

# INSPECTION REPORT

**ST MATTHIAS CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY  
SCHOOL**

Bethnal Green

LEA area: Tower Hamlets

Unique reference number: 100956

Headteacher: Ms Clare Sealy

Lead inspector: Kathryn Taylor

Dates of inspection: 10<sup>th</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup> November 2003

Inspection number: 257862

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	188
School address:	Bacon Street Bethnal Green London
Postcode:	E2 6DY
Telephone number:	(0207) 739 8058
Fax number:	(0207) 739 8057
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs R McCurry
Date of previous inspection:	September 1998

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

St Matthias Church of England School is an average-sized primary school with 188 boys and girls aged between three and 11. More children will join Reception and Nursery classes in January. Children's attainment when they start in the Nursery is well below that usually found. A significant number of children are at the early stage of learning English when they start school and some other pupils have specific speech and language difficulties. About two-thirds of pupils are Christian and the remaining third are Muslims. About six out of every ten pupils are from ethnic minority backgrounds. The largest group are Bangladeshi pupils. Just under half of the pupils are from a home where English is not the first language and currently 30 pupils are at the very early stage of acquiring English. Sylheti is the main first language spoken and a small number of children speak Arabic or Twi. The proportion of pupils on the special needs register and that have a statement of special educational needs is above the national average. Sixteen pupils are on the higher stages of the special needs register and six pupils have a statement of special educational need. Pupils' special needs relate to their learning, multi-sensory impairment, autism, physical disability and speech and communication difficulties. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is well above the national average. The social and economic backgrounds of many pupils are well below those usually found. There has been an extremely high turnover in teaching staff in the past two years. Pupil mobility is also high and on the increase because there is a shift of families moving out of the area and into neighbouring towns on the outskirts of London. The school received a School Achievement award in 2001. The school receives additional funds as part of the Excellence in Cities initiative.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
22424	Kathryn Taylor	Lead inspector	Mathematics, music, physical education and personal, social and health education
9163	Geoffrey Humphrey	Lay inspector	
23354	Evelyn Adams	Team inspector	English, information and communication technology, special educational needs, art and design, design and technology
10808	Alan Briton	Team inspector	Science, Foundation Stage, history, geography

The inspection contractor was:

Tribal PPI  
Barley House  
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Clifton  
Bristol  
BS8 2BN

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

### **OVERALL EVALUATION**

**This is a good school. The school is a very happy place. It has a very warm, welcoming ethos and serves the local community well. The quality of education is good. Teaching and learning are good and pupils achieve well. Test results are below those found nationally, but compare well with those in similar schools. The school is well led and managed and there is a clear focus on raising standards in all aspects of the school. The school provides good value for money.**

**The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:**

- The headteacher and key staff lead and manage the school well. They have high expectations of themselves and of others.
- Teaching is good and there is good teamwork.
- Pupils' speaking skills and their knowledge of basic number facts are below those expected.
- The support staff make a very good contribution to pupils' personal development, well-being and learning.
- Foundation Stage provision (Nursery and Reception), although satisfactory and improving, still needs further development.
- Good attention is given to promoting pupils' social skills and moral understanding. This helps them to develop confidence, good attitudes, behaviour and very good relationships, as well as a clear understanding of fairness and of the difference between right and wrong.
- Racial harmony is a strength and all pupils are valued and included.
- Attendance and punctuality are unsatisfactory.
- Due to staff absences and the high turnover of teaching staff, there was a period of time when developments were slowed down and few staff were involved in evaluating the school's work and leading on school developments.

**The school is more effective than it was when it was last inspected.** The school has worked very successfully to address the weaknesses found at the time of the last inspection in 1998. As a result, provision in many areas has improved, standards have risen and the good quality teaching and learning has been maintained. The school works very hard to sustain improvement, despite difficulties such as the recruitment and retention of staff, and the fairly high number of pupils moving in and out of the school. The school's very positive outlook, the staff's commitment to the pupils and their determination to meet their needs, all contribute well to the school's capacity to continue to improve.

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED**

Test results, at age 11 in 2003, were below those found nationally, but were at least in line with those in similar schools. In the tests in Year 6 in 2003, overall standards in English, mathematics and science were all well below those in schools nationally, but were at least as good as those in similar schools, as the table below shows. Last year, pupils in Year 2 performed better in mathematics tests than pupils in similar schools and as well as pupils in similar schools in reading and writing. Results in national tests sometimes go up and down from one year to the next and overall standards do also vary across classes. This is due to the differing numbers of children with special educational needs in each class. Pupils achieve well during their time at the school, often from a low starting point. Many children starting in the Nursery have poor speaking skills or limited skills in English and few experiences beyond their homes. By the end of Year 2, and Year 6, the majority of pupils nevertheless attain standards that are in line with those expected.

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	C	D	D	B
mathematics	C	E	E	C
science	D	E	E	C

*Key: A - well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average.  
Similar schools are those whose pupils have a similar number of pupils entitled to free school meals.*

In the current Year 6 class, standards in most subjects inspected are broadly in line with those expected nationally. In the current Year 2 class, many pupils attain standards in line with those expected nationally, but there is also a high proportion of pupils with special needs and those at the early stages of acquiring English in this class.

## ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIOUR

**Pupils have good attitudes to school and learning and behave well.** Pupils work hard and are keen to learn. They have a clear understanding of what is right and what is wrong. They respect one another and the teachers and support staff. Although attendance levels have improved, they are still not good enough. Too many pupils also come to school late. Relationships are very good and there is very good racial harmony among pupils from a range of backgrounds.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION

**The school provides a good standard of education.** Teaching and learning are good. All National Curriculum subjects are taught. The school makes good use of its links with the community and visits and visitors to school to support pupils' learning. All staff ensure that pupils are very well cared for and safe at school. The school works hard to keep parents informed.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

**The headteacher leads and manages the school well and provides a clear educational direction.** The deputy headteacher and senior staff support her well and make a good contribution to the way in which the school is led and managed. Other staff with subject and management responsibilities lead and manage well. The governors support the work of the school well and carry out all of their statutory responsibilities as they should.

## PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

**Parents like the school and feel their children are getting on well.** They particularly like the way the headteacher and staff give time to talk with them. Pupils like school. They trust their teachers and the supportive staff. They say they get lots of help from them, and that they are fair and respond to their needs and concerns.

## IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

Attention should be given to the following areas:

- Improve pupils' speaking skills, and their knowledge and use of vocabulary.
- In mathematics, extend pupils' skills in mental calculations and their knowledge of number facts.
- Build on the improvements that are being made to provision in Nursery and Reception.
- Improve pupils' attendance and punctuality.

- Train new teachers to lead and manage subjects.
- Extend the good work that has started on school self-evaluation.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS**

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

#### **Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses**

**The school's overall standards usually compare well with those in similar schools but are sometimes below national standards.** This is because a higher than average proportion of pupils are still learning English or have special educational needs. All pupils achieve well during their time at the school.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The attainment of many children entering Nursery and Reception classes is well below that usually found.
- Test results at age seven and 11 compare favourably with similar schools, and sometimes compare well with national results.
- Pupils of all abilities achieve well during their time at the school, especially in English.
- The headteacher and senior staff track individual pupils' progress rigorously and use this information well to assess how effective the school is meeting all pupils' needs.
- In all classes, many pupils have weak speaking skills.
- Pupils' skills in mental calculations and their knowledge of number facts are below those expected.

### **Commentary**

#### **Nursery and Reception**

1. When children join the Nursery, their attainment is well below that usually found. Many children have had few experiences outside the home and their skills in communication, language and literacy are particularly low. About a third of children joining Nursery have very limited understanding of English, and a significant number of children whose first language is English have specific speech and language difficulties, or a very restricted vocabulary. Although children achieve well during their time in the Nursery and Reception classes, standards remain below those expected by the time the children join Year 1. The exceptions are children's personal and social development, and their physical development, where attainment is in line with that expected.

