

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **WILLIAM DAVIS PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Bethnal Green

LEA area: London Borough of Tower Hamlets

Unique reference number: 100943

Headteacher: Ms Alison Flegg

Lead inspector: Mrs Christine Huard

Dates of inspection: June 7<sup>th</sup> - 9<sup>th</sup> 2004

Inspection number: 258431

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:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	187
School address:	Wood Close Cheshire Street London
Postcode:	E2 6ET
Telephone number:	(02077) 391 511
Fax number:	(02077) 391 331
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Dr Patricia Clayton
Date of previous inspection:	8 <sup>th</sup> June 1998

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

William Davis Primary School is in Bethnal Green in the heart of the East End of London. It caters for pupils between the ages of three and 11 and nearly all attend from the local area. The majority of children are from economically deprived backgrounds and most live in local authority accommodation. The temporary nature of this accommodation means that the school is subject to very high mobility amongst pupils. In the last few years, 310 pupils have been admitted to the school at various times of whom 187 remain on roll. There are more boys than girls – this is most noticeable in Years 1 and 2 where there are 37 boys and only 17 girls. Children join the Nursery class in the September following their third birthday. They join the class gradually over the first three weeks of term. When they join the Nursery, attainment is very low and most children have very poor linguistic ability and very few social skills. A high percentage of pupils, about 79 per cent, come from ethnic minority groups, with 146 pupils receiving some support with learning English, 108 (51 per cent) of whom are at an early stage of learning English. The main ethnic groups represented in the school are Bangladeshi, mixed white/black Caribbean and Somalian. Sixty per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is well above the national average. About 28 per cent of pupils have been identified as having special educational needs or are on the school's concern register: this is above the national average. Three pupils – about one per cent – have statements of special educational need; this is about average. These statements relate to pupils with speech and communication difficulties or visual impairment. Extra support is provided for pupils who have difficulties with learning. The school has received Achievement and Truancy Buster awards from the Department of Education and Skills.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
27290	Mrs Christine Huard	Lead inspector	The Foundation Stage Science Information and communication technology (ICT) Special educational needs
13874	Mrs Jane Chesterfield	Lay Inspector	
16773	Mrs Raminder Arora	Team Inspector	English English as an additional language Design and technology Religious education
22272	Mrs Elisabeth de Lancey	Team Inspector	History Geography
8183	Ms Gill Keevil	Team Inspector	Mathematics Art and design Music Physical education.

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**William Davis Primary School provides a good education for its pupils and has many very good features.** It provides good value for money. Teaching and learning are good, which enables pupils to achieve very well and to attain standards which are broadly in line with those seen nationally and well above those of schools in similar circumstances. The leadership of the headteacher is very good and there is a strong emphasis on identifying areas for development and taking appropriate action to improve.

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

- The leadership and management of the school are good and the leadership of the headteacher is very good.
- Teaching and learning are good across the school.
- Pupils achieve very well, which means that when compared to similar schools, standards are high.
- The quality of provision for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language, is good.
- Children are given a very good start to their education in the Nursery and Reception classes.
- Although overall standards in English are broadly average, standards in writing are below average.
- The attitudes and behaviour of the pupils are very good; they are very keen and enthusiastic to learn.
- Pupils have too few opportunities to practise their speaking skills in subjects other than English.

The school has made good improvement since the last inspection in 1998. Overall, attainment has risen across the school. However, there have been particular improvements in the areas identified in the last report – information and communication technology (ICT), music and provision in the Foundation Stage<sup>1</sup>. The quality of teaching has significantly improved and teachers now plan very well for the needs of all pupils, including higher-attaining ones. Attendance has greatly improved.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*Key: A\* – very high; A – well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average. Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.*

**Achievement is very good overall.** The attainment of pupils when they first enter the school is very low. Test results show that standards in Year 6 are broadly in line with those found nationally, although they are high when compared with schools whose standards of attainment were similar at the end of Year 2. Inspection evidence confirms that overall standards at the end of Year 6 are in line with those expected nationally. Standards in mathematics are well above those expected, whilst standards in English and science are in line with expectations. However, although standards in English are in line with expectations overall, standards in writing are slightly below those expected. In addition, pupils have insufficient opportunities to practise their speaking skills across the curriculum which means their oral communication is not always as clear as it could be. Children in the Nursery

<sup>1</sup> The Foundation Stage consists of the Nursery and Reception classes.

and Reception classes make a good start to their education and achieve very well, but most will not achieve the goals expected nationally<sup>2</sup> by the time they enter Year 1. In Years 1 and 2, standards are well below those expected in writing, and are in line with those expected in reading and mathematics. English is an additional language for most of the pupils in the school and they achieve very well, as do pupils with special educational needs and those who are gifted or talented. This is because they are given suitable work which matches their needs and capabilities.

**Pupils' personal qualities and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good.**

Pupils' attitudes towards their work are very good. They are eager to learn and very attentive in class. Behaviour in and around the school is very good. Pupils are very polite and have good relationships with each other and with the adults they meet at school. Pupils' ethnic differences are celebrated and valued and they are prepared well for life in an ethnically diverse society. Attendance and punctuality are good.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The school provides its pupils with a good quality of education. Teaching is good throughout the school.** Children in the Nursery and Reception classes learn well because the teachers have assessed their particular needs and take action to ensure they are met. In Years 1 and 2, pupils learn and achieve well because they are enthusiastic and eagerly respond to the challenges that are presented to them. Pupils learn effectively in Years 3 to 6 because work is challenging and well matched to their needs. Pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language achieve very well because they receive good support from very well trained classroom assistants.

The school provides a good, broad curriculum. It is supported by a good range of extra-curricular activities which further enrich pupils' learning. The accommodation and resources are good and very well used, but the playground space is very small, which limits the opportunities for pupils to practise their skills in physical education. The school takes good care of its pupils. The school has good relationships with parents and good relationships with the local community.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Leadership and management are good overall.** The headteacher provides very good leadership. She has high expectations of what the school can achieve and a very good understanding of the areas where improvement is necessary. The headteacher and deputy provide very clear direction for the school. Governors challenge the school effectively and fulfil their statutory duties. Financial management is good and spending is suitably focused on actions taken to raise standards. Subject leaders manage their subjects well. They monitor their subjects well and have a very good overview of strengths and areas which require further improvement. Overall, there is very good commitment from the whole school team to ongoing review and development.

## **PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

The parents are pleased with the school and with the information they receive. They greatly appreciate the support that the school provides for their children. The pupils enjoy school. They told inspectors that they liked school, enjoyed lessons and valued the support they receive from teachers.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

**The most important things the school should do to improve are:**

- Increase the speaking opportunities for pupils in all subjects across the curriculum.

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<sup>2</sup> The Early Learning Goals refer to the six areas of learning covered in the Foundation Stage (Reception classes). These are: personal, social and emotional development, language, literacy and communication, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development.

- Increase the clarity of pupils' writing by focusing on correct sentence construction and spelling.

## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

#### Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Overall, achievement is very good. Standards in national tests have been sustained at well above the average for schools in similar circumstances, for a number of years.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is very good for all pupils because of the good teaching throughout the school.
- Standards in mathematics were above average and those in English and science were average, when compared to those of schools nationally, in the 2003 tests.
- Inspection evidence and work examined showed that standards in writing are below those expected and pupils have too few opportunities to practise their speaking skills in lessons other than English and guided reading.
- Children in the Reception and Nursery classes achieve very well overall.
- Pupils with English as an additional language achieve very well.

