

INSPECTION REPORT

SEVEN MILLS PRIMARY SCHOOL

Isle of Dogs, London

LEA area: Tower Hamlets

Unique reference number: 100931

Headteacher: Mike Thurley

Lead inspector: Colin Henderson

Dates of inspection: 23rd – 26th February 2004

Inspection number: 257432

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:	230
School address:	Malabar Road Alpha Grove London
Postcode:	E14 8LY
Telephone number:	020 7987 2350
Fax number:	020 7538 3118
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr J Andrews
Date of previous inspection:	July 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Seven Mills Primary is an average-sized inner-city primary school that serves its local community. Most pupils come from mainly rented housing on the surrounding Barkantine Estate, an area of considerable economic and social deprivation. Sixty-two per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is very high compared with the national average. Over 50 per cent of pupils are of Bangladeshi ethnic background and 34 per cent are of white, United Kingdom ethnic background. There are small numbers of pupils from other ethnic minority groups. One hundred and fifty two pupils receive additional support to develop their English language skills. This is well above the national average. Attainment on entry to the nursery is very poor. Nearly 20 per cent of pupils have special educational needs, which is above average. They have a wide range of educational, emotional, communication and sensory needs. The school has benefited from a recent New Build project, including an on-site nursery and new computer and library facilities, although delays in the project restricted some aspects of school development. There has been a large turnover of staff in the last two years, and schools in the area have some difficulties in recruiting and retaining experienced teachers. Seven Mills School was part of the Isle of Dogs Action Zone, which is now part of the Excellence in Cities initiative. This improved resources and links with other local schools. The school has established very good links with local community organisations, including large businesses, and these have extended the range of learning activities and pupil support strategies. The school runs an extensive out-of-hours learning programme and operates the Passport to Learning scheme for parents and support staff.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
23742	Colin Henderson	Lead inspector	Mathematics; information and communication technology; geography; history; physical education
9173	Sarah McDermott	Lay inspector	
22058	Christine Richardson	Team inspector	Science; art and design; design and technology; Foundation Stage; special educational needs
30573	Sonia Bosworth	Team inspector	English; music; religious education; citizenship
7420	Ann Simpson	Team inspector	English as an additional language

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	8
Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	12
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	17
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS	19
AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE	
SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	32

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The overall effectiveness of Seven Mills Primary School is **good**.

It is a friendly, caring and harmonious school that promotes excellent relationships. It encourages pupils to behave very well and have very good attitudes to their work. The school serves its community very well. It provides a **good** quality of education with good teaching, good management and very good leadership. A good staff team and supportive governing body work well together to ensure that all pupils are included fully and achieve well. The school gives **satisfactory** value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Pupils make good progress in their learning.
- Provision for pupils with English as an additional language is good. It is excellent in the Foundation Stage.
- The leadership of the headteacher is very good.
- Teaching is good, especially in the Foundation Stage and in Years 2, 5 and 6, and promotes good learning.
- Teachers do not use information about pupils' progress consistently in each class to meet their learning needs and target improvement.
- Pupils' writing skills are not promoted consistently in other subjects.

The school has made satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. It has improved the Foundation Stage, the provision for pupils with special educational needs and levels of attendance. It has maintained the good quality of teaching and standards of attainment. Some teachers still do not use assessment information consistently to inform their teaching. The contributions of support staff are not established consistently in each class. Some requirements over information for parents are still not met.

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	E	E	E
Mathematics	B	E	E	D
Science	D	E*	E*	E*

Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average; E - bottom 5 per cent nationally. Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2*