#### **Test results at age seven and 11**

The table below shows tests results in Year 2 in 2003 and 2002.

##### **Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2003**

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	13.8 (15.1)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	13.6 (13.2)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	16.3 (13.8)	16.3 (16.5)

*There were 24 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

- National comparative data shows that at age seven, in 2003, overall standards in reading and writing were well below those found nationally, but were in line with those in similar schools. Standards in mathematics were in line with those achieved nationally, and well above those in similar schools. Test results in reading dipped in 2003, while those in writing improved a little. Standards in mathematics rose sharply. On the basis of teacher assessments, science standards in Year 2 in 2003 were in line with those in similar schools and below those found in schools nationally.

The table below shows tests results in Year 6 in 2003 and 2002.

**Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2003**

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	25.7 (26.3)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	25.4 (23.6)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	27.0 (26.3)	28.6 (28.3)

*There were 27 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

- Standards in English fell slightly between 2002 and 2003, while those in mathematics and science improved. National comparative data shows that, in the tests in 2003, overall standards in English were below those found nationally, and in mathematics and science standards were well below those found nationally. Standards in mathematics and science were, however, in line with those in similar schools, and in English, standards were above those in similar schools.

**Current standards in English, mathematics and science**

- Standards in English, mathematics and science have improved overall since the last inspection. In the current Year 2 class, pupils’ overall attainments in all three subjects is lower than last year’s Year 2. Standards are depressed because there is a higher than average number of pupils with special educational needs or additional needs in learning English and these pupils are unlikely to reach the expected level 2. Pupils currently in Year 6 are likely to do better in the tests than pupils did last year, because there are fewer pupils with additional needs than was the case in Year 6 last year. In other year groups, overall standards do vary between classes. This is because the composition of the classes can vary significantly, and the proportion of higher attaining pupils and those with special educational needs is not consistent across classes. Nevertheless, the majority of pupils’ attainments are in line with age related expectations.
- Staff and pupils need to continue to work on developing pupils’ speaking skills and increasing their knowledge of number facts. These are the main areas of weakness in pupils’ attainments. Many of the children have a limited vocabulary, which affects their ability to express their opinions and explain what they are doing and thinking. It also prevents children from being able to express any difficulties they may be experiencing, across all areas of the curriculum. In mathematics, pupils’ ability to quickly recall addition or multiplication facts can slow down the pace at which they work, and makes the learning of new mathematical concepts and methods more complex than it needs to be.

**Data analysis**

- The headteacher and deputy headteacher analyse the statutory and optional end of year test results thoroughly. They set individual pupils’ results against their knowledge of the pupils, their attainment when they started school, any additional needs they have or any barriers to learning. This helps them to determine and explain trends, as well as dips and troughs that are sometimes apparent in the test results. They also use the results of their analysis well to ask

questions of themselves. They consider, for example, how well the school is serving the needs of different groups of pupils; boys and girls, different ethnic groups, pupils learning English as an additional language, and pupils with special educational needs. This helps them to determine the impact of any additional support given to groups of pupils, as well as to decide what more they can do to support children further in the future.

#### Standards seen in other subjects

7. Pupils' skills in ICT have improved well since the last inspection when they were judged to be unsatisfactory. Standards of the work seen in history, geography and design technology were in line with those expected, which also represents an improvement since the last inspection. Standards seen in art and design are in line with those expected. There is insufficient evidence to make a judgment about pupils' standards in music, but pupils were heard singing and they sing well. Religious education and physical education were not inspected, so no judgements can be made about pupils' attainments or progress in these subjects.

#### How well pupils' achieve

8. The evidence gained from observing lessons, looking at pupils' work, talking with pupils and from scrutinising pupil data, shows that pupils in this school achieve well, whatever their starting point. Pupils achieve particularly well in English, especially when taking account of the fact that many pupils start school with very limited skills. Pupils with special educational needs, including those who have statements of special need, attain standards that are below, and sometimes well below, national expectations. However, their achievement is good and this is well supported by the school's good identification, assessment and target setting procedures. Pupils who learn English as an additional language achieve well. Although they start school with limited skills in English, most achieve standards that are in line with, or close to, those expected by the time they leave the school. Some of the reasons why pupils at the school achieve well are because:

- The teaching is good.
- Staff know pupils well and have high expectations of them.
- Pupils experiencing difficulties are given extra support, as for example in booster classes, catch up programmes, support from learning mentors.
- The school provides well for pupils who have special educational needs and those who learn English as an additional language.
- Pupils have good attitudes to learning and try hard.

#### **Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities**

**Pupils have good attitudes to learning, show interest in their work, and they behave well. Their personal development is promoted very well with particular strengths in their spiritual, moral and social development. The school is working hard to improve attendance and punctuality, but they remain unsatisfactory.**

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is promoted very well.
- Relationships and racial harmony are very good.
- Pupils have good learning attitudes, a strong work ethic and behave well.
- Pupils appreciate their own and others cultural traditions.
- Attendance and punctuality remain unsatisfactory in spite of the school's best endeavours.

#### **Commentary**

9. Pupils' attitudes, values and behaviour are good. Pupils want to learn and show interest and commitment to their work. They are well behaved, polite and courteous and respond well to the expectations outlined in the school behaviour policy, which is consistently and successfully implemented. Children in the Nursery and Reception classes settle quickly into the routine of school life, respond well and enjoy working and playing together.
10. Pupils show a high level of interest in lessons and other school activities. When talking with pupils they say that they want to learn and behave well because this is a friendly and welcoming school, teachers are good at dealing with any poor behaviour, or with pupils who show a lack of consideration for others, and they say staff do so in a fair and just way. Pupils like the school because it is well equipped, particularly with computers, books and sports equipment, and because they get a lot of help from the teachers and assistants when they need it. Pupils with special educational needs display positive attitudes to learning when working in class and in small groups. Pupils are encouraged to work hard and do their best. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well by the school's very positive and caring ethos. They enjoy good relationships with other pupils. Pupils with specific behavioural difficulties and learning difficulties are supported very well
11. There were ten fixed period exclusions in the last year, as the table below shows. These were justified on the grounds of maintaining high standards of behaviour and the need to send a clear message to those who repeatedly failed to respond to the school's high expectations.

## Exclusions

### *Ethnic background of pupils*

### *Exclusions in the last school year*

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	69	3	0
White – any other White background	3	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	19	5	0
Mixed – White and Asian	1	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	4	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	76	1	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	6	1	0
Black or Black British – African	2	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	4	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	13	0	0

*The table gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.*

12. Relationships throughout the school are very good. Pupils show care and consideration for each other and are courteous and polite towards adults, and welcoming towards visitors. The racial harmony within the school is a particular strength. Pupils say their opinions are valued, and give as an example a whole school pupil survey that was recently conducted. They have opportunities to show initiative and take responsibility both in lessons, where they often work in pairs or groups, or by helping with preparation and clearing up after practical activities. Many older pupils become a member of the 'friendship squad' who are provided with special training in order that they can act as play leaders and mentors for younger pupils during break times.

## Pupils' personal development

13. The overall provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development has improved well since the last inspection and is now very good. Pupils have opportunities to explore their own feelings, values, and beliefs. The school provides a clear moral code and promotes equality of opportunity for all pupils. There is a strong sense of community that encourages pupils to express their views with confidence and to respect and support each other. A good example is the way in which pupils with learning or physical difficulty are helped and supported by those around them. Pupils develop good social skills and are learning to act according to their own principles and to challenge things such as injustice and discrimination. Personal values are promoted well through religious education and personal, social and health education. In circle time, pupils discuss their feelings and reactions to social and moral dilemmas. They develop into mature individuals who are well prepared for the next phase in their education.