#### Commentary

1. Standards attained by pupils at William Davis are well in line with the national average and the pupils achieve very well. Documentation shows that the trend in improvement is above that seen nationally at the end of Year 6. Results fluctuate from year to year because the number of pupils taking the tests is comparatively low and each pupil represents more than five percentage points. When pupils enter the school in the Nursery, standards of attainment are at a very low level. The attainment of pupils who enter the school at a later stage in their learning – of which there are a considerable number – is also invariably low. The school sets challenging targets for its own future development. The targets set for last summer were exceeded in both English and mathematics. The percentage of pupils achieving the higher Level 5 exceeded expectations in both subjects. Targets for results this year have been set, based on the achievement to date of the current group of Year 6 pupils. Targets have been raised in English and lowered slightly in mathematics and are very challenging. In particular, the percentage of pupils expected to reach the higher Level 5 has been significantly increased across both subjects. However, with the consistently good teaching the pupils receive and the level of achievement identified, the targets should be attainable.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	24.6 (28.9)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	28.4 (28.3)	26.8 (26.7)
science	28.8 (31.1)	28.6 (28.3)

*There were 17 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

2. By the end of Year 6, the pupils successfully attain the nationally expected standards in the core subjects of English and science, and well above expected standards in mathematics because of good teaching. There is consistent and regular assessment and tracking of pupils' achievement. Good systems enable staff to monitor closely the progress of the pupils in their class and to compare performance and achievement because of the consistent way in which records are kept. This has a positive effect on standards because teachers ensure that pupils' needs are met. In the analysis undertaken after the 2003 tests, the school identified that writing was a particular problem in English. As a result, the school has introduced a system whereby all pupils have an intensive session every day, learning all the letter sounds and

blends to enable them to become more able to write fluently and spell correctly. Work examined showed that writing is improving. Pupils are not always given sufficient opportunities to practise their speaking skills in all subjects which means that, orally, pupils are not always as fluent as they might be.

3. Children enter the Nursery with very low attainment, particularly in linguistic and social skills. They achieve very well in both the Nursery and Reception classes, particularly in the areas of personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, numeracy, and knowledge and understanding of the world. The use of bilingual assistants is of particular benefit and enables children to settle quickly when they first start school. Careful ongoing assessments ensure that tasks set are clearly matched to each child's capabilities and the support provided by all the classroom assistants and nursery nurses is of high quality. However, although the children achieve very well, few will reach the expected goals for their age by the time they move into Year 1.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	13.6 (14.7)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	13.0 (13.5)	14.6 (15.8)
mathematics	16.3 (16.9)	16.3 (16.5)

*There were 29 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

4. The results of tests and assessments at the end of Year 2 are affected by the numbers of pupils with English as an additional language or with special educational needs. The 2003 test results were well below average in reading and writing and average in mathematics and science. When compared to those of pupils in similar schools, the results are above average in reading and writing, well above average in science and in the top five per cent of schools for mathematics. Inspection evidence reflects the standards in last summer's tests. The main reason for the good progress made by pupils is that lessons are well structured and pupils achieve well because each lesson builds carefully on the one before, and on the learning gained by each pupil. Standards in speaking and listening, and reading and writing are all well below expectations because pupils have not yet mastered the vagaries of the English language. In mathematics, the curriculum is varied and covers all the required areas thoroughly. Pupils are encouraged to solve problems, and their independent learning skills are well developed through opportunities to confer with their peers. Standards in science are in line with expectations. The curriculum for younger pupils is firmly built around investigative work and, from an early stage, pupils learn to set up experiments and devise fair tests.
5. Standards in the foundation subjects<sup>3</sup> are all at least in line with those expected nationally. There has been considerable improvement in the provision for ICT and music. Pupils have acquired a good level of skills and understanding in both subjects, and have good opportunities to apply these skills. In ICT, pupils have good opportunities to apply their skills across the curriculum. The school meets the national expectations for religious education as the local syllabus is being revised.
6. Pupils with English as an additional language (EAL) attain standards that are comparable to, and often better than, their indigenous peers. The school's tracking shows that they make good, and often very good, progress and that their achievements over time are very good. Pupils at the early stages of learning English achieve well as a result of mentoring and bilingual support. Nationally approved guidance is effectively used by the teachers to target needs of pupils new to English. Progress of more proficient pupils is sometimes restricted due to insufficient planned opportunities for speaking at length in subjects other than English or guided reading. Pupils do not always write with clarity, or use adventurous vocabulary or correct sentence structures. These shortcomings become apparent when greater demands are made

<sup>3</sup> The foundation subjects are: art and design, design and technology, geography, history, ICT, music, physical education.

on pupils' use of language. However, pupils acquire enough basic language to communicate effectively in class and to access the curriculum.

7. Pupils with special educational needs achieve very well overall because work is generally well matched to their needs. Pupils who have been identified by the school as being especially gifted or talented in particular areas of the curriculum are provided with tasks which appropriately challenge them, enabling them to achieve well.

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

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Attendance and punctuality are good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good.
- The mentoring programme makes a significant contribution to pupils' personal development.
- Relationships between all members of the school are very good.
- Attendance has improved significantly and is above average.
- There are no formal procedures for logging incidents of unsatisfactory behaviour.

### **Commentary**

8. Pupils' personal development was a strong feature at the time of the last inspection. This strength has been maintained and further developed. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good. They are keen to come to school and take a very active part in all that the school offers them. There is good attendance at the school clubs and the school rightly ensures that pupils understand the importance of making a commitment to an activity and attending regularly. In all lessons, behaviour is good and often very good. At break-times, pupils show that they can take responsibility for their own behaviour, and the way that they play in the well designed and resourced, but limited, playground space is exemplary. Relationships between all members of the school are very good and built on a strong ethos of trust and respect. In lessons, there is high level of co-operation between pupils when they work with partners or in groups. The school has very good procedures for addressing issues of bullying, harassment and racism and parents are confident that they school would address these issues effectively. There is a high degree of harmony within the school and children and adults alike feel safe. The school now has a behaviour policy and code of conduct which it did not have at the last inspection but there are no formal procedures for logging incidents of poor behaviour. This is an important area for development as it will enable the school to track the patterns of behaviour of individual pupils more easily.
9. Although there are no formal procedures, such as a school council or use of questionnaires, to consult with pupils, adults listen well to pupils' views, particularly in lessons and through the school mentoring programme. The school has canvassed pupils' opinions on a number of issues such as the selection of resources. Where they are given responsibilities, such as helping at dinner times, pupils respond well.

## Exclusions

10. There have been four exclusions from the school in the past year. None of the exclusions has been permanent.

### *Ethnic background of pupils*

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White - British
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British - Bangladeshi
Black or Black British - Caribbean
Black or Black British - African
Black or Black British - any other Black background
Chinese
Any other ethnic group

### *Exclusions in the last school year*

Number of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
24	0	0
1	0	0
1	0	0
3	0	0
126	3	0
5	0	0
19	1	0
4	0	0
2	0	0
5	0	0

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

## Attendance

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

Authorised absence	
School data	4.4
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.5
National data	0.4

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

11. Pupils' attendance is above the national average and has improved significantly since the last inspection when it was judged to be below average. This is because the school has implemented a number of strategies to improve attendance. Firstly, it has taken a very firm line on not authorising holidays or absence other than for medical reasons during term times; this also explains why the unauthorised absence is a little higher than is found nationally. Secondly, there are very effective administrative procedures for following up absence on the first day that a pupil is absent. The majority of pupils arrive punctually at school and punctuality throughout the school day is very good. There are, however, a small but significant number of pupils who arrive late. The school is working with the families to address this.
12. Pupils' personal development is good and the school promotes spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. The mentoring programme is a successful innovation of which the school is justifiably very proud and it makes a significant contribution to the personal development of pupils. The programme is well thought out and planned and dovetails effectively with the overall personal, social and health education curriculum. All adults who act as mentors are appropriately trained. Through this programme, pupils develop their self-esteem and confidence. They are learning to express their views and beliefs and to respect the views and beliefs of others. School assemblies make a positive contribution to pupils' spiritual development. For example, during the inspection, the pupils reflected well on the themes of 'making choices' and 'following others'. Their thoughtful responses showed that even the youngest pupils could respect and see the best in others. The quiet reflections and

enthusiastic singing achieved a real sense of collective worship in this multi-faith school. Pupils show their care and concern for others in a number of ways and, in particular, have raised money for charities through the events of the special curriculum weeks called 'I Can' weeks. These weeks also provide a good range of opportunities to develop pupils' cultural awareness. The diversity of cultural backgrounds represented in the school is drawn on to enrich pupils' multi-cultural awareness and the school prepares its pupils very well for life in a culturally diverse society.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is good. Teaching and learning are good overall and enable pupils to achieve very well. The curriculum is good and is well planned. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and monitoring their progress are good. Pupils are cared for very well and the school has a very good partnership with parents, other schools and the community.

### Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is good throughout the school. Assessment is good.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers' planning is very good.
- There has been a good improvement in the quality of teaching and learning since the last inspection.
- Pupils learn well together. They apply themselves very well to tasks and produce a good quality of work because teachers have high expectations of what can be achieved.
- Teaching for pupils who learn English as an additional language or who have special educational needs is good.
- The quality of support provided by classroom assistants is very good.