Standards are improving. Year 6 pupils attain **average** standards in mathematics, science and information and communication technology. They attain **below average** standards in English. Pupils' achievement is **good**. Most children enter the nursery with poor attainment, especially in their English language skills. They make **very good** progress in the Foundation Stage, particularly those for whom English is an additional language who make excellent progress. Most achieve their expected learning goals in creative and personal development by the end of reception year. Infant pupils achieve well overall, promoted by good teaching in Year 2. Junior pupils achieve well, particularly in Years 5 and 6, although inconsistencies in teachers' expectations limit achievement in some classes. Those with English as an additional language achieve well and most Year 6 pupils from ethnic minorities attain nationally expected standards. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards their learning targets. Standards in art and design and physical education are above nationally expected levels. Pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding in religious education, geography and history are not developed satisfactorily.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are **very good**. Attitudes and behaviour are very good. Attendance is satisfactory. Punctuality is good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is **good**. Teaching is **good** overall. It is very good in the Foundation Stage and consistently good in Years 2, 5 and 6. Teachers' expectations are not as consistently high in other years. The school provides **very good** care, support and guidance. The curriculum is **very good** for the Foundation Stage and **good** for Years 1 to 6. It is enriched very well by the very good range of clubs and out-of-school activities. Links with parents are **good**. There are **very good** links with the local community that enhance pupils' learning very well.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership of the headteacher is **very good** and focused strongly on school improvement. He is supported well by an influential deputy, a good staff team and supportive governors. The management is **good**. Key subject co-ordinators manage their subjects well and target areas for improvement successfully. The roles and contributions of some other subject co-ordinators are not fully established. Governance is **satisfactory**. A core group of governors works closely with the headteacher and staff to evaluate the education provided, manage inclusion well and target improvement, particularly on improving the building. The governors' monitoring of the curriculum is not established fully, although it is planned for further development.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

A large majority of parents are very supportive of the school. Parents in over 90 per cent of the questionnaires showed that their children liked school, were well informed about their progress and were comfortable about approaching the school. They valued the good quality of teaching, leadership and management and the good use of homework. A small number of parents expressed concern about bullying. Inspectors found that the school used good procedures to manage any bullying incidents very effectively and reinforce very good standards of behaviour.

Pupils have similar positive views of the school. These were clearly reflected in the pupils' questionnaires and in discussions with inspectors. Almost all indicated that they enjoyed school and over 90 per cent of questionnaires showed that other children are friendly, teachers are fair and that there is an adult they could go to if worried. Many valued the good range of out-of-school activities. Inspectors agree that this is a friendly, caring school in which relationships are excellent.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- ensure that teachers use information consistently on how well pupils are doing to match learning activities to the range of different needs and to extend the use of pupil targets;
- increase the opportunities for pupils to apply their writing skills in a broad range of subjects;
- improve pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding in geography, history and religious education;

and, to meet statutory requirements:

- increase the information provided to parents in the prospectus and governors' annual report.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Pupils attain **average** standards by the end of Year 6 in mathematics and science. They are **below average** in English. Pupils attain **below average** standards by the end of Year 2. Achievement is **very good** in the Foundation Stage. It is **good** for infant and junior pupils.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children with English as an additional language make excellent progress in the Foundation Stage and good progress overall throughout the school.
- Children in the Foundation Stage make very good progress in all areas of learning.
- Pupils achieve well in Years 2, 5 and 6, promoted by consistently good teaching.
- Pupils achieve satisfactorily overall in other years, although some teachers' expectations are not always high enough.
- Standards in art and design and physical education are above expected levels.
- Pupils attain standards in geography and history, and in religious education at Year 6, which are below the nationally expected levels.
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards their learning targets.

Commentary

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	13.9 (14.3)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	15.1 (12.8)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	15.8 (15.4)	16.3 (16.5)

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

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	23.5 (24.2)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	24.5 (24.4)	26.8 (26.7)
science	23.9 (23.8)	28.6 (28.3)

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

1. The results of the national tests for pupils in Year 6 over the last four years show that pupils attain standards that are well below the national average in English and science and below average in mathematics. They are below the average for similar schools in mathematics and are well below average in English and science. In the last school year, the Year 6 group of pupils was affected by frequent staff changes when they were in Years 3 and 5 and by the number of pupils who entered the year group during their last two years in the school. This was reflected in the 2003 test results that were well below the national average. The school did not achieve its challenging target of 70 per cent of pupils to attain the nationally expected Level 4. Inspection evidence shows that standards are improving in Year 6. The current group of pupils is on course to achieve the school's challenging target of 75 per cent of pupils to attain Level 4 in English and mathematics. The proportion of pupils who are likely to attain Level 5 is well below the national average, although they are likely to achieve the school's targets of 15 per

cent in English and 19 per cent in mathematics. This year group has benefited from consistently good quality teaching in Years 5 and 6 and from the school's effective use of support and extension strategies to raise standards. Inspection evidence shows that standards in science are improving and meet the national average at the end of Year 6. The very good use of a specialist support teacher is providing better scientific investigations and raising standards.