#### Attendance

14. The school works hard to improve pupils' attendance and punctuality and has met with some success. Levels of attendance and morning punctuality are improving as a result of rigorous monitoring and communication with parents, both by the school and the local authority education welfare officer. However, attendance remains below the national average, as the table below shows. Too many pupils also arrive late. The majority of parents do co-operate with the school and make sure that their children attend school regularly and arrive punctually.

#### **Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)**

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	6.3	School data	1.0
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

*The table gives the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.*

### **THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL**

**The school provides a good standard of education. The teaching and learning are good. The curriculum is satisfactory.**

#### Teaching and learning

**Teaching in Nursery and Reception is satisfactory overall. Teaching and learning in Years 1 to 6 is good overall.**

#### **Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 32 lessons**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1 (3%)	7 (22%)	13 (41%)	10 (31%)	1 (3%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

*The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages where 30 or more lessons are seen.*

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- All teachers plan and prepare lessons well.
- Staff expect pupils to work hard and they do.
- Teaching assistants make a very good contribution to pupils' learning.

- Teaching is particularly strong in Year 2 and 6.
- Teachers should give even more attention to developing pupils' skills in speaking and in developing basic number facts.

### **Commentary**

15. Teaching is satisfactory in the Nursery and Reception classes. Lesson planning is good and addresses all six areas of learning within an overall theme. Staff provide appropriate activities. They keep detailed notes of children's individual development and teachers are beginning to make clear links between the information gained from these ongoing assessments, and their future planning, but as yet this is underdeveloped. The general organisation and management of the various activities is good in the Reception class. This needs more attention and planning in the Nursery, in order to ensure that all adults are aware of how well children are achieving and what they are expected to learn from each of the activities. Teachers in Nursery and Reception make good use of the outdoor areas to promote children's learning. Children's personal and social development, and their physical development are taught and promoted well. The school has been focussing on improving the teaching and provision in this part of the school and is currently making good use of the additional external support and advice that is being provided.
16. In Years 1 to 6, teaching and learning are good overall. The main strengths are:
- Teachers expect pupils to work hard and to do well. Pupils respond positively and try hard, even when they find things difficult.
  - Classrooms are well organised and lessons are prepared well.
  - Simple learning objectives are shared with pupils in terms that they can understand.
  - Most teachers have good knowledge of the subjects they teach.
  - There is a good structure to lessons and some good plenary sessions at the end, which are used well to check pupils' learning and introduce new ideas.
  - Teachers often make very good use of resources to make learning interesting and to help all pupils to understand.
  - Staff promote pupils' personal development well through their teaching. They provide good role models for pupils, emphasise and reward good behaviour and attitudes, provide good opportunities for pupils to reflect on their learning and to learn about other cultural traditions.

Weaker aspects of teaching are:

- Teachers do not give enough attention to developing pupils' speaking skills. Although pupils have regular opportunities to speak with partners, and as part of a group, pupils lack confidence and have too few opportunities to address the whole class or to speak at length.
  - Teachers sometimes talk for too long themselves.
  - In mathematics lessons, too little time is given to teaching, practising and developing basic number facts.
17. Most of the teaching seen in the core subject of English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology was at least good. Teachers, in all classes, give good attention to the needs of pupils of different abilities, which includes higher attaining pupils, pupils who have additional needs in learning English or those pupils who have special educational needs. They plan work for different groups and keep a good overview of how well they are progressing. Learning support assistants are also very well deployed and make a very good contribution to pupils' learning. Staff are well trained, show initiative, work in partnership with teachers and are well briefed about their role in each lesson. In the lower school, bilingual assistants translate for pupils, throughout lesson. This ensures that those pupils with very limited English can access the curriculum, learn the appropriate vocabulary in English and, learn at the same rate as other pupils. Assistants who provide support for pupils

with special educational needs, including those pupils with a statement of special need, are equally effective. During whole class teaching, they quietly and unobtrusively provide additional input for pupils, which keeps them on task and learning at a good rate. They encourage pupils to be independent by giving the right amount of guidance and lots of praise and encouragement. Learning support assistants also run catch up classes before school for targeted pupils. Pupils attending these are making good progress.

18. No teaching was seen in physical education, religious education or art and design. Teaching seen in design and technology, music and history was at least satisfactory and some good and better teaching was seen across these subjects. Teachers demonstrated at least secure knowledge of the subjects and gave good attention to teaching skills. Resources, including visitors, made a good contribution in some of the history and music teaching and pupils learned well as a result.
19. Teaching in Years 2 and 6 is of a particularly high quality. Both class teachers have very good subject knowledge and skills in teaching across the range of subjects seen. They know their pupils very well. Teaching is energetic and very focused. Good use of assessment means that teaching is constantly being amended and adapted throughout the lessons to ensure that pupils of all abilities participate and learn well.
20. In the short term, teachers effectively assess pupils' progress against the learning objectives in lessons. Well-established and experienced teachers know their pupils and the relative strengths and weaknesses in their attainment. Longer-term assessments in English are good. The school also tracks the progress of pupils with special educational needs and those learning English well, but does not make links with other school assessment and tracking procedures explicit, thereby reducing the efficiency and effectiveness of each tracking process. For example, a significant number of pupils' identified needs relate to speaking and listening or reading and writing, but there are no clear links between targets set on group education plans and pupils' levels of fluency in English and the data used by the English co-ordinator to track progress in English. Improving this aspect and extending the way in which teachers assess pupils' progress in mathematics and science in the short term, would help the school to raise standards further.

## The curriculum

**The curriculum is broad, balanced and meets statutory requirements.** It meets pupils' needs **satisfactorily** and is enriched by links with the community. **Accommodation and resources are good overall**, but are only satisfactory in the Nursery classroom, due to lack of space.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- Provision for personal, social and health education is good.
- Equality of access and opportunity for all pupils is good.
- Learning support assistants are very effective and provide very good support for pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language.
- The accommodation is well organised, clean, tidy and welcoming.

## Commentary

21. All pupils have equal access to the curriculum, which also meets statutory requirements. This is an improvement since the last inspection when a number of weaknesses were highlighted. Children in the Nursery and Reception classes follow a broad and balanced curriculum that meets children's learning needs satisfactorily and ensures a sound start to their education. Pupils in Years 1 to 6 follow the National Curriculum and the National Literacy and National

Numeracy Strategies, although the literacy curriculum is currently being modified to take account of local initiatives.

22. The curriculum is adapted to reflect the diverse cultural backgrounds of pupils. For example, pupils learn about different religions, art and music from around the world. It is fully adapted to take account of pupils who are learning English and those who have special educational needs. Work is matched to individual pupils' learning needs, especially in English and mathematics. Comprehensive assessment procedures effectively track pupil progress in learning English, and pupils with special educational needs have clear individual or group education plans that are regularly reviewed and revised.
23. The school is well resourced to meet the needs of the curriculum in Years 1 to 6 and resources are also good in the Foundation Stage. Teachers make good cross-curricular links and provide opportunities for literacy skills to be taught as part of their work in other subjects, especially in history where history topics are used to provide opportunities for extended writing. Cross-curricular links are also made in mathematics, science, ICT and geography. Information and communication technology is used satisfactorily to support learning. All classes are timetabled to use the computer suite but computers in classrooms are not used to full effect to support learning across the curriculum.
24. There has been a very high turnover of teaching staff in recent years. This has posed some challenges for the school and a period of some considerable instability in the recent past. Senior staff have now established a good induction process for new staff. This is helping to ensure consistency and continuity for pupils. The school is also working to strengthen existing staff's roles, and other aspects of the school, in an attempt to minimise the impact of staff changes and absences, should they occur again in the future. There are a good number of learning support assistants, including bilingual staff drawn from the Bangladeshi community. This has resulted in very good improvements to the provision for pupils learning English as an additional language since the last inspection. The learning support assistants are well trained, deployed and developed. They provide a high level of effective support for pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language.
25. The curriculum is enhanced by visits to places of interest such as residential trips to Gorsefield Outdoor Pursuits centre, the Imperial War Museum, Mudchute Farm and the Guardian Newspaper ICT workshop. There are satisfactory opportunities for extra-curricular activities, mostly sports, which effectively contribute to pupils' performance in physical education. Participation in the arts is good, due to effective links with singers, musicians and music workshops facilitated by an enthusiastic school governor. Good use is made of visitors as seen during the inspection when the local priest led the Remembrance Day assembly.
26. The accommodation is good overall, except the indoor accommodation in the Nursery, which is of an odd-shape and is cramped. The building is well maintained, clean and well organised. All staff work hard to create and maintain a warm, welcoming, stimulating and attractive environment.