### Commentary

#### **Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 33 lessons**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0 (0%)	7 (21%)	19 (58%)	7 (21%)	0 (0%)	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.*

13. In the teaching observed during the inspection, there were many strengths and very few weaknesses. Teachers have a good command of the subject areas and teach confidently across the full range. They ensure that pupils are challenged, develop good levels of knowledge, improve their skills and deepen their levels of understanding. Planning is very thorough, with clear objectives to indicate what is to be learnt by pupils. Teachers form very good relationships with pupils, show a high level of interest in their welfare and give praise and encouragement to spur pupils to higher levels of achievement. Effective teaching methods are used, such as good question-and-answer sessions during the introduction to lessons, which are an effective way of assessing how well pupils have learned in previous lessons. In the best lessons, the plenary sessions<sup>4</sup> are used not only to consolidate learning, but also to show pupils what they should do in preparation for the following lesson. Classes are always well managed and teachers insist on high standards of behaviour. There were few weaknesses in teaching. In some lessons, the opportunity was not always taken to ensure pupils expressed their views clearly and succinctly, with the result that pupils' speech was not consistently coherent. Occasionally, the pace of working was a little slow and the introduction over-long, so that pupils became fidgety. On a few occasions, tasks were not well matched to the complete

<sup>4</sup> Plenary session- the final part of the lesson, which is used to consolidate pupils' learning.

range of ability within the class. However, this does not detract from the overall positive picture of the quality of teaching and learning in the school.

14. The school has a good number of committed and knowledgeable support staff. They play a valuable role in addressing the particular learning needs of individual pupils or groups of pupils. The use of bilingual staff to support pupils learning English as an additional language is of particular benefit. All support is in the classroom. Where teaching is good and a range of teaching methods are used, pupils achieve very well. Pupils cope well with the demands of English as well as with the other subjects. They are given opportunities for developing their language in context, for example when teachers focus on subject specific vocabulary in lessons. In lessons, where teachers' planning takes account of their needs and the tasks are well matched, pupils learn well. Pupils are assessed for their competency in the spoken language, reading and writing, and placed on one of the appropriate stages of English language learning. Most teachers are aware of the full range of language needs of the identified pupils and make good use of interesting and appropriate resources. Extra support from the classroom assistant is good.
15. Lower-attaining pupils and those who have individual education plans are well supported by teaching assistants. Steps in learning are carefully identified and teachers and teaching assistants match work to the needs of these pupils. Pupils who have been identified as gifted or talented are well provided for and are given additional tasks and problems to solve in the areas in which they are particularly proficient. For the daily sessions working on the new English programme, pupils throughout the school work with pupils at a similar level, which means, in some cases, pupils working with those from a different year group. This system works well and is monitored carefully for its effectiveness.
16. There has been a good level of improvement since the last inspection, when the quality of teaching was judged to be satisfactory overall. Specific weaknesses were identified in music, because of a lack of knowledge in the subject. The school has addressed this by employing a part-time music specialist who teaches with the class teacher. This is highly successful – the pupils benefit from high quality, vibrant teaching and the class teacher benefits from observing good music teaching. In ICT, the quality of equipment has been improved and teachers teach confidently.
17. Comprehensive monitoring of teaching and learning appears to have made the most significant impact on the quality of teachers' work. There is a regular programme of observations undertaken by the headteacher and her deputy, using a system agreed with the staff, covering set criteria. Staff are given details of the successful elements of their practice and clear guidance on areas for further development. Pupils' work is also reviewed regularly, with a specific focus on agreed areas, such as the quality of marking and presentation, the progress being made over time and the suitability of the match of work to pupils' needs. The headteacher's written comments to teachers are incisive and show a very good understanding of how teachers can improve the quality of their teaching.
18. Pupils' learning is enhanced by their own very positive attitudes to school. They collaborate well and form very good relationships with each other. This aspect was illustrated very well in a Year 5 science lesson when pupils worked enthusiastically and systematically in groups, making suggestions as to how they could set up an investigation to ascertain whether air was present in a range of substances. When questioned by the teacher, the pupils gave good reasons for their ideas. Pupils apply themselves well, present their work neatly and produce a good amount of work in the time available. This is because teachers have high expectations of what pupils are capable of achieving and ensure that everyone is included and does their best. A good quantity of homework is also completed by pupils.
19. Assessment procedures are good. There are examples of good assessment practice throughout the school. There is a good common approach between subjects and classes. The tracking of pupils' progress is regularly undertaken and information is easy to extract so

that it is easy to discern clear patterns as pupils move through the school. Marking is thorough and most teachers make valuable comments which help pupils to understand what they have to do to improve. Pupils have specific targets for improvement and many older pupils know exactly how their performance in English and mathematics can be improved. Assessment is used well to identify those pupils who might benefit from additional help.

## **The curriculum**

The curriculum is good. It meets all statutory requirements and is enriched by a good range of out-of-school activities. The accommodation and resources are good.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good provision is made for children in the Foundation Stage.
- There is good provision for pupils learning English as an additional language and for those who have special educational needs.
- Good links have been established between subjects.
- There is a good programme for pupils' personal development.
- There are good opportunities for additional activities, both during and out of school time.
- There are insufficient planned opportunities for speaking and writing at length other than in English lessons.
- There is insufficient outdoor space for games and sports.

## **Commentary**

20. Curricular planning across the school ensures that a broad range of activities and experiences is offered, covering all National Curriculum subjects. Religious education meets statutory requirements. The curriculum has improved since the previous inspection when weaknesses were identified in the provision for children under five, for music and for information and communication technology.
21. Teachers in the Nursery and Reception classes provide a range of interesting and challenging experiences suitably aimed at developing children's skills, knowledge and understanding in each area of learning, both indoors and outside. Bilingual support staff have a crucial role and, between them, are fluent in most of the main groups of languages spoken at home by the pupils. Joint planning between teaching and support staff is very successful. Across both these Foundation Stage classes, a really strong emphasis is placed on fostering children's language skills through whole-class and group discussions, practical activities and role-play, enhancing learning for all children, including those with special educational needs and the many learning English as an additional language.
22. Useful links across subjects have been made. A rolling programme of topics ensures appropriate provision for the mixed age-group class. Although a limited use of computers was seen in classrooms during the inspection, the well-equipped computer suite, regularly used by all classes, marks good improvement in provision. Some research work is also carried out, for example in the study of places of worship, thus extending pupils' understanding of the scope of information and communication technology.
23. Work is planned well for all pupils with special educational needs and for those still at a relatively early stage of English language acquisition to ensure they are included fully in all lessons. Support staff are deployed to very good effect to make sure all pupils with additional learning needs take a full part in planned work to the best of their ability. Planning ensures that targets for individuals are taken into account.

24. There is a good programme for personal, social, health and citizenship education planned for circle time<sup>5</sup>, as well as mentoring sessions. Each week during these times, teachers also plan opportunities to develop pupils' thinking and problem-solving skills. Issues linked to sex, relationships and drugs education are dealt with during science.
25. There is a good range of activities organised to enrich learning both in and out of lesson time. After-school and lunchtime clubs, such as those for various sports, dance, drama and gardening, are well attended and greatly enjoyed. The curricular provision is further enhanced with pupils participating in theme weeks, such as 'I Can Week' and 'Big Arts Week'. Pupils also enjoy the drama workshops and the sessions making music with musicians from the London Symphony Orchestra. They benefit from many opportunities to visit places of interest connected to class work. Year 4 pupils benefit from a residential visit each year.
26. There are enough teachers to meet curricular demands across the age-range and there is a good number of well-qualified support staff. All staff are suitably trained and equipped with skills in supporting pupils who are learning English as an additional language.
27. The accommodation is spacious, interesting and made attractive with landscaping. It is bright and in a good state of repair. The provision for physical education is affected by the lack of its own outdoor field for games and sports, although the school does have access to facilities some distance away. Good quality learning resources support curricular planning well and the library is well stocked with a wide variety of books.