2. The results of the national tests for Year 2 pupils show that standards are improving. Up to 2002, the results show that standards were consistently well below the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. In 2003, results met the national average in writing, were below average in mathematics and were well below average in reading. They were well above the average of similar schools in writing and mathematics and average for reading. Inspection evidence confirms that standards have improved from well below the national average to below average. The current Year 2 has nearly 50 per cent of pupils with English as an additional language or with special educational needs. Good teaching, together with very effective support strategies, especially for pupils with English as an additional language, is raising standards.
3. Most children enter the nursery with poor attainment. A significant number of pupils, often up to 50 per cent, have very little or no English and come from homes where English is not spoken. By the end of the reception year, these pupils are speaking and understanding English at a level that is just below the nationally expected levels. They speak with confidence and clarity and have developed a degree of independence in their learning which gives them access to the whole curriculum. This represents excellent progress and achievement. The consistently high quality of teaching in the nursery and in the reception class enables all children to make very good progress in all six areas of learning. Most achieve their nationally expected levels in personal, social and emotional development and creative development. Many achieve the expected levels in the other areas of learning. This is very good achievement when compared with that predicted from the standards on entry.
4. Year 1 pupils achieve satisfactorily overall, although are not always expected to achieve as well as they should. Year 2 pupils continue to achieve well, supported by good teaching, and attain standards that are below the national average and similar to those at the last inspection. Junior pupils achieve well overall, with consistently good progress being made in Years 5 and 6. They attain average standards, similar to those at the last inspection. Standards in English are below average. Teachers do not promote pupils' writing skills enough in other subjects. They do not always use information on how well pupils are doing to match activities to the range of different learning needs and maintain consistently high enough expectations. This restricts achievement.
5. Pupils with English as an additional language make good progress throughout the school. It is often very good when the specialist co-ordinator provides very high quality support and guidance, particularly for infant pupils. By the end of Year 2, many are working at an average level in English and using their English skills to achieve well in other subjects. By the end of Year 6, they continue to achieve well, although the level of support is not as consistently high in some classes. Many pupils from a Bangladeshi background are attaining nationally expected standards and achieving higher than their monolingual peers. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the steps noted on their individual education plans. The school has improved the provision for pupils with special educational needs, especially the quality of the learning targets and the support programmes. These are promoting pupils' achievements. The school provides well for gifted and talented pupils and they make good progress in extending their skills.
6. Standards in art and design and physical education are above expected levels. The school makes very effective use of specialist teachers and coaches to promote high standards. Pupils make satisfactory progress in information and communication technology (ICT) and attain standards that meet nationally expected levels. Pupils' attainment in geography and history, and in religious education from Years 3 to 6, is below nationally expected levels. Pupils do not have enough time to develop their skills and knowledge effectively and teachers do not always ensure that their lessons build successfully on prior learning.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

The attitudes and behaviour of the pupils are **very good** as a result of the **very strong** promotion of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Attendance levels are **satisfactory** and punctuality is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Excellent relationships in the school underpin the harmony amongst pupils from many different backgrounds and cultures.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes to school life and learning.
- The school promotes the personal development of pupils very effectively.
- Attendance has improved dramatically.