### **Care, guidance and support**

**Pupils are very well cared for and given very good guidance and support.** Their views and opinions are valued. Child protection and health and safety procedures are rigorous.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils are very well cared for and supported.
- Health and safety procedures are very good.
- There is a high degree of trust between the pupils and their teachers.
- The school seeks and acts upon pupils' views.

## Commentary

27. This aspect has improved well since the last inspection. The school supports its pupils well and provides a very caring ethos that encourages pupils to do their best at all times. Staff are sensitive to pupils' individual needs and respond to them. Health and safety procedures are rigorous and very effective and the provision for first-aid is good. The school also makes effective use of external health and safety consultants. Children in the Nursery and Reception classes, and throughout the school, are very well supervised and are taught to use school equipment safely and to observe high standards of personal hygiene. Older pupils learn to take responsibility for their own health and safety. The school is cleaned and maintained to a very high standard, which is a credit to the caretaker and cleaning staff. Child protection procedures are rigorous. Staff are well trained and exercise their child protection responsibilities with vigilance and care. There are well-established links with social services and all other relevant outside agencies.
28. Induction procedures for children entering the Nursery and Reception classes, and for pupils joining the school at other times, are good. Pupils are also well prepared for transfer into secondary education. Pupils trust their teachers and the support staff. They say they get lots of help from them, and that they are fair and respond to their needs and concerns. Pupils are confident that if they ask for help with their work, or if they have a personal problem, they will get help and advice. The learning mentors provide good support for a number of pupils with particular difficulties. Pupils who require additional help with their learning, or who have a physical disability, are particularly well cared for in a way that ensures that they are fully included in all aspects of school life. The views and opinions of pupils are valued and acted upon. Pupil surveys are conducted and the outcomes are given full consideration by the management team.

## Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

**Parents have positive views about the school and the quality of education and Christian ethos it provides. The partnership between the school and parents and the involvement with the wider community is good. Links with other schools are satisfactory.**

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are pleased with what the school provides.
- Partnership between the school is good and a significant number of parents volunteer to help in school.
- The Parent Teacher Association works hard to support the school.
- Pupil progress reports are well written.
- Links with the wider community contribute well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

## Commentary

29. Parents' have positive views of the school, are satisfied with the quality of education it provides and its Christian ethos. This was evident from the parent questionnaires and the meeting with parents. Parents and staff work well together. The short, interim reports and the detailed end of year progress reports are good and comprehensive, showing that teachers know and understand their pupils. The half yearly, interim reports provide a clear overview of pupils' attainment and effort in mathematics and English with a summary about pupils' attitudes towards learning and homework, attendance, punctuality and behaviour. The end of year reports provide a summary of attainment and progress in all subjects, an overview of pupils' emotional and social development and targets to work on in the future.

30. Topic related homework is designed to encourage parents to work with their children in research and investigative activities. Parents have formal opportunities to meet with class teachers to look at their children's work and discuss their progress. Parents of children in the Reception class are provided with guidance on how children learn to read. Staff also make sure they are accessible to parents at the end of the school day. A number of parents volunteer to help in school and there is a small active Parent Teacher Association that organises a programme of social and fundraising events. This supports the school's work and helps provide additional resources.
31. There are good links with the community. There is a close relationship with the congregation of the local parish church of St Matthews. One of the City of London churches also sponsors additional music and drama activities in the school, which includes a programme of visiting professional musicians, such as a cellist, pianist and percussionist, for Friday assemblies. There is a good programme of visits to places of local historic, cultural and religious interest, including the local Mosque. These very good links with the community contribute well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Links with other schools are satisfactory. The school has worked with other primary schools in a community music project, and opportunities are provided for pupils to visit the local secondary schools to gain first hand experience of their facilities and any specialist provision that is on offer.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**The headteacher and senior management team lead the school well, give clear direction and are committed to raising standards. Governors are involved well in the school and actively support its work. The school is well managed, despite the many challenges that it faces.**

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher and senior management team provide good leadership and manage the school well. There is a strong emphasis on raising standards.
- The school has a very good ethos and racial harmony is promoted very well.
- Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
- Finances are managed well and the school provides good value for money.

### **Commentary**

32. Good leadership and management have been maintained since the last inspection and the weaknesses identified at that time have been addressed. The school has a very good ethos, which values all pupils and staff. Racial harmony is very strong. Despite the many challenges the school faces, for example, those relating to staffing and pupil turnover, there is a very calm and happy working atmosphere in the school and strong teamwork between teachers and support staff. The headteacher provides good leadership and clear educational direction. She works closely with the deputy headteacher and senior management team. There is a clear commitment to improving standards and enabling pupils to achieve well. Members of the senior management team provide very good role models for staff and pupils. The quality of much of their teaching is of a high standard.
33. Staff who have subject or management responsibilities manage these well. At the current time, however, due to some new members of staff being inexperienced, the senior management team are currently co-ordinating many of the subjects. Staff changes and long-term staff absences last year, including those of some of the key managers, has led to a lack of continuity in developing, monitoring and evaluating some subjects and aspects of the school. The situation is now far more stable. This should allow time for consolidation, and enable senior managers to draw together existing good practice and make best use of its data analysis, monitoring and evaluation, to secure further improvements.

34. The special needs co-ordinator provides good advice and support for teachers, maintains regular contact with parents and external agencies, knows pupils well and keeps an overview of the quality of provision and pupil progress, through review of individual and group education plans, in conjunction with the class teachers. The school tracks the progress of pupils with special educational needs and those learning English well, but does not make links with other school assessment and tracking procedures explicit, thereby reducing the efficiency and effectiveness of each tracking process. For example, a significant number of pupils' identified needs relate to speaking and listening or reading and writing, but there are no clear links between targets set on group education plans and pupils' levels of fluency in English and the data used by the English co-ordinator to track progress in English.
35. The new school improvement plan for the current and subsequent three years is good. It contains appropriate priorities for development that focus on raising standards, especially those in the core subjects and in the Nursery and Reception classes. Priorities are well linked to costings.
36. The governing body carries out its responsibilities satisfactorily. They ensure that statutory requirements are met including those relating to daily collective act of worship and pupils with a statement of special need. Governors are kept well informed by the headteacher, and this helps them to play an important role in the life of the school. Most governors have undertaken training, which has helped them to be more effective in their work with the school. All have a curriculum and year group responsibility, which enables them to spend some time working alongside teachers and pupils. Governors understand the challenges that the school faces and they have an objective view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They support the headteacher well in attempting to recruit staff that are representative of the local community and have been instrumental in ensuring that the school is truly inclusive. However the governing body itself is not representative of the ethnic mix of pupils in the school although efforts are being made to rectify this. Governors carry out some formal monitoring of the provision and report their findings to the full governing body.
37. Staff development and training opportunities are good. Staff new to the school, and those who are new to working in particular year groups, are receiving effective school based support and training. Well focussed monitoring and feedback to teachers is also proving effective. The school is also benefiting from additional focussed local education authority support.
38. Finances are managed well. The well qualified finance governor works well with the school to ensure that the budget is apportioned appropriately and directed to the areas of priority for development. Specific grants are used appropriately. The school spends over and above the allocation it is given for special educational needs and that for pupils learning English. The governing body supports the school's decision to allocate more money to these areas. Funding from Excellence in Cities is used appropriately to provide the services of two learning mentors. At the time of the last inspection the school had a very large budget deficit, which has now been rectified. Recent financial cutbacks and a reduction in pupils' numbers, however, have led to the school having to reduce staffing and cut back on some extra-curricular provision. The money carried forward from last year appears to be fairly high, but this includes some additional money to maintain current staffing levels, despite the cutbacks. A further £40, 000 is in reserve. This is the school's contribution to a new community sports hall, which is soon to be built, largely funded by Sport England.
39. The principle of best value in the application of challenge, comparison, consultation and competition is central to the school's management and use of resources. When consideration is given to the good quality of education provided, the leadership and management, very good learning ethos and very high inclusion principles, the school provides good value for money.