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

Good attention is given to pupils' care, welfare, health and safety. They receive very good support and guidance. The school involves the pupils well in its decision-making processes.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school's good ethos revolves around developing pupils' self-belief.
- Staff identify pupils' needs and gear their teaching to meet them.
- High quality induction means pupils settle quickly whenever they join the school.
- Well-organised daily routines make pupils feel secure.
- Pupils know that their opinions matter.

### **Commentary**

28. The school values all pupils equally as individuals. All members of the school community show care and concern for each other. Support staff, midday supervisors and outside agencies work alongside teachers so that all adults working in school make significant contributions in raising pupils' self-esteem and encouraging independence. The school recognises that many pupils lack confidence in themselves and what they can achieve, especially if they are at the early stages of learning English, and it sets out to counter this. Group sessions for all the older pupils, with an adult mentor, help them to realise what they are good at, and to be positive about others as well. Whole-class discussion, in 'circle time', reinforces these messages and gives pupils a sense of the part they can play in the school and the wider community. Parental support is sought where needed.
29. Because assessment is good, teachers and teaching assistants are very aware of what support pupils should have in class. They bear in mind the needs of those who are new to English when they plan their lessons, using lots of visual aids and repetition of vocabulary, for example. However, staff also fully take into account the pupils who speak English as their first language, and make sure that their methods are well suited to these pupils too.

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<sup>5</sup> Circle time – time set aside for whole class discussion on particular issues such as bullying, PSHE, class and wider concerns.

30. Many pupils enter the school during the school year, but staff assess their capabilities quickly to ensure they fit in and get on with their learning. Induction for the children in the Nursery and Reception is very good. Carefully thought-out deployment of staff, involvement of parents and staggering of entry dates make this a painless process for most children. Similarly, new pupils further up the school are offered organised support from others who speak their home language where possible. As a result, new arrivals soon feel at home.
31. The school makes the most of its limited outdoor accommodation to make sure that break and lunchtime are positive experiences for all pupils. Any potential for unacceptable behaviour in the cramped outside area has been eliminated. The landscaping of the playground and planting out of bushes and flowers have created a haven for nature in the inner city surroundings, and pupils can enjoy the shade and the beauty of the plants around them. The range of playground equipment available for pupils is excellent, so everyone has something constructive to do. Teaching assistants look after pupils at break and at lunchtime, and this provides pupils with continuity all day, and means that they can always turn to someone they know.
32. Pupils feel that it is easy to let staff know their ideas, either in circle time or mentoring sessions, or at any other time.

### **Partnership with parents, other schools and the community**

Partnership with parents is very good. Links with the community are good and those with other schools are satisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school has succeeded in involving parents in their children's education.
- Staff are readily accessible and always happy to talk to parents.
- Information is available in community languages.
- The school offers a lot of useful support to its parent community.

### **Commentary**

33. The school has high expectations for its parents as well as its pupils, and its insistence on high standards achieves results. Through its regular communications, the school makes clear its expectations that parents will send their children to school regularly, and come and discuss their children's progress regularly with their teachers. It is emphatic that their children's education is a partnership between home and school. As a result, attendance is good and the school achieves a full turnout at parents' evenings.
34. One of the reasons for this success is that staff at all levels show a high level of commitment to the school and its pupils. They are readily available to parents and get on well with them. At the beginning of the day, for example, registration sessions are welcoming, relaxed occasions when parents can come in with their children to discuss their homework and change their reading books. Bilingual staff are often on hand if required to translate, particularly in the younger year groups. At the end of the day, all teachers come to the playground with their classes, so that parents can talk to them. The head and deputy know the families very well and try to be available whenever parents need to see them. Regular consultation with parents through the use of questionnaires is an established part of school life.
35. Written information to parents is helpful and welcoming. The weekly newsletters, for example, are very good. They encourage parents to get involved and celebrate their children's successes, and are provided in Bengali as well as English so that most parents can access them without difficulty. The prospectus, governors' annual report and termly curriculum sheets are also useful, though they are not translated into community languages as a matter of course. The school has a very good system for reporting to parents on their children's progress through its termly consultation and target-setting evenings. Written reports, although

satisfactory, are not to such a high standard. They tend to use jargon rather than everyday language, refer to National Curriculum levels without explanation, and contain limited information on subjects other than English, mathematics and science.

36. The school has set up a number of facilities which make life easier for its parents and for the local community. The breakfast club is particularly helpful for those parents who work outside the home, as it means they can drop their children off early. Local families who have pre-school children can come in to the toy library to meet other parents while their children play. Adult education classes take place each week and a parenting skills group has just begun. The school tries to provide for parents from all ethnic backgrounds. For those families who particularly need support in their home language, an advice worker visits twice a week and provides invaluable assistance about a range of issues, including education, health and benefits, in five different languages. This all serves to help parents to support their children with their education.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The leadership and management of the school are good overall. The governance of the school is good. The leadership of the headteacher is very good and the management of the school is good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The inspirational leadership of the headteacher motivates staff and pupils.
- The good leadership provided by other key staff has been maintained since the last inspection.
- The ethos of the school ensures that all pupils are valued and provided for.
- The school's policy for monitoring and evaluating its own performance is rigorous and effective.
- Governors know their school well, they provide good support and most are aware of the need to continue to challenge the school.
- The school's finances are well managed.

### **Commentary**

37. At the previous inspection, the leadership of the school was judged to be good, and its management effective. Since then, there have been many changes of staff and middle management but, because of astute appointments and the continuation of very secure leadership by the headteacher and her deputy, the leadership and management of the school are still good and the school maintains its good local reputation. The governance of the school has improved since the last inspection. Most of the governors take an active role, are well aware of their responsibilities, and appropriately and effectively challenge the school.
38. The headteacher, who has been in post a number of years, has an inspirational vision for the future direction of the school. Her vision builds on the strong aims and values of the school and the maintenance of high standards. All the staff are committed to an approach that involves the teaching of a broad curriculum which enables pupils to leave the school as well-rounded individuals. The school's policy for racial equality is monitored effectively by the school and governors. The school is not complacent in its approach and constantly challenges itself to do better. Careful monitoring is carried out to ensure all pupils are achieving their full potential. The school aims for the highest possible results. The school carries out regular and extensive self-evaluation and monitoring. This includes regular high quality observations of teaching and learning in all areas, mainly by the headteacher and her deputy. This identifies appropriate strengths and areas requiring improvement and has a positive impact on standards, as the consistently good results, compared with those of similar schools, show.

39. Subject leaders carry out their responsibilities well. They are conscientious and have a very good understanding of what their roles entail. Monitoring of planning, pupils' work, and classroom practice is carried out regularly. Good use is made of subject leaders' skills and, where these require updating or improving, training is provided to enable them to fulfil their roles as effectively as possible. As a result, they provide good quality advice to colleagues. The school welcomes input from other sources and involves various educational groups and visitors to help further improve its provision. It seizes every opportunity to apply for additional funding in order to help the pupils' learning.
40. The school's approach to strategic planning is strong. There is a detailed improvement plan, which emphasises the commitment to raising standards still further in all aspects of school life. Particularly good use is made of available information to evaluate the quality of the school's work. This includes results from national and other tests and regular classroom assessment, as well as the monitoring of teaching and analyses of pupils' work and of the outcomes of annual surveys of parents' views.
41. The governors are effective and fulfil their statutory duties. The impact of the governors on the school has improved considerably. Governors demonstrate a good understanding of the many strengths of the school, including its ethos. Governors talk about the importance of the partnership between the school and its immediate community of parents, advisers and friends. They feel that one of the reasons for the school's success is its consistency of approach. They believe that the proof of this is clear in the way the school's ethos is translated into practice in class, in the playground and throughout the school. They help to shape the overall direction of the school effectively, for example through contributing to and reviewing the improvement plan. In addition, some visit the school regularly in order to monitor the quality of the education provided and report back to the governing body. All governors are very supportive and most have a good understanding of their role as 'critical friends'.
42. The finance officer is very experienced and exercises highly effective day-to-day budgetary control. The financial planning is very well organised. The headteacher and members of the governing body use well the four principles of compare, challenge, consult, and compete to ensure that the school provides best value in its educational provision. All elements of the school's spending are evaluated to ensure that the most economic, effective and efficient quality of education and support is provided for the pupils in its charge. The financial information shows that the school is well funded and the figures presented below show a larger than usual carry-forward figure last year, resulting from relatively stable pupil numbers. This funding has already been allocated to appropriate projects and to cover the projected increase in staffing salaries. Although the school has a high level of funding in comparison to most other schools of a similar size, all spending decisions are carefully considered, the school continues to perform well and, consequently, still provides good value for money.