Commentary

7. The school is a harmonious and welcoming community. Relationships, judged to be very good at the last inspection, are now excellent. Pupils with different cultural backgrounds and home languages get on extremely well together. Both in class and at play, pupils accept each other as individuals and race or gender is not an issue. Pupils work well together as 'talk partners' to discuss what they are learning and how they could do even better. The staff are excellent role models and show the pupils how to treat everyone fairly. Of particular note were the music lessons when pupils, whose home language is not English, were made to feel very special as the others learnt to sing simple tunes in their languages. A few parents were concerned about bullying. However, inspectors found no evidence of harassment and were impressed with the excellent relationships that give the pupils comfort and confidence to learn effectively.
8. Pupils enjoy coming to school, learning in class and taking part in the wide range of activities and clubs. They not only appreciate the after-school clubs, outings and visiting coaches but also spoke positively of mathematics lessons and the extra classes held before school to help them with their work. Behaviour throughout the school is very good. One boy was excluded last year. Pupils have plenty of activities during breaks, although a few pupils are not sufficiently encouraged by the lunchtime staff to become involved in games and social activities. Pupils are polite and courteous, greeting visitors cheerfully and lining up sensibly for lunch and assembly. The school councillors are proud of their role in helping to run the school and talked enthusiastically of their recycling project. Seven Mills is a stimulating place to which the pupils want to come, so learning is positive and achievement is good. The attitudes and behaviour of the pupils have become even better since the last inspection
9. The school is very successful in helping the pupils to grow up as sensible and caring members of society. There is a strong sense of respect for the feelings and values of others, although the inconsistent teaching of religious education detracts from a fuller understanding of each other's religions and beliefs. The reverence and quiet contemplation in assembly were impressive. Pupils are encouraged to believe in themselves and strive for the best, as demonstrated in the 'Wow! Look what we have achieved' display. Pupils are clear about what is right and wrong because they have a chance to discuss topical issues in personal, social and health education lessons and moral messages are strong in assemblies. Behaviour management is consistent and very effective. It emphasises the positive so pupils want to behave and to receive due praise and recognition. The promotion of social development is very good. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their learning and interact positively with their fellows. More able pupils support pupils with special educational needs well when they work together. The personal development of the nursery and reception children is remarkable as many arrive with no English language and very little experience of mixing with other children, yet move on confidently and very well settled in to Year 1. The pupils have a well-developed awareness of their school and the Isle of Dogs community and are learning the value of becoming involved in and contributing to community events. The school takes great pleasure in the cultural traditions of its pupils. It promotes cultural development very well not only through celebrating different

festivals and ways of life, but also by helping the pupils to experience a very good variety of art, dance and music. The overall provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development has improved since the last inspection.

Attendance

10. Attendance levels are similar to most primary schools. However, there has been impressive improvement over the last three years due to a concerted drive to discourage absence for inadequate reasons. The use of the home-school liaison workers has proved most effective, with prompt follow up of absences and with home visits to offer help and guidance to families who find it difficult to get their children to school. Most parents are realising the benefit of regular school attendance on their children's achievement. There is still a significant number who take their children out of school in term time for extended stays abroad.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	6.1%
National data	5.4%

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.8%
National data	0.4%

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

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – any other White background
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British – Indian
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani
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
No ethnic group recorded

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
78	2	1
6		
1		
2		
1		
117		
4		
4		
2		
9		
6		
6		

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is **good**.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are **good** overall. Teaching is very good in the Foundation Stage. It is good overall for junior and infant pupils, although there are inconsistencies in some teachers' expectations of pupils' work.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching in the Foundation Stage is consistently very good. It helps children to settle into the nursery quickly and happily and achieve very well.
- Teaching in Years 2, 5 and 6 is consistently good and enables pupils to make good progress in their learning.
- Teaching for the high proportion of pupils with English as an additional language is good overall. It is excellent in the Foundation Stage.
- There are examples of good teaching in all years, although some teachers do not have consistently high enough expectations of pupils' work.
- Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and attitudes to which they respond very well.
- Some teachers do not use consistently the information on how well pupils are doing to match activities to the range of learning needs and to tell pupils how to improve their work.
- Learning support staff are not always used effectively in each class to focus on improving pupils' learning.
- Teachers make very good use of homework to promote pupils' learning.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 51 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
4 (8%)	13 (25%)	23 (45%)	10 (20%)	1 (2%)	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

11. Teaching has been maintained at the good level reported in the last inspection. The high level of staff change has contributed well to maintaining the good quality. There were examples of good and often very good practice in each year group, with some excellent contributions from specialist physical education teachers and teachers for pupils with English as an additional language. This good quality reflected the positive views of most parents and pupils. Parents in 93 per cent of the questionnaires valued the quality of teaching. The consistently high quality of teaching in the nursery and reception class enables children to make a very good start to their schooling and to achieve very well.
12. All teachers maintain very good control of their classes and have excellent relationships with their pupils. Teachers expect high standards in pupils' behaviour and in their attitudes to work. Pupils respond very well. They sustain their interest and attention and are keen to succeed. Teaching was consistently good in Years 2, 5 and 6 and is a significant factor in raising pupils' attainment. Teachers in these classes challenge pupils consistently to apply and extend their skills and knowledge. This was clearly evident in an analysis of pupils' work and in the lessons observed. For example, teachers use good questioning skills in mathematics and science to require pupils to explain the strategy they use to solve a problem. They then challenge them to think of other ways in which the same problem could be solved. This requires pupils to apply

their knowledge and understanding and raise the standard of their work. Where teachers have good subject knowledge, for example in information and communication technology and physical education, they use it very effectively to improve the quality of pupils' work. Teachers use homework very effectively, particularly in the juniors, to support and extend the work in class. They encourage parents to get involved in their children's learning, and this is valued by parents – 91 per cent of the parents' questionnaires and many of the parents at the pre-inspection meeting indicated that teachers use homework well to promote their children's learning.