## **Financial information**

**Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003**

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	829,787
Total expenditure	832,798
Expenditure per pupil	3,735

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	60,000
Balance carried forward to the next	66,686

## **PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS**

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

#### **THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING**

##### **The provision is satisfactory**

40. The school has maintained its sound provision for children in the Foundation Stage since the last inspection. Attainment on entry to the Nursery is very low in communication, language and literacy and well below that usually found in most other areas of learning, except in children's personal, social and emotional development. In Nursery and Reception classes, children with English as an additional language and those who have special educational needs, are very well supported and achieve well. Teaching and learning is satisfactory with some examples of good teaching and learning observed during the inspection in the Reception class. Teachers plan well in all areas of learning and they are beginning to keep detailed notes of children's individual development. These are used appropriately by teachers and support staff to plan future lessons and to identify children who need extra help or those of higher ability. The organisation and management of the various activities is generally good in the Reception class but this needs more attention and planning in the Nursery to ensure that the learning outcomes deriving from activities are well defined. The Foundation Stage is, overall, well led and managed. Resources are good. The accommodation is satisfactory overall but that in Nursery is rather cramped. The school has a partly covered, separate outdoor area with access from both classrooms, and this is well used throughout the whole school year to give children practical experiences in all the areas of learning.

#### **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

##### **Provision for personal, social and emotional development is good.**

##### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children achieve well in this area of learning so that standards are at least as expected by the time they join Year 1.
- Relationships between children are very good and all staff provide very positive role models so that children behave well and develop good attitudes to learning.
- Personal and social development is promoted well through work in all areas of learning.

##### **Commentary**

41. The quality of teaching and learning is good in both the Nursery and Reception classes and children achieve well. There are good arrangements to settle Nursery children into school both before they enter and when they start school. The routines, established in both classes, help children to feel secure and develop independence, for example, they are given opportunities to choose activities and to tidy up after lessons. They learn to share equipment and to listen while others are speaking. Relationships between children are very good and all staff provide very

positive examples of how to behave. Children develop a good understanding of how to behave under different circumstances due to the staff's high expectations. This is evident, for example, when the Nursery children are eating their lunch; they eat quietly, use knives and forks correctly and say 'please' and 'thank you' on receiving their meal. In the Reception class children are attentive and can sit for a reasonable length of time in whole class lessons. Sometimes, however, they sit listening for too long. Children work well cooperatively with other children and can also work independently. Most children are on course to meet the nationally expected standards in this area by the time they leave the Reception class.

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

**Provision in communication, language and literacy is good.**

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The quality of teaching and learning is good and children in both classes achieve well.
- All staff encourage children to talk during whole class, group or individual activities to help to build up their vocabulary.
- Although children achieve well, standards remain below the expected levels for many children when they join Year 1, because of their low starting point.

### **Commentary**

42. The quality of teaching and learning is good and children achieve well in both the Nursery and Reception classes. All staff make every effort to engage children in conversation to encourage them to talk and begin to build up their vocabulary. For example, in the Reception class when the children were reading from the 'big book' the story of 'Handa's Surprise', the teacher emphasised the names of the various fruits in the story to ensure recognition. This helped all the children to extend their vocabulary, including those who were at an early stage of learning English. Teachers and support staff in both classes use every opportunity to extend children's speaking skills in both formal and informal situations. Although children's vocabulary and speaking skills are limited they do use the role-play areas, in and out of the classrooms, to practice communication skills with lots of encouragement from adults. Children in both classes enjoy looking at books, and the older children are able to recognise the title, author and illustrator's contribution to a book. Most children are unlikely to meet the early learning goals for writing and for communication by the time they join Year 1 due to their limited vocabulary and speaking skills on entry.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

**Provision in mathematical development is satisfactory.**

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Practical activities support children's mathematical development well.
- Teaching assistants support children who speak English as an additional language well and some teaching assistants also speak pupils' first languages.
- Most children are unlikely to achieve the expected level by the time they leave the Reception class.

### **Commentary**

43. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory and children make sound achievement in both the Nursery and Reception classes. Children learn and enjoy a number of rhymes and songs that extends their knowledge of number well. Lessons are well planned and children are given many opportunities to participate in 'hands on' practical activities to develop their skills and understanding. For example, Nursery children used various coloured paints to print out

simple two-dimensional shapes enhancing their creative as well as their mathematical skills. Teaching assistants, some who are able to talk to the children in their first language support children very well. Staff assess the children's progress well and use this when planning the next steps in their learning. Most children are unlikely however to attain the expected standards in their mathematical development by the time they leave the Reception class.

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

**Provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is satisfactory.**

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Staff provide a good range of activities to further children's knowledge and understanding of the world around them.

### **Commentary**

44. Direct teaching of this area of learning was only observed in the Nursery class but evidence from planned activities and display work indicates that the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children's achievement is satisfactory but their weak language skills limits their ability to explain or discuss what they are doing and learning. They learn about a variety of materials through using construction toys, sand and water. Staff provide a good range of activities but, sometimes, children could be further encouraged to select their own tools and techniques so as to adapt their work and extend their learning. Children have good opportunities to learn about other cultures and religions. In their literacy work, concerned with the story, 'Handa's Surprise', for example, the teacher used this effectively to further children's understanding of different cultures. Most children are unlikely to achieve all the nationally expected goals by the time they leave the Reception class.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

**Provision in physical development is good.**

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The large, outdoor activity area and resources are used well to promote children's physical development.
- There is very good support from teaching assistants and the nursery nurse.
- Most children likely to achieve the expected standard by the time they enter Year 1.

### **Commentary**

45. The wide and varied outdoor resources available ensure that children in the Nursery learn to use the wheeled toys and climbing and balancing apparatus safely and confidently. Very good support from teaching assistants and the nursery nurse also helps children to achieve well in this area of learning. In Reception, children are taught to use space appropriately to control their movements and consequently they achieve well. Children in both classes are encouraged to use a wide range of tools and apparatus like, pencils, crayons, paintbrushes and clay to develop their handling abilities. By the time they are in the Reception class most children can hold these implements correctly and are beginning to learn to write accurately with a pencil. Most children are likely to achieve the expected standard in this area of their learning by the time they leave the reception class.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

## **Provision in creative development is satisfactory.**

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good attention is given to developing children's vocabulary in role-play activities both indoors and outdoors.
- Most children do not find it easy to extend their play activities due to limited vocabulary and speaking skills.

### **Commentary**

46. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory and children achieve well, from a low starting point. Children in both Nursery and Reception are introduced to a range of activities including; painting and singing. Children enjoy activities in the role play areas and outdoors free choice activities. The 'home corner' and the outdoor 'road track' are popular. Support assistants make every effort to encourage children to talk about their creative activities, however, because of their limited vocabulary and speaking skills children do not find it easy to extend their play. Most children are unlikely to meet the goals in this area of learning by the time they join Year 1 due to their low starting point.