## Financial information

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

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	956,133
Total expenditure	807,769
Expenditure per pupil	5,113

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	11,000
Balance carried forward to the next	159,364

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

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

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is very good and has improved significantly since the last inspection. Children enter the Nursery with a low attainment in all areas of learning. They achieve very well in all areas although, when they leave Reception, children are still not reaching the expected standards. The children achieve very well because the curriculum is very well planned, and teaching is good in both classes. The very strong, enthusiastic leadership has created a very effective team, ensured that time is exceptionally well organised and built up an impressive range of resources to stimulate children's learning. Effective systems are in place to record children's achievements and information is regularly transferred to individual records so that overall progress can be monitored and individual learning carefully tracked. The large numbers of children learning English as an additional language make good progress because of the high quality support provided by bilingual staff.

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

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children achieve very well and become self-confident because of the very good organisation and daily routines, and adults' high expectations of good behaviour.
- Children with English as an additional language achieve well because of the high quality bilingual support which they receive.

### **Commentary**

43. When the children start in the Nursery, their personal, social and emotional skills are very limited. To help ensure a smooth transition from home to school, the entry of children into the Nursery is staggered over three weeks. This very careful organisation ensures that all the children have individual support, older children become good role models for the younger ones and daily routines are quickly established. Teaching is very good. The rich variety of activities provided in both the Nursery and Reception classes ensures children are purposefully employed and enables them to move confidently from task to task. Staff engage with the children very well, helping them to take turns and encouraging sharing. The way in which adults talk to and show respect for the children sets a very good example. Children make very good progress and by the time they move into Year 1, some will meet the standards required, although most will not. They are well-behaved, show appropriate levels of concentration and happily share toys and equipment.
44. A significant number of children start in the Nursery with very little understanding of English. Bilingual staff give very good support to most of these children by conversing in their home language and in English. This enables the children to understand what is expected of them, to follow routines and generally settle very well.

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teachers plan and organise activities well so that the children can practise and develop their speaking and listening skills.

- Adults' skilled interaction with the children ensures that they learn to reason and use language with increasing expertise.

### Commentary

45. When they first come into Nursery, many children have very few speaking skills and are not used to listening carefully. In both the Nursery and Reception, the very good organisation and breadth of stimulating activities provide plenty of opportunities for the children to speak and listen. For example, the dolls' house provides opportunities for the children to act out the story of 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears' using the dolls' house figures. The children learn effectively because they are expected to listen to adults and to each other, reinforcing social skills as well as learning how to communicate. Throughout the Foundation Stage, children learn to listen to stories with enjoyment and talk about what they have heard. The availability of a good range of books encourages children in Reception to begin to enjoy 'reading' by themselves, many choosing to sit and talk about the story with whoever will listen.
46. Teaching is good overall and children achieve well. Staff in the Nursery engage in meaningful conversations with the children whenever possible, in both English and Bengali, asking them open-ended questions which demand answers, not just a 'yes' or a 'no'. For instance, when changing their reading books, the children were encouraged to give reasons why they had enjoyed a particular part of the book. As they get older, children in Reception have further demands made on them. In an activity where the children were discussing the story of 'Rosie the Hen', the children were expected to be able to relate the sequence of events in the story correctly, using correct positional language, such as '*around the pond*', and '*over the haystack*'. By the time the children move into Year 1, they have made good progress but their attainment is still well below what is expected for their age.

## MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Strong emphasis is placed on developing children's mathematical language as an integral part of many other activities.
- Teachers use assessment well to ensure that tasks are appropriately matched to children's abilities and provide good challenge.

### Commentary

47. Adults working with the children reinforce counting skills whenever possible and number games are frequently used, making mathematical development fun. Children are encouraged to use their fingers for counting. In Reception, they are encouraged to use a variety of equipment, including number lines and real coins, to reinforce learning. Specifically planned group activities ensure that the breadth of mathematical development is covered and children learn well. In the Nursery, for example, children learn the names of triangles, rectangles and circles and have a 'shape of the week', as well as sorting mini-beasts into sets depending on the number of legs they have. Children in Reception learn to use money and have real coins to work with in order to find the right change from ten pence when shopping. To reinforce this learning, they shop in the 'Garden Centre' and work out simple sums to find out if they can afford specific items. Adults reinforce learning by questioning the children while engaged in a variety of tasks, constantly encouraging mathematical language and understanding.
48. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers make good assessments of children's progress. They carefully plan activities so that they reinforce and extend children's learning. Most of the children start in Nursery with very low mathematical skills and, although many can now count to seven, they often cannot match the words to the actual number of objects being counted. In

Reception, a group of children were being well challenged to count to ten using money, selecting the correct number of pence to pay for items. Good reinforcement of language was encouraged as the children discussed with the teacher who had the most, the least or the same number of pence. All children in Reception understand that money is used when they go shopping and are beginning to understand the value of money. For example, they understand that they can't buy many sweets for one penny but they can buy some for ten pence. Despite making good progress and achieving very well through the Foundation Stage, by the time they leave Reception, their attainment is still below the standard expected in mathematical development.

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

Provision for children's knowledge and understanding of the world is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The teachers' very good planning and organisation ensures that this wide area of learning is thoroughly covered.
- The opportunities provided for the children to talk about their own experiences and learn about other people's life-styles enable them to develop positive attitudes to people around them.

### **Commentary**

49. Good planning and teaching ensure that children enjoy a wide range of experiences which help them discover and understand about simple science, technology, history, geography and religious education. On starting in Nursery, the knowledge and understanding of most children are well below expectations. The richly-planned curriculum and good teaching means that children learn effectively and achieve well. By the time children move into Year 1, although they have made good progress, they are still not meeting the expected learning goals. In the Nursery, the children learning the story of 'The Very Hungry Caterpillar' were also learning more about mini-beasts, sorting them by numbers of legs and eyes, and building appropriate habitats for them in the sand. Children in Reception use the computer for creating their own pictures, and also have a weekly session in the computer suite where they are being systematically taught how to use the 'mouse' and how to access simple menus. There is good progression between the two classes. For example, children in the Nursery learn how to use a robotic toy and programme it to move forwards and backwards. In the Reception classes, they use a slightly more sophisticated toy to move in more directions.
50. From day one in the Nursery, the children are exposed to hearing at least two languages spoken, thus learning to accept and respect differences. Resources, including bilingual storybooks, reflect different cultures and backgrounds and children are encouraged to talk about and share their own cultural heritages.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision for physical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The provision of high quality resources means that there are good opportunities for learning.

### **Commentary**

51. When children start in the Nursery, their physical skills are generally well below what is expected for their age. During their time in the Foundation Stage, they make good progress because of the good teaching, high quality resources and good opportunities to use them.

Every day, children have the opportunity to practise using small items such as paintbrushes, scissors, jig-saw puzzles and small construction toys. This helps them develop control and hand-and-eye co-ordination. Opportunities are equally good for developing control when running and moving around. Daily outdoor sessions for all the children provide them with the chance to run and climb and to operate a very good range of wheeled toys such as tricycles, cars and scooters. Although pupils learn and achieve very well, they do not meet all the expected goals by the time they move into Year 1.

## CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

52. It is not possible to make an overall judgement on provision or teaching in **creative development** since too few sessions were observed. However, from planning and the work on display, it is evident that this is appropriately planned and pupils have opportunities for painting and experimenting with a range of modelling materials. In addition, the role-play area provided opportunities for pupils to use their imagination and play out situations. One very good music lesson was observed which had plenty of variety in the activities and very good interaction with the pupils. The pupils effectively learned how to clap out the number of beats in a variety of words and a song related to their min-beast topic because the teacher gave clear explanations, good opportunities for practice and had high expectations of the children's behaviour and attitudes.

## SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

### ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The test results in 2003 show a good improvement for Year 6 pupils, and standards in reading show an upwards trend for Year 2 pupils.
- There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to practise their speaking skills in subjects other than English.
- Pupils make good progress in writing from their very low start on entry, but there is insufficient focus on clarity in sentence construction.
- Teaching and learning are good. Teachers, assistants and mentors provide good support for pupils.
- The staff are skilled at teaching English to pupils who are learning it as an additional language.
- The leadership and management of the subject are good.