13. In the lessons observed, there were examples of good teaching in each year group. However, discussions with pupils and an analysis of their work show that teachers' expectations are not always high enough in some classes. There are significant variations in the quality and amount of work achieved in some classes. Teachers do not always tell pupils what they expect them to have achieved by the end of the lesson. Some do not maintain a sufficiently brisk enough pace to the activity. Although pupils' positive attitudes encourage them to maintain their attention, they do not always achieve as well as they should. The school has good procedures for assessing how well pupils are doing in English, mathematics and science. However, teachers do not use this information consistently to plan activities that match the range of different learning needs. Too often, in some classes, teachers use the same activity for all pupils. This results in more able pupils not being challenged enough or less able pupils achieving too little as they find the activity too difficult.
14. Teaching for pupils with English as an additional language is good overall. It is excellent in the Foundation Stage where specific teaching for individuals and small groups helps children to gain rapidly a basic mastery of the English language. They build on this successfully through well planned and stimulating experiences. The specialist teaching of the co-ordinator for pupils with English as an additional language is highly effective in making language meaningful and well targeted. He works very successfully with Foundation Stage staff to provide a clearly planned and well supported approach to enable children to make excellent progress in developing speaking skills. As infant and junior pupils' English language fluency increases, they are supported well in their learning of other subjects through the use of effective strategies, such as role play, paired question and answer activities and the making of taped radio plays. The co-ordinator works particularly effectively alongside some class teachers, using both English and the pupils' home language to ensure that all pupils are included fully and able to learn. Support for promoting pupils' English language skills in some other classes is not consistently effective. The activity is not always matched to these pupils' needs and teaching and support staff do not always provide effective guidance in developing language aspects. Support for beginner learners of English who arrive unexpectedly is good and well targeted. Assessment systems are excellent and ensure that the progress and achievement of all pupils are carefully tracked and that resources and support can be well deployed.
15. Many teachers use improvement targets for pupils to show what they need to focus on in literacy and numeracy. Some teachers put the targets in the front of pupils' work books. They refer to these targets regularly when marking pupils' work and indicate when targets have been met. This helps pupils to understand how well they are doing and to encourage them to look carefully at what they need to improve. However, the use of targets is not consistent enough to contribute sufficiently to raising standards. There is little evidence of each teacher reviewing pupils' progress towards their targets consistently or marking pupils' work constructively to indicate what progress has been made or what needs improvement. This does not encourage pupils to maintain a consistent focus on improving the standard of their work.
16. Teachers and learning support assistants plan very carefully for pupils with special educational needs but learning support staff are not always used effectively to promote pupils' learning. They use good individual education plans to show what pupils need to learn next and achievable steps are written into the planning. Pupils are grouped effectively according to their prior attainment in literacy and numeracy. Some pupils have good individual support in the

classroom as well as working in groups, although the quality is not consistently good in each class.

The curriculum

The school ensures there is a **good** range of learning opportunities within the curriculum to meet all needs and there is a very good range in the Foundation Stage. There are **very good** opportunities to widen pupils' experiences through extra-curricular activities and participation in an extensive range of sporting and artistic projects. The school's **very good** accommodation and **good** resources support pupils' learning well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good provision for all who learn English as an additional language enables these pupils to be included fully and to achieve well.
- An extensive range of stimulating and challenging activities in extra-curricular activities and in out-of-hours learning is matched very well to pupils' needs and increases their confidence and self-esteem.
- The provision for children in the Foundation Stage is very well planned to ensure that all the areas of learning are covered in an exciting and practical way.
- Planning is good in most subjects but in religious education, history and geography pupils do not always build effectively on prior learning.
- Provision for special educational needs is good but learning support assistants are not always used effectively to promote pupils' learning.