## **SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2**

### **ENGLISH**

**Provision for English is good. Many pupils have English as an additional language and the school provides well for these pupils. Learning support assistants provide a good range and level of support for pupils with special educational needs and those learning English. Some learning support assistants provide bi-lingual support for pupils at the early stages of English acquisition.**

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Overall standards are below those found nationally but pupils achieve well and many pupils attain or exceed the nationally expected level by the end of Year 6.
- The small number of pupils in each year group results in differing attainment year-on-year.
- There are examples of good and very good teaching in both key stages.
- Teachers' planning includes clear and specific learning objectives that are shared with pupils in words that children can understand
- Learning support assistants are well briefed and deployed effectively during lessons to provide a good level of support for groups and individuals.
- Work is differentiated effectively to meet the needs of groups of pupils and individuals.

### **Commentary**

47. Overall, standards in English are below those found nationally. Boys and girls of all prior attainment levels, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in relation to their starting point. Pupils from all ethnic backgrounds achieve well. Many pupils attending the school learn English as an additional language and a significant minority are at the early stages of acquiring English. The school provides well for these pupils and bi-lingual assistants effectively support pupils at the early stages, in their home-language, during lessons. Pupils with special educational needs in English are effectively identified. Appropriate intervention strategies, including early literacy support, additional literacy support and further literacy support, are provided. The learning targets arising from such programmes are included in individual or group education plans, and are reviewed and revised each term.

48. In the 2003 national tests, at the end of Year 2, the proportion of pupils who attained the expected Level 2 in reading and writing was the same as that found in similar schools. Few pupils attained the higher Level 3 and this depressed the overall standards based on average point scores. In Year 6, the percentage attaining the expected Level 4 was above that found in similar schools. This was due to good teaching in Year 6, effective support by learning support staff, plus regular assessment and tracking of pupil progress linked to individual and group target setting. The leadership of the subject is strong, dedicated and enthusiastic.
49. Pupils throughout the school listen attentively and display a positive attitude towards their learning in English. Teachers include many opportunities for pupils to speak and listen during lessons and pupils are particularly proficient at talking in pairs and reporting back to the rest of the class. Many pupils have a very limited vocabulary. Although teachers are aware of this, and list relevant vocabulary on lesson plans, they do not always take enough time to explain new words to pupils or to revisit and reinforce words that pupils have been previously introduced to. This sometimes leads to pupils using very simplistic language when trying to explain their reasoning and ideas, especially in subjects requiring specialised vocabulary, for example, mathematics and science.
50. Pupils make good progress in reading and most children achieve the expected level by the time they leave the school and some exceed this. Most pupils read for meaning and have a variety of reading strategies to help them access texts. A great deal of emphasis is placed on the teaching of phonics and pupils are able to use their phonic knowledge when tackling new or unfamiliar words. Pupils say they like reading and most can name a favourite author, but many say that they do not read a great deal at home, and that their parents or carers do not always listen to them read or sign their reading record books. Pupils understand the value of reading and are keen to improve their reading skills.
51. Pupils' achievement in writing is satisfactory, although standards are below national expectations. Pupils' writing shows that pupils concentrate on both content and presentation. Teachers provide pupils with a good variety of writing opportunities including recounts, reports, poetry and stories. Work is usually marked thoroughly with helpful feedback and comments that show pupils how they can improve.
52. The quality of teaching is good, with examples of very good teaching in Years 1 and 2 and Years 3 to 6. In the best lessons, teachers' planning has clear, explicit objectives that are shared with pupils, at the beginning of lessons, in words they can identify with and understand. Teachers explain concepts and instructions thoughtfully, and work is differentiated to meet the needs of individual pupils and different attainment groups. There are strong cross-curricular links with history, geography and design technology which help pupils make sense of what they are learning and see the relevance in a wider context. Teachers work well with their learning support assistants who are an integral part of the delivery of lessons. Teachers ensure that learning support assistants are well briefed before lessons and during lessons are deployed to provide the most effective support for pupils with special educational needs or those learning English as an additional language. Learning support assistants also effectively lead English booster classes before school and withdrawal groups for early, additional and further literacy support during the school day. Teachers use the few minutes towards the end of English lessons to effectively recapitulate and reinforce the lesson objective, through a plenary session that actively involves pupils in reporting back and explaining ideas.
53. Pupils' work is regularly assessed through specific pieces of extended writing or comprehension tests. Results are analysed and used to inform teachers' planning and target setting for individuals or groups. The school has a sophisticated system of tracking and assessing pupil progress in English and has recently re-banded all school reading books to ensure that pupils are provided with books that meet their own learning needs.
54. The co-ordinator has a clear vision for the subject and is well aware of the strengths and weaknesses across the school. There is a very effective process of induction for new members of staff which includes in-house training, mentoring and monitoring as well as

access to relevant local education authority training. This enables the school to maintain continuity and consistency in the teaching of English, and ensure that new staff quickly and effectively begin to deliver English lessons that are in keeping with the school's practice and expectations.

## **Language and Literacy across the curriculum**

55. Pupils have many opportunities to develop their speaking and listening, reading and writing skills as part of their work in other subjects. There are strong cross-curricular links made with other subjects particularly history, geography and design technology which are used to provide pupils with a context within which to write extended reports and stories as well as poems and instructions.

## **MATHEMATICS**

**Provision for mathematics is good.**

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils of all abilities achieve well during their time in the school.
- A weakness in many pupils' attainment is their knowledge of number facts and multiplication tables.
- Many pupils have weak speaking skills and a limited vocabulary, which adversely affects their ability to explain what they are doing and thinking.
- Teaching and learning are good.
- Teaching assistants make a very strong contribution to pupils' learning.
- There have been several mathematics co-ordinators in the last two years, which has affected developments.

### **Commentary**

56. Test results at age 11 in 2003, based on average point scores, were well below the national average but in line with those in similar schools. At age 7, standards were in line with those in schools nationally, and well above those in similar schools. Test results at age 7 and 11 do tend to vary from one year to the next. This is because cohorts of pupils are small and the number of pupils with special educational needs and statements of special educational need can, and does, affect the percentages and average point scores considerably. This pattern is confirmed by inspection evidence: there are some variations in standards across different classes that relate to the number of pupils in the class who have additional needs.
57. In the current Year 2 class, standards are below national expectations. In Year 6, standards are in line with national expectations. All pupils, irrespective of their prior attainments, achieve well in mathematics during their time at the school. The majority of pupils in each class work competently at the expected level and there is clear evidence of higher attainment amongst some pupils. In a few classes, there is also quite a large group of lower attaining pupils, which includes pupils with special educational needs, others who have recently joined the school from overseas and those pupils who are at the very early stages of acquiring English.
58. Pupils' knowledge of number facts and multiplication tables is a weaker aspect of many pupils' attainment. This was evident, for example, when pupils in Year 4 were learning how to multiply, using the partitioning method. Pupils were working hard, but many of them had to use their fingers or other apparatus to help them work out simple multiplication facts, and this affected the speed with which they completed their work. The school is aware that this is a weakness for many pupils and is trying to address this, for example by providing specific booster classes for a number of pupils in some classes. Nevertheless, the fact that it is a priority area for

development is not evident in the teaching seen in every class: in a number of lessons the mental mathematics part of the lesson was too brief, with insufficient attention paid to developing quick recall of number facts.

59. Pupils' attainment is also adversely affected by pupils' weak speaking skills and their limited, and sometimes very limited vocabulary. This is evident among pupils whose first language is English as well as some of the pupils who learn English as an additional language. The weakness is more pronounced in Years 3 to 6, where the requirements of the curriculum are more demanding and the concepts being taught and developed are frequently more abstract and complex. Pupils often know the answers, but when they are asked to explain these, their reasoning or methods, some find this very difficult. In all lessons, teachers encourage paired talk to help extend pupils' mathematical discussions, which is a very positive move. Where teaching is at its best, teachers also encourage individual pupils to speak out to the whole class, support pupils to extend their explanations, and introduce and model the correct use of vocabulary.
60. Inspectors saw lessons in all classes since the school had requested a particular focus on mathematics provision. Teaching and learning is good overall. It was good in two lessons, very good in two lessons, satisfactory in one lesson and unsatisfactory in the remaining lesson.