#### Commentary

53. Standards at the end of Year 6 in the 2003 national tests were broadly in line with the national average. Standards at the end of Year 2 were well below average. The school has taken positive action to boost reading and writing skills through the introduction of a structured session each day at the same time for all pupils in the school. For this, pupils are taught in ability groups and work is very carefully structured to meet the needs of each group and this, combined with good teaching, has done much to raise pupils' achievements.
54. Inspection evidence shows that standards have improved significantly since the last inspection. Pupils' attainment is well below that expected at the end of Year 2 and is in line with expectations at the end of Year 6. Given their low attainment when they join the school, pupils achieve very well. Although standards have improved over time, test results fluctuate from year to year. This is because of the high number of pupils who move in and out of the school during the year. This potential barrier to learning is overcome through good quality lesson-planning which highlights how the needs of all pupils will be met. Pupils' work is assessed rigorously in

order to plan the next steps in learning. As a result, pupils, including those with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language, do very well relative to their attainment when they entered the school.

55. Standards in speaking are well below those expected for Year 2 and broadly in line with expectations at the end of Year 6. Opportunities for speaking are insufficiently planned across all subjects and many pupils do not take a full part in whole-class discussions because they are limited by a restricted vocabulary. By the end of Year 2, a few pupils speak confidently and many remain quiet, or speak in single words and short phrases rather than whole sentences. There are too few opportunities to help pupils extend their vocabulary by repeating and explaining unfamiliar words. Where teaching is better, teachers use interesting activities that promote speaking and listening and give opportunities for pupils to report back. By Year 6, pupils are more aware of the appropriateness of a formal vocabulary and when to use it. Their vocabulary has increased and their speech is more fluent. However, teachers take too few opportunities to urge pupils to speak at length and to initiate ideas, especially where questions sometimes require more detailed responses and a need to substantiate opinions with examples or reasons.
56. Teachers pay close attention to the development of reading and writing. Standards in reading are in line with those expected for Year 2 and above expectations for Year 6 pupils. Pupils are regularly heard reading at school. By the end of Year 2, pupils demonstrate a good grasp of basic reading skills, and use these successfully to help them to improve their reading. Year 6 pupils read fluently and expressively. Pupils are encouraged in their enjoyment of reading by the teaching strategies which are used and which enable pupils to achieve very well. In all classes, pupils' progress is supported by well-planned group and individual reading. Teachers ensure that pupils have access to a good range of authors and literature. Many lower-attaining pupils read competently but some find it difficult to predict what might happen next. The guided reading sessions are well structured to support pupils' achievements in reading. A very methodical approach, using a commercial programme, further develops pupils' understanding and offers them suitable strategies to approach words which they find difficult. Most pupils' research and information-seeking skills are suitably developed.
57. Standards in writing are lower than those in reading and well below expectations at the end of Year 2, and slightly below the expected standards at the end of Year 6. From an early age, pupils are encouraged to write for a range of purposes. Year 2 pupils write short pieces or single sentences, although a few are still striving to express themselves clearly in writing. In one lesson, they made good attempts to write their own ideas independently, inspired by the story of 'George and the Dragon'. Pupils' knowledge and correct use of punctuation increase as they move through the school. By Year 6, pupils write for a variety of audiences, and some are beginning to show an adventurous use of vocabulary in their work. One pupil playing with words in a poem, wrote, '*sweet wind sighing*' and '*a sunbeam on a rainbow*'. However, much of pupils' writing shows a lack of clarity and weak sentence construction. Handwriting through the school is neat, but pupils only write in pencil. Spelling is developed steadily, from sounding out simple words to the understanding of regular patterns in more complex vocabulary.
58. The classroom assistants are very well focused when working with their groups. Pupils benefit from close support and from the way work is geared to their needs. In a Year 1 lesson, for example, pupils were effectively helped in writing short captions for their digital pictures by the words displayed on the wall. About a third managed independently, including many bilingual learners.
59. The quality of teaching is good overall. The most noticeable feature of the best lessons is the way that teachers raise pupils' achievement in understanding and using descriptive language to improve writing. Teachers are skilful in teaching the basic skills of English to enable pupils to make good progress. A strength of the teaching is the strategies used, which motivate and interest the pupils. It helps them to become more independent, but ensures that they build on their skills and knowledge well. Good discussion in a Year 6 lesson helped pupils to

understand the essential elements of persuasive writing when devising arguments for and against allowing mobile phones in school. Teachers have good subject knowledge and this enables pupils to understand the purpose of what they are learning. Teachers make good use of assessment, thus ensuring that they carefully plan work that matches the needs of pupils of all abilities.

60. The leadership and management of English by the headteacher and her deputy is very good. Assessment in the subject is well established as key to planning teaching and learning activities, helping teachers to diagnose what has been successful and where individuals may need further support. Resources are very good.

### **Language and literacy across the curriculum**

61. Opportunities to promote literacy through topics in other subjects is satisfactory and used to enhance pupils' writing skills, with the result that pupils develop some assurance in narrating accounts or expressing written views on a range of themes. There are some opportunities to use computers to record their poems and stories or to illustrate these with pictures collected from electronic files.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are above the expected level at the end of Year 6 and pupils' achievement is very good.
- Teaching and learning are good.
- A careful analysis of the 2003 test results enabled the school to identify which areas of mathematics needed to be improved.
- Pupils use and understand the correct technical language.

### **Commentary**

62. In the 2003 national tests for Year 6, a well-above-average percentage of pupils reached or exceeded the expected standard. In the tests for Year 2 pupils, the proportion of pupils who reached or exceeded the expected level was in line with the national average.
63. The school has worked hard to raise standards in mathematics and standards are now higher than they were at the last inspection. This is because the school has focused on the development of pupils' problem-solving skills and their understanding of shape and space, and good progress has been made in both areas.
64. In the work seen during the inspection, there is clear evidence that pupils in Years 1 and 2 make very good progress. They enter the school with very limited mathematical understanding but, by the end of Year 2, standards are in line with those expected nationally. By Year 2, pupils have a secure grasp of numbers up to 100 and many have a grasp beyond this. They can add and subtract and can multiply and divide by doubling and halving numbers. They measure using standard measures such as millilitres. They know how to use mathematics in everyday contexts, for example to tell the time, and use simple graphs like pictograms to find and record information. They have a good understanding of money and the most able pupils can record and add using a decimal point. As a result of the school's focus on problem-solving, they can use a good range of strategies to solve mathematical problems and are able to discuss their work with their peers and with their teacher.

65. Through Years 3 to 4, pupils continue to achieve well and earlier work is well consolidated so that they can use their knowledge to investigate number problems confidently. They use the correct mathematical language when investigating and solving problems. In Years 5 and 6, the pace of learning accelerates so that by the end of Year 6, they have made very good progress and standards are above those expected. They have developed good problem-solving skills. When solving problems, they confidently explain their methods and reasoning and test their results to check their answers. A number of pupils are attaining standards beyond the level expected for their age. Their work on shape and space is good and they are able to read and plot co-ordinates. They can draw and measure angles and calculate angles around a point. Pupils with special educational needs and pupils from ethnic minority groups, are well supported by teachers and teaching assistants and they achieve as well as their peers. Boys and girls are currently making similar progress.
66. Some use is made of computers in mathematics for devising and using spreadsheets and creating databases in order to create graphs. Literacy is well used in mathematics and pupils use and understand the correct technical language.
67. Teaching and learning are good. Most teachers are making very good use of the published scheme which is based on the National Numeracy Strategy. Teachers in all lessons have enabled pupils to develop a range of strategies for solving mathematical problems. The work is often interesting and stimulating. For example, in a Year 3 class where pupils were set the challenge of finding the most popular name in the school, there was a high level of co-operation and very good discussion between pupils. The quality of learning was good as pupils had to make decisions about what strategies to use and then apply what they already knew, and they did this successfully. In good lessons, teachers question pupils well and encourage them to think about their work. Other features of good teaching and learning are the clear explanations and demonstrations of what is required before pupils undertake tasks. For example, a Year 4 class were challenged to find out if statements were always, sometimes, or never true. The teacher worked an example with the whole class, building well from the initial statement by using discussion in pairs and then taking pupils' responses to work the example on the whiteboard. Teachers make good use of computer software to teach aspects of mathematics. Teachers are assessing and recording pupils' achievements well and are making use of this information to plan pupils' work.
68. The leadership and management are good as are the improvements since the last inspection. There has been a rigorous analysis of strengths and weaknesses in the subject and the school knows what it needs to do to improve further. The systems for tracking the progress of individual pupils are good for pupils in Years 3 to 6 but have yet to be developed in the same detail for pupils in Years 1 and 2. This information is not always sufficiently well analysed to set individual targets for pupils so that they have a clear understanding of what they need to do to improve.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

69. There are sound opportunities for pupils to use mathematics as part of their work in other subjects. The school involves the use of mathematics in a number of subject areas, for example in design and technology, where pupils have to make very careful and accurate measurements when constructing their models. In science, pupils in Year 5 constructed line graphs to show how the heart rate increases with exercise.