Commentary

17. Skilled staff, very good accommodation and learning resources contribute well to the challenging and interesting curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage. Planning is very clear and ensures that all areas of learning receive the right emphasis. There is a very good emphasis on practical activities and adults are quick to intervene to answer and stimulate questions. The practical bias is echoed in science lessons throughout the school, where the strong attention given to practical investigations helps pupils to understand their work as well as enjoy it.
18. The school is now using national subject guidance consistently to provide a good range of curriculum activities. Planning in most subjects is good, although in religious education, history and geography pupils do not build effectively on previous learning. Teachers plan good links between subjects, for example between literacy, science and design and technology in Year 4. Writing, however, is not consistently used in other subjects. The school is using improved resources for ICT to extend pupils' skills, although teachers do not plan to apply these skills consistently across the curriculum. The school recognises the different levels of attainment within classes and carefully plans specific groups to provide additional support for the gifted and talented and those who need additional support. The provision for pupils with English as an additional language is good. The co-ordinator provides very good support to these pupils to enable them to improve their English language skills rapidly. This enables them to be included well in curriculum activities. As their language skills improve, teachers work closely with the co-ordinator to use a good variety of strategies to improve their self-esteem and their confidence in contributing to learning activities.
19. The provision for special educational needs is well planned and pupils are included fully in lessons and school activities. Individual education plans have clear targets that all understand. These have improved significantly since the last inspection. Teachers plan carefully for support in the classroom and in groups but teaching assistants are not always used effectively to promote pupils' learning.
20. Innovative approaches to learning give pupils good access to interactive whiteboards to focus their interest and attention and very good use of out-of-school hours provision and educational

trips. These enhance pupils' learning very effectively and enable them to grow in confidence and self-esteem. Pupils in Year 6 learn French during the summer term and have a weekend trip to France. During the year, there is a successful lunchtime French Club when pupils learn basic vocabulary with French adults from the Canary Wharf business community. The advisory teacher in science and skilled physical education coaches and teachers of art have contributed very effectively to improved provision in these subjects. They work effectively with staff to help all pupils to be included and achieve well.

Care, guidance and support

Systems to ensure pupils' health, safety and welfare are **very good**. Procedures to monitor and support pupils' personal and academic development are **good**. The involvement of pupils in the school's work and development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have excellent and trusting relationships with at least one adult, who listens to them and consults with them effectively.
- There are very good procedures to ensure that pupils work in a healthy and safe environment.
- Pupils' progress is tracked well in literacy and numeracy and identifies those who could benefit from additional support.
- The school actively seeks pupils' views and acts upon them.

Commentary

21. The school is a caring community. Pupils are very well supported by the excellent relationships that exist between adults and pupils. They say that they like and trust adults in the school. Pupils' personal well-being is a priority of all members of staff and the home-school liaison worker provides good links between home and school. The school provides a very good range of well supported out-of-school clubs and also many early morning school activities. There are very good induction procedures for pupils who enter school in the nursery, with pre-visits to children's homes so that the school knows how best to support each child. Pupils with English as an additional language who enter school at other times are assessed soon after entry and given good support within lessons.
22. The school has very effective procedures for health and safety. The headteacher, governing body and staff together ensure that the school is a safe place for pupils to learn. The site manager, supported by a good assistant and effective advice from an external agency, provides very good day-to-day support. The school meticulously carries out risk assessments for trips and visits. The school has very good child protection procedures, with two members of staff fully trained as designated contacts. Staff have good training in first aid and procedures are very good.
23. Teachers assess pupils' attainment in English and mathematics regularly throughout the school. This information is used well to track pupils' progress and to identify if extra support is required or extension activities would be beneficial to increase progress. Pupils with special educational needs have good individual education programmes that are directly linked to present needs and difficulties. Pupils have relevant personal or group targets for their writing, reading and mathematics. In some classes, pupils are well informed about their progress towards these targets by regular review and in teachers' marking, but this process is not consistent in all classes.
24. There are very good opportunities for pupils to make their views known through the school council. The school provides clearly defined discussion time in class for pupils to put their ideas and viewpoints to their class representatives. The school consults pupils very well about club activities as they complete questionnaires about them at the end of each year.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has **good** links with parents. Links with the community and other schools and colleges are **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A wide range of links with the local community brings great benefit to pupils' learning.
- The school provides very good support and advice to the whole family.
- Homework is regular and well monitored.
- Not all reports are sufficiently clear in letting parents know how their children have progressed over the year.
- Some legally required information is missing from the prospectus and governors' annual report.