Strengths in almost all of the teaching include:

- Good preparation and organisation.
- Clear learning objectives expressed simply and in a way that pupils can understand.
- Pupils are encouraged to work hard.
- Teachers have at least secure understanding of the subject and high expectations of what pupils will achieve.
- Work is usually well matched to pupils of different prior attainments.

61. In lessons where teaching was good or very good, teachers have good or very good subject knowledge and teaching skills. They kept a good overview of all pupils' progress during the lesson. Strengths were sometimes seen in the way that teachers emphasised and developed precise mathematical vocabulary. This was the case, for example, in Year 5 when pupils learned to recognise and understand the properties of different types of triangles, and by the end of the lesson, most pupils could also use correct, precise vocabulary to explain what distinguished one type of triangle from another. Resources were frequently used very well. In Year 6, for example, excellent use was made of a number line from 0-1 to show pupils that decimals and fractions relate to parts of one, and to help pupils understand the relationship between fractions, decimals and percentages. Pupils learned and understood very well, despite this being a very difficult concept.
62. A general area for improvement in teaching, in almost all classes, is the amount of time pupils are given to work uninterrupted. In their efforts to make teaching more interactive, many teachers frequently do too much talking and give pupils too little time for sustained concentration on written tasks. This is sometimes what made some of the very good teaching, very good rather than excellent. The most effective use of time, with the right balance between teacher talk and pupils having opportunities to talk and to work independently, was seen in a lesson in Year 1. In the lesson, during group work, higher attaining pupils demonstrated a good ability to work systematically and to organise their own learning.
63. Learning support assistants are very well deployed and make a very strong contribution to pupils' learning. In the lower school, bilingual assistants translate for pupils, throughout the lesson, ensuring that pupils can fully access the curriculum and achieve well. They also teach pupils the appropriate vocabulary in English. Those supporting pupils with special educational needs are equally effective. During whole class teaching, they quietly and unobtrusively provide additional input for some pupils. This keeps pupils on task and learning at a good rate. Some

learning support assistants also run catch up classes before school for targeted groups of pupils. Pupils who attend these are progressing well and gaining confidence.

64. Improvements since the last inspection have been good overall. However, due to staff turnover and some long-term staff absences, there have been several mathematics coordinators in the past two years, which has got in the way of sustained developments. Nevertheless, more recently there has been good, focused monitoring, evaluation and developments so that improvements to provision have been rapid. The school has also been drawing on external support and advice as well as that provided by senior managers and the coordinator. The new coordinator is competent, provides good leadership and has the potential further developments to work in mathematics. Her own teaching provides a very good example to others.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

65. Good, relevant links are made between mathematics work and pupils' work in other subjects. In science and design technology for example pupils have opportunities to apply and extend their knowledge of measures. In history pupils learn about time lines and discuss how long ago events occurred. As part of their work in geography pupils study maps, direction and scales. Pupils use ICT and calculators appropriately as part of their work in mathematics.

## **SCIENCE**

**Overall provision in science is satisfactory.**

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There is good emphasis on the investigational aspects of science.
- Standards at age 11 have improved since the last inspection.
- The quality of teaching and learning seen in the upper half of the school is good.
- Pupils with special educational needs or who learn English as an additional language receive good support.
- The subject is well led and managed.

### **Commentary**

66. Standards have improved since the last inspection when they were judged to be unsatisfactory. Standards, in the current Year 6, are now in line with those expected and pupils are achieving well. Standards in Year 2 are below national expectations. A significant proportion of pupils at this key stage are still at the very early stages of English acquisition and this adversely affects standards, although pupils do receive extra support. Boys generally attain better than girls in the science tests and the school has been working hard to address this.
67. The quality of teaching and learning, seen in Years 3 to 6 during the inspection, and from the scrutiny of work, is good. Although no lessons were observed in Years 1 and 2, a scrutiny of work and teachers' planning and discussion with pupils indicates that this teaching is at least satisfactory. Throughout the school there is good emphasis on investigations and pupils learning from practical aspects of science. This has had the effect of raising standards and improving achievement. Through practical activities, as seen in Years 3, 4 and 6 lessons, pupils' learn particularly well. In a lesson in Year 4, for example, pupils investigated high and low pitched sounds and were given the opportunity to use practical apparatus to investigate these differences. The lesson was well linked to music and the teacher used various musical instruments to demonstrate. In the Year 6 lesson, pupils' knowledge and understanding of the reasons why objects weigh less in water was developed well using good methods of investigation. Nearly all pupils understand the principle of a 'fair test'. Similarly, when pupils in Year 3 were investigating which types of paper were most absorbent, they clearly understood

the need to ensure they must use the same amount of water each time. Mathematics and information and communication technology were applied well to pupils' work in Year 6 when they were presented two sets of data, and in Year 3 when they had to accurately measure thirty centilitres of water. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language achieve as well as other pupils, due to good support from teachers and learning support assistants. All adults encourage pupils to talk work cooperatively and collaboratively together and to talk about their work and discuss their ideas.

68. The headteacher has been temporarily leading science and is aware of the need for further developments in the subject. A great deal of monitoring and analysis of test results has been undertaken which has identified areas for improvement that are already taking place, for example the differences in girls' and boys' achievements in the tests. An area for improvement is to establish systems for more regularly assessing pupils' progress as they move up through the school. The headteacher has analysed the areas of the subject that pupils found most difficult in the national tests. This information has been used to help plan appropriate work for this year to enable standards to rise further.
69. Resources are good enabling teachers to satisfy the National Curriculum requirements and to give pupils the opportunity to participate in practical investigative work. The curriculum was recently enhanced when Year 5 pupils attended a residential visit to a rural study centre. Information and communication technology is used appropriately to support work in science, especially that relating to data handling or graph work.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

**Provision in information and communication technology is satisfactory and has improved since the last inspection. All statutory requirements are now met.**

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils achieve well and so attain standards that are in line with national expectations.
- Teaching is at least satisfactory and often good.
- The subject is well led.
- A learning support assistant effectively supports teachers in the delivery of ICT lessons.

### **Commentary**

70. At the time of the previous inspection information and communication technology was judged to be a weakness and statutory requirements were not met. This has now been addressed and all aspects of ICT, including control activities, are now planned and delivered as part of the overall scheme of work for the subject. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language, achieve well and standards are in line with those expected.
71. All teachers use the nationally recommended scheme of work as the basis for their planning and this is appropriately adapted for the pupils at the school. Teaching was generally good in lessons seen, although in one lesson it was satisfactory. Teachers' clear planning and delivery, along with good preparation of the programmes and computers by the learning support assistant, ensures that pupils engage fully with their lessons, contribute well and make good progress in acquiring and consolidating their ICT skills, knowledge and understanding. Pupils save their work in individual on-line folders, files and directories, which teachers then access in order to assess progress. Teachers list relevant vocabulary on their planning sheets but, sometimes, they overlook the most obvious words that pupils need to revisit and recall in order to clearly explain the work they are doing. For example, in a lesson on spreadsheets, the teacher omitted to reinforce the term "spreadsheet" to help pupils understand the programme they were working with. Work in ICT makes an effective contribution to pupils' moral and

social development through encouraging them to work co-operatively together at computers. Pupils show a great interest in their work and many say that ICT is their favourite lesson.