### **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **good**.

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

- There is a good focus on experimental and investigative skills.

- The subject is very well led and managed by the co-ordinator.
- The quality of teaching is good and enables pupils to learn effectively and achieve well.
- There is a very good and thorough coverage of the curriculum.

## Commentary

70. Standards in science have improved since the last inspection and are now in line with those expected nationally. The examination of pupils' work confirms this. Pupils make good progress in their learning and achieve well. This good achievement is because teaching is good. There is a good emphasis on the importance of matching work very closely to pupils' capabilities and, as a result, the tasks set for pupils in science lessons are challenging for all.
71. Throughout the school, the pupils are taught through first-hand experiences. During the inspection, Year 4 sorted a range of solids and liquids, discussing in pairs the criteria they could use for this activity. The discussion was thoughtful as pupils compared the properties of the substances they had, ultimately determining the difference between a solid and a liquid. In a Year 5 lesson on solids, liquids and gases, the focus was on how they could determine that the holes in a sponge did contain air and were not just a vacuum. This led to pupils devising an investigation to discover if air was also present in collections of other materials such as a container of sand or marbles. This work followed on very well from that covered two years previously. Pupils in Year 6 are taught each week at the local technical college. They follow the planned Year 6 curriculum, but have the advantage of more sophisticated resources and facilities. The quality of work is good and shows that the pupils make good progress during the year.
72. Pupils' independent learning skills are generally well developed. In science, pupils discuss well in their groups and make sensible predictions. In the lesson seen in Year 5, the emphasis on discussion enabled pupils to gain a greater understanding of what they were learning. As a result, pupils expressed themselves clearly when they wrote up the results of their investigations. However, in some lessons, this was not the case and pupils had too few opportunities to talk at length about what they were finding out.
73. The quality of teaching is good and some very good teaching was observed. Good lesson-planning ensures a clear structure to lessons, with a very good emphasis on the development of scientific vocabulary. A particular strength is the quality of teachers' questioning. Teachers ask for ideas and value pupils' responses. They take care to select resources which will interest and enliven pupils' learning and, although some work sheets are used, these are highly relevant and often carefully produced by the teacher to match the content of the lesson. For example, pupils in Year 2 had the task of sequencing the events in the life-cycle of a butterfly, using a specially-prepared worksheet. Tasks are well matched to pupils' capabilities. For example, in Year 5, higher-attaining pupils were challenged to devise an investigation independently while lower-attaining pupils were given several pointers and guidelines to help them. These pupils received appropriate help with their organisation and recording – but were not told the answers by their support staff. Pupils with English as an additional language received good support in this lesson because scientific terminology was carefully explained to them so that they could understand more clearly.
74. There is a very broad coverage of the curriculum as pupils move through the school and all areas are covered in depth. There is an emphasis on investigation and experimentation. Each half-termly topic is explored very thoroughly. In pupils' work, it is possible to trace how their knowledge is extended as they move through the school. For example, pupils in the lower juniors label the parts of a plant and identify the main functions of the roots, stem, petals and sepals. In the upper juniors, they produce a detailed annotated diagram of a plant, showing the names and functions of the parts of the flower, for example the stigma, style, anther and filament.

75. Science is led and managed very well. The co-ordinator has carefully monitored pupils' learning and meticulously analysed and evaluated ongoing test results. This has enabled her to identify the actions needed to improve standards in the subject. For example, she identified the need to match work much more closely to pupils' capabilities. In addition, it was found that too little time was devoted to science. These were both useful and objective conclusions and these weaknesses have largely been redressed. In addition there has been a focus on developing pupils' investigative skills further and improving recording techniques so that a wider range of graphs and diagrams are used in order to extend pupils' experiences as far as possible. The co-ordinator has identified where teachers required, or wanted, further training to improve their confidence and ensured this has been undertaken. As a result, the quality of teaching has improved and pupils are being challenged more in class.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The recording of pupils' work is of a good standard.
- Resources are much improved and are now good.
- The planning for the use of information and communication technology across the curriculum is good.
- There are too few opportunities for pupils to use ICT regularly in the classroom.

### **Commentary**

76. Provision for ICT has improved considerably since the last inspection, when standards were below average because there was insufficient equipment available for pupils to use. However, there is clear evidence that standards by Year 2 and Year 6 are similar to those found in most schools. This is because teachers make good use of the very good resources in the computer suite to provide maximum opportunity for pupils to develop the necessary skills and confidence to meet the demands of the National Curriculum. The overall quality of teaching is good and consequently, pupils throughout the school are achieving well. Pupils with special educational needs and those in the early stages of learning English are supported well and make good progress.
77. All pupils have an ICT exercise book in which they record exactly what they have learned in each lesson. This is invaluable as it serves as a reference for future lessons and also acts as a very good means of assessing of what pupils have learned. In addition, useful additional assessments are carried out at the end of each unit, which enables pupils' individual progress to be tracked and their individual needs provided for.
78. There is comprehensive coverage of the curriculum. The shortfalls of the previous inspection have been rectified and pupils are competent at using and controlling devices such as robotic toys, and devising programs to control equipment. In Year 1, pupils can use the mouse to select and drag parts of a picture across the screen to make a face or animal and they also use a painting program to create their own pictures. Pupils in Year 4 have access to the Internet for research in order to discover more about Aboriginal art. By Year 6, most pupils are becoming increasingly aware of the wider uses of technology, for example in controlling traffic lights and car park barriers. They devised a simple program to regulate a zebra crossing. Higher-attaining pupils went on to write programs to turn lights on in a set order, then turning them all off together and, finally, setting a program to run constantly. This shows a good understanding above the expected level of attainment.
79. There has been good progress in the development of ICT, and the leadership and management are good. Teachers throughout the school are encouraged to make use of the good resources available to them, such as listening sets and the interactive whiteboard. Most

teachers are positive and adventurous in their use of technology, which has a positive impact on teaching and learning. The use of technology is included in the planning of most subjects although pupils do not always have enough opportunities to use computers in the classroom.

## **HUMANITIES**

80. During the inspection, only two lessons in history and no lessons in geography were observed. As a result, no overall judgements on provision can be made about these subjects. In both subjects, pupils' work, classroom displays and teachers' planning were examined.
81. In history, standards are likely to meet those expected by the end of Years 2 and 6 and pupils are achieving well across the school. This maintains the standards seen at the last inspection. In the two lessons observed in Years 1 and 2, the teaching was good. Pupils were excited by the planned activities and highly motivated to develop their skills. Pupils in Year 1, comparing seaside holidays today with those in Victorian times, enjoyed placing old and modern beach accessories appropriately in their attractively converted 'seaside' classroom and showed a good understanding of the differences. Pupils in Year 2 showed a sound awareness of the events leading up to the Great Fire of London and enjoyed a video showing their own dramatisation of the event. From the examination of pupils' work, it is evident that by the end of Year 6, pupils have a secure understanding of the passage of time and a sound factual grasp of the periods they have studied, such as the Tudors, the Victorians and the Second World War. They empathise well with the experiences of people living at different times, for example the predicament of the evacuees. They recognise the similarities and differences between civilisations such as the Aztecs and the Egyptians and show some understanding of the motives behind such events as the Viking invasions of Britain.
82. In geography, pupils develop sound mapping and geographical enquiry skills. Pupils in Year 1 draw plans of their classroom and record their routes to school. In Year 2, they undertake simple geographical investigations of the local area and mark their findings on a map. They enjoy exploring the similarities and differences between their locality and a seaside town like Margate. By the end of Year 5, pupils show sound progress in their recognition of the human and physical features of different places. They show a good understanding of how people have changed their environment and sensitively discuss the need to care for it.
83. Educational visits and residential trips make a good contribution to pupils' learning in these two subjects. The national guidance for schemes of work in history and geography is used to good effect to ensure that pupils follow a balanced curriculum.

