several strong features such as promoting fair tests. The quality of planning that promotes the pupils' experimentation is good. A further strength is the joint planning across each year group, which ensures that children are provided with similar experiences. Pupils clearly know what they are going to learn in each lesson and this is checked at the end of each session. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subject are satisfactory and enable them to provide accurate information to pupils. It does not always lead to extending the more able pupils' understanding. The pupils are assessed on a regular basis each half term, and this enables teachers to track progress and determine areas of weakness in the curriculum. Learning resources are, in some areas, barely adequate in quantity and require teachers to borrow basic equipment from each other. Attitudes towards science are good. Pupils find the subject interesting and are eager to involve themselves in their work. Thoughtful planning sessions ensure that pupils understand what they have learned and consolidate their knowledge of appropriate vocabulary. Coordination of the subject is good and has resulted in a thorough curriculum audit, which identified weaknesses and correctly led to changes in the emphasis given to parts of the curriculum. The monitoring of planning and of the quality of teaching are not yet developed sufficiently well.

ART AND DESIGN

88. Overall, attainment and learning are good because of some high quality teaching. A review of work on display shows an attractive range of pictures with examples of paintings in the style of Picasso, Kandinski and Klee.

89. Different media were constructively used in Year 1 by a visiting artist, when tissue paper blends were stuck and overlapped in response to the stimulus of exotic flowers. The use of blocks of chalk and charcoal enabled the children to experiment in shape and form. Light, dark and tone were investigated by the use of sand on black paper, the children running it through a hole in a cup and then designing with their hands. This free work contrasted with the close observation of flowers to form oil pastel drawings undertaken by pupils of Year 2. Good progress was seen in both of these lessons.

90. The attitude and behaviour of the pupils is good. They all concentrate very well on their activity and are appreciative

of each other's successes. Teaching was of exceptional quality by a visiting artist, providing exciting stimuli and new media to use. Class teachers provide good leadership, they show the pupils how to carry out techniques clearly, providing support and encouragement. They organise lessons well. Overall, teaching is good. Lessons are jointly planned for each year group so all the pupils have a similar experience. Resources are good.

91. There is currently no coordinator for the subject. There is a provisional scheme of work providing some guidance for teachers. Standards are not formally monitored but visiting specialists provide helpful expertise and the detailed medium term planning provides good guidance for teachers. The school lacks the coordination needed to continue the good progress and develop the subject into the junior key stage.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

92. No lessons were observed. The standards reflected in a scrutiny of last term's displayed work and in the pupils' topic books are satisfactory. There is evidence of satisfactory joining and cutting skills and of practical knowledge in the Year 1 topic on transport. The pupils had designed a moving vehicle as homework. The vehicles made are displayed with the pupils' written evaluations, such as "I would make my axle smaller". Photographs show the vehicles being made. The work of pupils in Year 2 is reflected in a display of carrier bags, which the pupils had designed and constructed to hold a mass of half a kilogram.

93. There is a curriculum scheme of work that plans units of work to be taught in half termly blocks. The subject is not taught during every half term. The scheme gives good guidance to teachers about what to teach, but provides less help in planning progression in the learning of skills. The objective of the scheme is to work and rework materials to meet needs, modelling ideas in three-dimensional materials, producing artefacts, which are tested and evaluated. There is currently no coordinator and the curriculum has not yet been reviewed to check its compliance with the new National Curriculum programme of study. Resources are adequate.

GEOGRAPHY

94. During the inspection, few lessons were observed because history and geography are taught alternately with the current focus being on history. Judgements therefore are based on the lesson observations, the examination of work in pupils' books, the display of work around the school and discussions with pupils and the acting coordinator for geography, currently the headteacher.

95. The pupils' work covered a study of different places and how, for example, Ilford compares to the seaside town of Shoeburyness. Knowledge about process and patterns of geography, for example, seasonal changes in the weather, was also in evidence. In lessons, the teachers ensure that a basic level of understanding is achieved and then pupils work at different levels with support for pupils with special educational needs and newcomers to English from classroom assistants. In some classes, links in learning are achieved when work in other subjects supports the new learning in geography. For example, a history lesson, on the life of Mary Seacole helped pupils to use a map of the world with a clear purpose.