72. The computer suite is well equipped with terminals, an interactive whiteboard and a data projector. A learning support assistant is assigned to support lessons in the ICT suite and she provides very effective support for teachers and pupils. The computer suite is well timetabled and used effectively to support learning in the subject, but inadequate provision and use of computers in classrooms restricts ICT from efficiently supporting learning across the curriculum when pupils may want to spontaneously engage in individual research.
73. The subject leader is experienced and enthusiastic, but is holding the post on a temporary basis until a permanent post-holder can be appointed. She has taken effective action to raise standards and raise the profile of ICT across the school. She ensures that new members of staff are confident and competent in the computer suite, and is pleased with the standards of attainment now being achieved by the pupils.

### **Information and communication technology across the curriculum**

74. Lessons in the ICT suite are used effectively to support learning in other subjects, for example, mathematics, science and literacy. Pupils make good use of the programmes available and can effectively word-process and manipulate data on databases and spreadsheets. Pupils of all ages confidently use the mouse and grow in competence in clicking and dragging, using pull-down menus, saving and printing their work.

## **HUMANITIES**

### **The provision for history and geography is satisfactory.**

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school makes good use of the local area, visitors and visits to places of interest to support pupils' learning.
- Teachers make some good links between history and geography and with other subjects.

#### **Commentary**

75. Religious education was not inspected, as the Diocesan Board carried out a separate inspection. Work in history and geography was not inspected in depth but was sampled. Evidence about history was drawn from lessons seen in Years 2, 4 and 5 and a sample of work on display. No geography lessons were seen. Evidence is based on pupils' work on display. The provision for history and geography has improved since the last inspection when weaknesses in the curriculum, standards and pupils' progress were highlighted. The school now ensures that pupils are regularly taught both subjects. Curriculum plans are in place. Pupils are taught key skills.

#### **History**

76. In the history lessons seen, pupils achieved at least satisfactorily and standards were at least in line with those expected. In a lesson seen in Year 2, pupils demonstrated good knowledge and understanding of the events leading up to The Fire Of London, as well as the causes and consequences of the great fire. Pupils understood that the events happened a long time ago and talked about some of the differences between life then and today. Pupils' learning was particularly good because pupils had previously been involved in drama activities with a visiting theatre group. In the lesson seen, the class teacher dressed up as the baker's daughter and pupils then asked her questions. Later they took on the role of Samuel Pepys before writing about the events, using a 'quill' and burned paper. In two other lessons seen,

teaching and learning were satisfactory with strengths. Resources were used particularly well and good attention was given to developing historical skills and to enabling children to learn from using secondary sources. All teachers make good links between history work and pupils' work in other subjects. In Year 6, for example, pupils have been learning about World War 2. Work on display shows good links with art and design and design technology, and good links with homework. The work seen in Year 3 and 4 is well linked to literacy and to art and design and design technology. The provision for history has improved since the last inspection.

## **Geography**

77. Pupils in Year 5 enjoyed a residential visit to a rural Study Centre near Stanstead. As a result they were able to describe and contrast the physical and human features of rural and urban life when comparing the area with Bethnal Green. Displays, and pupils' work, also indicate they are able to understand how the environment can be changed for better or worse when they discussed the possible effect on the surrounding villages, if Stanstead Airport was extended. In Year 2, pupils are learning about their own local area, in particular the transport links. They construct simple maps and discuss the use of buildings in their community. Pupils in Year 2 are also familiar with places in the United Kingdom and, by using postcards from their summer holidays, show an awareness of this country's link with other places in the world. The work seen in geography indicates some effective links to pupils' work in literacy and numeracy.

## **CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS**

**Physical education** was not inspected. Work in **music, art and design** and **design and technology** was sampled. Two lessons in music and two lessons in design and technology were seen. Judgements about work in art and design are based on displays of pupils' work seen around the school.

**On the basis of the limited evidence gathered, provision for aesthetic and practical subjects is judged to be satisfactory.**

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils sing well.
- Pupils learn a good range of songs and listen to music from a wide range of cultures.
- Pupils learn about art from around the world.
- Teaching and learning are enhanced by visitors and visiting specialists.

### **Commentary**

#### **Music**

78. Three music sessions were observed, two lessons and one singing practice assembly. These indicate good standards in the singing and the performing element, but there is insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement on standards in all aspects of music. Pupils sing a wide range of songs with enthusiasm, particularly during whole school assemblies. They demonstrate a good grasp of melody, maintain the beat well and sing with expression and obvious enjoyment. Although the music selected is drawn from a wide range of cultures, some pupils from ethnic minority groups do not attempt to participate in singing. Teaching and learning are enhanced by visiting music specialists. The teaching seen was good, and this promoted good achievement. Strengths included interesting activities that made most pupils want to contribute, good management of pupils, and a good knowledge and understanding of the subject. This was the case, for example, in the lesson in Year 3 when South African music was used. Pupils were keen and enthusiastic to sing and their learning was also enhanced well by the lively, active participation of several adults. The headteacher is temporarily managing the subject and provides good leadership and support for teachers. The school uses a published scheme of work to support teachers and to ensure that the curriculum is

covered. Resources for the subject are satisfactory and pupils in all year groups undertake specific projects with specialist peripatetic teachers throughout the course of the year. Provision is also supported by a well-qualified and enthusiastic governor who contributes to work in music.

## **Design and Technology**

79. Teaching in the two lessons seen was good in one lesson and excellent in the other. Evidence of pupils' past work, and the work seen in lessons, indicates that standards in design and technology are in line with those expected nationally. In lessons seen in Years 5 and 6, pupils used scissors accurately and confidently; they apply design principles and follow instructions well. In a lesson in Year 6, pupils worked efficiently and effectively in mixed-race and mixed-gender pairs to create a structure that stood at least one metre high and would bear a load of 200 grams, using only paper, tape and a small amount of card. They explored the interpersonal aspects of teamwork and problem-solving at the start of the lesson, enhancing their understanding of personal, social and moral education as well as aspects of behaviour management, negotiation skills and citizenship. They worked diligently and enthusiastically being encouraged to trouble-shoot and problem-solve through the skilful questioning of the teacher and learning support assistant. They used and applied their previous knowledge to strengthen and reinforce their models and finally tested their structures against the criteria set at the beginning of the lesson. Each pair of pupils were encouraged to provide constructive, critical comment about other models and this was done with maturity and insight. Improvements since previous inspection have been satisfactory.

## **Art and design**

80. Displays around the school indicate that standards are broadly in line with those expected nationally. There have been satisfactory improvements since the last inspection. Pupils from Years 1 to 6 have a satisfactory range of opportunities to use a variety of art materials and to explore different aspects of art including large collages, drawing, painting and model making. Work in art effectively supports pupils' cultural and spiritual development as strong cross-curricular links encourage pupils to extend their learning in other subjects through representing concepts they have learned about in religious education, history and geography through their art work. Pupils are also given ample opportunity to learn about artistic traditions from around the world as evidenced from work on display representing the artwork on African Ndebele houses by Year 1 and models of rickshaws celebrating Asian art by Year 2, both of which were linked to work celebrating Black History Month. Artwork representing crosses and poppies used by the Year 6 class in their Remembrance Day assembly was of a good standard.

## **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP**

Only one lesson was seen in this area of the school's work and so no judgements are made about overall teaching. Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is good. The school sees pupils' personal development as a very important part of its work and incorporates work in this area as part of its work in other subjects. The programme for personal, social and health education includes work on diet, health, sex, drugs, relationships and personal safety. This programme helps pupils develop a safe and healthy lifestyle, gain confidence and interact with others. It is well supported by visits from outside agencies.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

### *Inspection judgement*

### *Grade*

<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3

<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>4</b>
Pupils' achievement	3

<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>3</b>
Attendance	5
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	4

<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

*Inspectors make judgements on a scale: excellent (grade 1); very good (2); good (3); satisfactory (4); unsatisfactory (5); poor (6); very poor (7).*