Commentary

25. The school has maintained its notable links with the local communities in the Isle of Dogs and Canary Wharf. The headteacher is very knowledgeable on the history of the locality and makes the most of useful contacts to the benefit of the school and its pupils. Seven Mills is an active member of the Isle of Dogs Action Zone, bringing with it increased resources and opportunities for curriculum 'extras' for the pupils. The proximity of Canary Wharf businesses provides personnel from some multi-national companies to support reading, mathematics and French. Not only do the pupils look forward to these visitors and improve their learning, but they also find out more about business and raise their aspirations for future careers. Through the local cluster of schools, Seven Mills usefully shares in curriculum development, staff and governor training and discussion of issues relating to education both on the Isle of Dogs and nationally. Very good links with the local secondary school mean that pupils transfer smoothly and confidently to the next stage of education.
26. The partnership between school and home remains good. Of particular note is the way the school acts as a source of advice and support for the whole family, many of whom speak little English and are new to this country. The breakfast club and many after-school activities are very popular with pupils and parents alike. Most parents are comfortable in approaching the school and appreciate the stability given to their children. They are beginning to become more involved in school life, especially in the nursery and reception class, although there is still some way to go with involving some Bangladeshi families fully in school life. In direct response to this issue, the school has recently appointed a new Bangladeshi home-school worker.
27. The information provided to parents is good. Notice boards and the outside windows of classrooms are well used to display essential messages and timetables. The families of nursery and reception children receive a useful booklet on ways they can help settle their children into learning. However, parents of some older children do not receive detailed information about the curriculum and guidance on how to support learning from home. Clear plans are in place to extend the Family Learning Project from the initial taster sessions in English and mathematics. Homework routines are good and better than seen in most primary schools. Parents keep up to date with what their children are learning because homework is regular, linked to class work and kept together in one book or file. Some annual reports give a clear indication how pupils have progressed in each subject over the year, but too many are inconsistent. They do not give pointers for improvement so the parents can work with the school to support achievement. As noted at the last inspection, both the annual governors' report and the prospectus still omit some legally required information.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership of the headteacher is **very good**. The governance of the school is **satisfactory**. The overall management of the school is **good**, with good contributions from the deputy headteacher and key subject co-ordinators.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher provides very clear and effective leadership.
- He works in an effective and influential partnership with his deputy headteacher and a supportive core group of governors.
- The headteacher, staff and governors have established a supportive and harmonious ethos, in which every pupil is valued and included fully in the good range of activities.
- The school has a strong and supportive team approach.
- The leadership and management of key subjects are good and focused strongly on raising standards.
- Aspects of management in some other subjects are not fully developed.

Commentary

28. The headteacher continues to provide very good leadership to the school. This is valued highly by parents, as reflected in 89 per cent of the questionnaires and many verbal and written comments. The headteacher has a very good knowledge of the school and the community it serves and uses this knowledge to give a strong focus on improving the school's effectiveness. He has established a good staff team. They work well together to create a harmonious, caring school community that offers all of its pupils a good range of learning activities and promotes pupil inclusion well. The headteacher works closely with his deputy and advisers from the local education authority to maintain good quality teaching during a period of considerable staff change. They successfully monitor teaching and evaluate its impact on learning. They identify strengths and weaknesses with follow-up visits effectively assessing improvement. The headteacher has re-established the pattern of termly interviews with all teachers to evaluate their effectiveness and to provide written detailed feedback on the performance of each pupil. He uses this information to maintain a very good profile of attainment standards across the school and evaluate the progress made by different groups of pupils, for example, by gender or by ethnic background. Detailed information from class teachers' assessments together with test results and an analysis of them from the local education authority show how well pupils are doing in English, mathematics and science. This information is used effectively by the senior management team to track achievement and set challenging attainment targets for the school. These procedures give the headteacher, governors and senior management a clear picture of how well pupils are achieving and identify where there needs to be improvement. This provides a good focus for informing priorities on the comprehensive school development plan.
29. The headteacher and his deputy are supported well by effective subject management, particularly in the key subjects of English and mathematics and in the provision for pupils with English as an additional language, and those with special educational needs. Literacy and numeracy co-ordinators regularly monitor and evaluate standards of teaching and learning by observing lessons, checking teaching plans and analysing samples of pupils' work. Additional observations by literacy and numeracy consultants are used well to monitor pupils' attainment and identify any weaknesses. This enables these subject co-ordinators to use action plans well, both termly subject action plans and as part of the annual school development plan, to focus consistently on improvement. These effective management procedures contribute well to supporting pupils' achievements in English and mathematics.
30. The leadership and management of English as an additional language are very good. Children's needs are carefully identified as soon as they enter the nursery class. Although the school now has fewer resources in this aspect of its provision than at the previous inspection, the decision to focus most of the specialist support in the early years has been highly successful. The co-ordinator is an excellent role model for other staff. Through his advice and team teaching