## **Religious education**

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The respect for different faiths and beliefs underpins teaching and learning activities.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning about different religions.
- Standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are below national expectations.
- There is too little recorded work.

### **Commentary**

84. Pupils' achievements in the subject are satisfactory overall, although standards in religious education are generally below those identified by the national guidelines. This represents a decline since the last inspection when standards were generally in line with the requirements of the locally-agreed syllabus. The school is currently using national guidelines while the local syllabus is being revised. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and the many

for whom English is an additional language, made satisfactory progress in the few lessons observed. Pupils in Year 1 achieved well in a lesson based on their visit to the church. They were able to identify stoles of different colours and link these to the different occasions. The lesson made a good use of pupils' art and design skills in making 'stained glass' windows, using tissue paper.

85. A limited amount of written work was seen in most classes and pupils' use of their literacy skills is somewhat limited. However, one example of writing by a higher-attaining Year 5 pupil was excellent. This was an account of the pupils' own participation in the 'Holi' festival. She wrote, 'taking part in this traditional occasion, I felt like I belonged to India', and that, 'I thought the scene was winding fast forward, as everyone was running, knocking things over'.
86. Although weekly lessons are planned, pupils do not always study the required topics in sufficient detail, and, as a result, the standards are lower than expected. Pupils are able to understand and appreciate the value of considerate behaviour such as caring and helping. They acquire some knowledge of their own religion, and have some idea of how a divine being is worshipped in different ways by other faith communities. Their knowledge is largely confined to basic facts about festivals such as Eid, Christmas and Easter. They have not heard many stories from the Bible and are at the early stages of understanding the meaning of some religious symbols. Across the school, there are some opportunities to reinforce and consolidate their thoughts and understanding through pictorial and written work, and to independently research the topics studied.
87. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Religious education lessons teach pupils to show respect for the beliefs and values of others. Class discussions help pupils make simple comparisons between their own religious ceremonies and traditions. A good Year 2 lesson was based on the knowledge gained by viewing a video. Pupils were well supported in their understanding of various features of a mosque and a church, but found difficult to describe the differences between them. A Year 6 lesson clearly highlighted how Muslims use arts and architecture in their worship. Good use was made of the Internet to research the architecture of different mosques and this effectively enhanced pupils' learning about the ways of Islam. The lesson linked well with art and design. Most pupils show a positive willingness to learn about religions other than their own and share personal experiences. The pupils listen intently to discussions and begin to develop their own ideas about appropriate personal responses to right and wrong. The subject contributes well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
88. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and aware of strengths and weaknesses in the subject and the leadership and management of the subject is sound. There are appropriate arrangements for assessing pupils' performance at the end of each topic. Currently, monitoring of provision is not carried out often or regularly enough. As a result, the rigour and focus required to improve methods of teaching and learning are limited.

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

89. It is not possible to make a firm judgement about provision in art and design, design and technology, music and physical education as only a small number of lessons were seen in design and technology, music and physical education and no lessons were seen in art and design.
90. Because of time-tabling, only one lesson could be seen in **design and technology**. Teachers' plans were studied and a small amount of completed work was looked at. The design and technology scheme of work ensures that curricular requirements are met, with planning taking suitable account of skills, knowledge and understanding to be developed. The evidence shows that all aspects of design and technology are taught throughout the school. The work observed in one lesson was in line with expectations. In this lesson, Year 1 pupils worked on making hinges for a 'flap' or a 'pop-up' book. Pupils enjoyed opportunities for creative and practical

work in this lesson. The co-ordinator is aware of the need for teachers to plan for on-going evaluations of methods and ideas, and to encourage pupils to adapt designs as required. There are some examples of pupils evaluating the success of the finished products, such as motorised vehicles in Year 6. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic about raising the profile of the subject.

91. In **physical education**, two lessons were observed, one in Year 4 and one in the Year 5 and 6 class. Teaching and learning were good and pupils participated enthusiastically and sensibly, having due regard for the cramped conditions. Most games lessons take place indoors as the outdoor space is very limited and is not suitable for whole-class lessons. The school makes best use of the indoor hall spaces which are adequate for gymnastics and dance lessons, although they are cramped for larger classes in Year 5 and 6. In Year 4, pupils showed good control when hitting a ball with a short tennis racquet but the limited indoor space made it difficult to apply their skills into a game. By Year 6, pupils' attainment in gymnastics is satisfactory but with more challenge and better space, they could achieve higher standards. The school provides a good range of extra-curricular physical education and sport and, during the inspection, clubs such as salsa dancing and cricket were enthusiastically and well attended. The school makes good use of community providers to enhance its extra-curricular programme.
92. In **music**, three lessons were observed - one each in Years 1, 3 and 4. The standards in the Year 1 and 4 lessons were above the national expectation and in Year 3 were in line. Pupils' singing in assembly was of a good standard. There is evidence, therefore, to suggest that standards have improved significantly since the last inspection, when they were judged to be below the national expectation. Since the last inspection, the school has raised the profile of music in the school and now employs a specialist music teacher. Her work has contributed significantly to improvements in attainment. As well as ensuring good quality music teaching, she also provides a good training opportunity for class teachers who accompany their class to music lessons to support the teaching; this is a very positive feature. In all lessons observed, pupils were developing skills to enable them to compose and evaluate music effectively. In Years 3 and 4, they are working on the theme of the stories of Scheherazade and music of Rimsky-Korsakov. In Year 3, pupils expressed feelings well in their compositions and by Year 4, pupils are able to compose using triple time. The lessons for Year 4 are supported with a double bass player from the London Symphony Orchestra which really enhances the provision for music. In Year 1, pupils used simple graphic notation to play percussion instruments. The work was challenging and the pupils responded very well. The school provides a satisfactory range of extra-curricular music. There is a school choir which makes a good contribution to assemblies in supporting singing and, more recently, a recorder club which pupils attend enthusiastically and has the potential for reaching equally high standards.
93. In **art and design**, no lessons were observed but, from the displays around the school and the scrutiny of sketch books, pupils are given appropriate opportunities to develop their skills. Pupils are given opportunities to research, plan and evaluate their work. In addition, some useful links have been made with other subjects. For example, in religious education, pupils in Year 1 followed up a visit to a local church by designing their own stained glass windows, using appropriate materials. Younger pupils produced some self-portraits which demonstrate a growing awareness of the need for careful observation. Pupils have a chance to experiment with a range of techniques and media. They have successfully learned to print patterns in Years 2 and 4 and have used fabric for collage work in Year 1. An ICT painting program is well used to enable pupils to create their own pictures in the style of Mondrian whilst pupils in Year 4 use examples of Aboriginal art researched from the Internet to help them create their own pictures, using similar colours and symbolism.

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

Provision in personal, social and health education and citizenship is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' moral and social development.

### **Commentary**

94. The subject is treated as an important one in this school and specific lessons are timetabled appropriately. Many opportunities are taken to introduce concepts such as looking after oneself and citizenship in other lessons, and, overall, personal, social and health education does much to enhance pupils' personal development. Pupils have a good understanding of the ways to keep safe and healthy and this is well reinforced by visits from appropriate outside agencies, mentors and counsellors who visit the school. The school's mentoring programme is a very effective way of developing personal responsibility and self-esteem. Issues of drug use and abuse are also discussed during group mentoring sessions and these issues are then appropriately followed up in the classroom. Pupils have a good understanding about relationships and the problems faced by people in society. Pupils have made very good progress in developing an appreciation of personal, social and health issues since they started in the school, and there is appropriate assessment of their personal development to demonstrate this. Pupils enjoy the lessons because teachers plan carefully and deal with the subject matter sensitively. This subject is very beneficial in promoting pupils' speaking skills, as well as their thinking skills.

## 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>2</b>
Pupils' achievement	2

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

<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	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
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	2
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	3
The leadership of the headteacher	2
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).*