96. The standards of pupils' work observed in lessons and on display are satisfactory and pupils make sound progress. In Year 1, the pupils have been studying their neighbourhood, people who work locally and features of seasonal weather. They have also listened and discussed stories from around the world, using a map to indicate the locations. For example, in 'Handa's Surprise', a well-loved story from Kenya, the pupils focused on aspects of the story that indicated that it was set in an African country. They pointed out the animals and fruits in the pictures and features of the village that Handa visited, comparing and contrasting them with their Ilford environment. They compared the clothes people wore and pictures of the village compound. They contrasted this well with the way family life is organised in suburban Ilford. The pupils were quick to note that Handa wore flip-flops in her hot country in Africa in the same way that they wore them on very hot days in Ilford and compared cooking out of doors in Kenya with barbecues in Ilford. In these ways, pupils are developing the essential geographical skill of recognising common responses to similar environmental conditions. In contrast, Handa's journey through tropical grasslands was much more specific to Africa. Pupils' own writing on hot and cold weather was often over-generalised, for example, when a pupil wrote that "Africa is a hot country where it never rains". This misconception was not challenged and the pupils not helped to understand about variation of weather in particular climatic zones. More careful marking and annotation of work by teachers is needed to help pupils gain more geographical learning as well as skills of literacy and presentation.

97. In Year 2, the pupils are also developing the idea of the differences of places and the realisation that the United Kingdom reaches beyond their locality. For example, following a visit to Shoeburyness, the pupils compared the physical features of Ilford, contrasting them with those of a seaside environment. The pupils drew plans of the beach and the varied deposits on the shoreline, mapping them and comparing this work to photographs of the beach. The

pupils also noted with great interest that some two-storey beach homes had bedrooms on the ground floor and living rooms upstairs to allow a good view of the sea for the occupants. Some of the work enabled pupils to develop their literacy and mathematical skills, for example, by writing seaside poems and individual books about Shoeburyness with a content page to help others understand the breadth of work they had undertaken. Other pupils made block graphs and pictographs of favourite parts of the beach. The children's knowledge of their locality was demonstrated well in drawings and photographs with captions on display around the school. Those pupils' learning with English as an additional language make satisfactory progress, though there was no evidence of higher attaining pupils producing work beyond that expected for their age.

98. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Lesson planning is satisfactory, with clear learning aims shared with pupils and good use of resources to help pupils make progress. For example, in the work on the story from Kenya non-fiction books about a life in an east African village and other resources on traditional life-styles in tropical environments were available for further reading and discussion. In the work on Shoeburyness good use was made of the photographic record of their school visit for discussion about different environments.

99. The pupils' attitudes to learning are good. They are very interested in the work they undertake and are keen to talk about places they know and about the map-reading skills they are developing. The photographs, detailed plans and maps of the school site and the proposed building work, have been displayed at a child's eye-level in the corridors. There was some evidence of teachers' awareness of how the study of geography can enhance the quality of learning in other subjects, for example pupils' fine observational drawings of shells collected on their school trip. Information and communication technology is inadequately used in geography and resources for the subject are limited.

100. Coordination in this subject is unsatisfactory. Teachers have some guidance from the National Curriculum programme of study and from a model scheme of work but this gives insufficient guidance about the progression of skills and the expected standards. In samples of work available in pupils' folders marking focused on overall presentation rather than on geography, so comments such as "lovely work", while being very positive, failed to give pupils pointers for improvement. There is very little monitoring and evaluation. Currently there is no coordinator or specific guidance on teaching geography in multilingual classes. The school development plan includes relevant priorities to develop the provision for the subject next term.

HISTORY

101. Judgements are based on observations of lessons, the analysis of worksheets and other documents, observation of artefacts seen around the school and interviews with teachers and pupils. Standards are satisfactory and learning is good.

102. The story of Mary Seacole was taught in the lessons observed, indicating the school's commitment to multicultural education. Pupils were beginning to understand the word 'famous' and most were able to recount the main sequences of events in Mary's life. They are beginning to make historical deductions about her conditions. All the pupils, including those with special educational needs, made good progress. In previous years the school ran a very successful Victorian week when pupils and staff dressed in Victorian clothes and pupils experienced how it felt to be at school in Victorian times. The school also celebrated "black history week", when visitors to the school included poets and storytellers.

103. The pupils work well cooperatively. They are generally well behaved and motivated to complete their tasks. Those of different ability share their work at the end of the lesson, all of which is equally well received by the class.

104. The teaching is good overall. Activities are planned for the different levels of attainment in each class and to maintain good interest. The lessons observed benefited from the additional adult support for the group activities.

105. The role of history coordinator was introduced in September 2000, and the post holder has made a very good start in preparation for the subject to become better established. She has spent time monitoring the existing provision and, having taken advice from a local authority specialist, is adding to the school's resources for learning. These currently include a good selection of history books in the library. Other resources are stored centrally. The co-ordinator has attended appropriate training. A scrutiny of pupils' work revealed little evidence of history and at present there is insufficient work completed. A careful monitoring of the time actually spent on the subject is needed. In the summer term, the existing scheme of work will be amended using nationally recommended guidelines, and a history policy produced. This is to be implemented by September 2001 and will provide the support and guidance which teachers need. There is no scheme of work or resources available for next year when there will be pupils in the seven to eleven-year-old age group. A working party is to revise the scheme of work and plan for the necessary progression in learning into the junior key stage.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

106. Standards are poor. There is very little evidence that the school provides an appropriate curriculum; statutory requirements are not fulfilled. In the one lesson observed in the infants, it was apparent that pupils had very limited knowledge and understanding of the use of computers or of the skills involved. Significant improvements in both resources and in staff training are planned for the very near future and evidence from the inspection indicates that the school will be in a position to improve learning and attainment.

107. In the one lesson seen, the teaching was of satisfactory quality. The teacher's knowledge and understanding were appropriate and pupils were interested and eager to be involved. Practical opportunities to increase pupils' skills are currently limited but due to improve in the near future. A scheme of work to guide teachers' planning is being put in place and time provided for the discrete teaching of the necessary skills. The school is also looking closely at how the benefits of computer technology can be used in other subjects to increase and enliven pupils' learning. There have been a number of delays in the provision of a computer suite, but this is now available.

MUSIC

108. Standards are satisfactory among the seven-year-old pupils. The pupils' learning is always satisfactory throughout the school and sometimes good. However, standards vary, for example, the quality of singing in assemblies is good at times but this is when the songs are well practised. At other times, the pupils do not sing well in tune and sometimes with little enthusiasm. One lesson was observed in each year group and appropriate progress is evident.

109. About three-quarters of the Year 1 pupils can copy simple rhythms but find it hard to keep a regular pulse. They are learning to play untuned percussion instruments well and mostly choose appropriate sounds to match the moods suggested in parts of a simple story. They make good efforts to follow the teacher's conducting and are able to discuss the appropriateness of the sounds for the moods. The pupils in Year 2 are mostly well able to keep the pulse of a song and in groups collaboratively compose a short piece to represent aspects of a story. They remember what they have practised well but cannot record their compositions. The compositions show a good sense of rhythm and form with a start, development, and end.

110. The pupils enjoy the subject and are usually keen to develop their skills. The collaboration of Year 2 pupils is particularly noticeable. They take good notice of teachers in learning to hold and play instruments. In assemblies, the singing is sometimes good but at other times poor and this is when the pupils are less interested or do not know the songs well. When questioned and instructed, the pupils respond well. Their behaviour is good even on those occasions when some lose interest. Most pupils are keen to play instruments and show good confidence in performing, for example, in an assembly for the whole school and parents.

111. Teaching is satisfactory and sometimes good. All aspects of the curriculum are taught and there has been a good level of training for teachers. The school benefits from a visiting advisory teacher, who currently teaches children in the nursery and reception age groups. There have been demonstration lessons in all classes and although some teachers lack expertise in the subject, training has helped the teachers to provide appropriate learning across the subject. Occasionally, teachers lack sufficient experience to identify common mistakes, for example, the difference between a pulse and a rhythm was insufficiently stressed in one lesson while in another the pupils needed a method to record their compositions. Lessons benefit from being planned jointly by teachers of the same year group. Teachers manage their classes well and provide sensitively taught lessons that are well resourced. Some use a number of good strategies for organising lessons such as simple songs that help to remind pupils of the importance of silences. The teachers' questions often help the pupils to learn through having their attention drawn to appropriate aspects, for example, the pace of music in depicting a particular mood. Pupils are occasionally withdrawn from lessons for reading by assistants for short periods and such withdrawals are not monitored systematically to identify and make up for the lost learning. Pupils with special educational needs and those who have difficulty in understanding English are helped wherever possible.

112. A small number of pupils have lessons in playing the violin from a visiting specialist teacher and a good number have joined recorder groups in the lunch break. The school provides a good number of opportunities for pupils to perform and this helps many to become confident. Other enrichment activities include visits from an Indian musician and opportunities to dance to Indian music. A display of tabla drums also stimulates interest. The school is also building a stock of recorded music from around the world and this appropriately reflects the school's rich cultural mix. The coordinator is active in building up resources for learning and each year group has a box of instruments and other resources. There is an appropriate action plan for developments. Despite the training that has taken place, the coordinator has few means to judge the standards of attainment or the quality of teaching and does not review planning.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

113. Standards are satisfactory. The school teaches all the required elements of the National Curriculum programme of study and standards in gymnastics and games are satisfactory, with standards in dance being good. There are no significant differences between the performance of girls and boys and all the pupils including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language make good progress.

114. Pupils throughout Years 1 and 2 enjoy the subject. They listen well to what they have to do and work hard to improve standards. Pupils work well together. This was seen to good effect in a dance lesson when pupils interpreted a passage of music to move with considerable control and awareness of others around them. They performed well to the rhythm of the music using stretching and curling movements to give the impression of moving leaves and branches. The teacher used pupils to demonstrate very well to improve the quality of their work. The teacher also ensured that pupils provide constructive comments on the work of others. Pupils move from individual performance to working in pairs and match their movements thoughtfully. Games skills are taught satisfactorily. This leads to small games activities in which pupils can demonstrate the skills they have previously learned. Levels of skill are appropriate, as seen in a lesson to develop hockey skills focusing on ball control.

115. The coordinator has only been in post for a short time but is beginning to have a positive impact on the quality of work. Lessons now develop new skills building appropriately on those previously learned.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

116. Attainment is satisfactory. The work planned complies with the locally agreed syllabus, which sets out six areas of study. These are special times; places and events; lifestyle and the community; nature and the world; awareness of self and others; expressing meaning, belief and value and sources of authority. The principal aim of the syllabus is to help the children to achieve knowledge and understanding of religious experience, beliefs and practices, enabling them to come to their own beliefs and respect the rights of other people who hold different beliefs from their own. Three lessons were observed showing mixed standards but standards are satisfactory overall and progress is generally good. There is currently little written work in the pupils' books because many lessons involve discussion. The work in displays shows that an appropriate number of the areas have been studied recently.

117. Drawing on some pupils' own experience, Year 1 children were introduced to the story of Guru Singh who lived in 1699. They discussed the symbolism represented by the 5Ks and they heard the story of the five men who offered their lives to God and became the founders of the Sikh faith. A Sikh girl in the class was delighted that her friends were interested in the symbols of her faith and that of her family through the artefacts they had provided. 'Messages in stories' was the theme for this study, with a story in the previous week from the Islamic faith and the Easter story of the crucifixion in the next week's lessons. Progress was seen in a Year 2 lesson, where the study had been on the Christian creation story contrasted with an Iroquois creation story. In an extension of the Christian creation story, the class had listened to the story of a whale threatened with extinction, reflecting on this damage to creation. A topic about special people and special places had involved the children looking at St. Francis who "made friends with the wolf". Visits of special people to assemblies, such as the local vicar and rabbi, enrich the pupils' learning about a variety of different religions.

118. The pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good. They are respectful and caring of others' interests. The teaching ranges from satisfactory to very good and is good overall. Where it is a very good, the teacher knows the subject well and is able to involve all the pupils with great interest, respect, and reverence. Resources are adequate and artefacts are often borrowed to supplement the schools provision. There is no subject coordinator and consequently there is little professional development, monitoring, or advice for teachers.