strategies, the school continues to provide a high quality provision, although the support skills of some staff are not of a consistently good quality.

31. Subject management in some other subjects is less well developed, mainly because of staff changes and a strong focus being given to pupils' key literacy and numeracy skills. Assessment procedures are not established effectively in some other subjects and co-ordinators do not always have a clear understanding of the standards being attained. This does not ensure that pupils are achieving as well as they should in these subjects.
32. Governors continue to be supportive of the school as reported in the last inspection. They fulfil their responsibilities soundly, although some specific aspects of information for parents are still not reported as required. The headteacher and senior management team work in an effective and influential partnership with a core development group of governors, including the acting chair, vice-chair and finance governor, to evaluate and shape the direction of the school's work. They have been especially supportive during the current and often delayed building programme. Governors provide a good range of expertise and involvement in the local community. They use their knowledge well to strengthen the school's links with the community it serves and to encourage the school to look for any additional sources of funding and support. Some governors are actively involved in supporting the school's initiatives in sport and art, for example, in their bids for Activemark and Artsmark quality standards. Governors are kept well informed about standards being attained by pupils by detailed reports from the headteacher. Some governors work in school and others visit classes. Procedures to enable governors to review the curriculum frequently and evaluate its impact on standards are included in the school development plan but not yet fully established.
33. Governors have established good financial procedures and manage the school's funds efficiently. The headteacher works closely with the efficient school's administrator to maintain detailed up-to-date financial records. The governors use these effectively to monitor spending levels and to ensure that funds are being used well to support development priorities. Governors use the funds for pupils with special educational needs carefully to ensure that there are sufficient resources to meet pupils' needs and to provide good staff training. They use best value principles well, for example, during the current building improvements. The school's accurate financial information enables the governing body to target spending efficiently as the financial information provided by the local education authority does not reflect the up-to-date spending pattern. For example, the current high level of balances is not shown clearly in the most recent local education authority's income and expenditure figures as illustrated in the following table. The school's finances contain significant funds that are committed to paying for the new building. They were carried over from the previous year, together with some funds intended for improved resources, for example, in ICT and the library. These have yet to be paid due to delays in the building programme.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	849,161
Total expenditure	866,545
Expenditure per pupil	3,800

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	68,719
Balance carried forward to the next	139,916

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision is **very good** in the Foundation Stage.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching in both the nursery and reception class is very good in all areas of learning.
- There is a consistent focus on improving children's basic skills, especially in social and language development.
- The leadership and management are very good.
- Staff and pupils benefit from very good accommodation and learning resources.

Commentary

34. The provision is now very good because the many strengths identified at the last inspection have been developed further. Attainment on entry varies from year to year. It is poor overall. Children achieve very well from a very low starting point in all areas of learning, especially those for whom English is not the language spoken at home. The majority of children are learning English as an additional language.
35. There is a very strong emphasis on learning to communicate with others in the Foundation Stage and many reasons why children are achieving so well. Provision and teaching are very good in all areas of learning. An enthusiastic team of adults sets very high expectations in an imaginative and stimulating curriculum, which meets children's needs very well. Staffing levels are good and the teacher of English as an additional language spends an important amount of time with the groups so that all children are supported well. Relationships are excellent and as a result children's personal skills improve rapidly, which impacts very positively on standards. Skilful leadership and management have ensured that the recent move to the main site has been managed very smoothly and there are extremely effective procedures for planning, monitoring and assessment. Assessments are used directly to plan work at the correct level for all children, including those with special educational needs. The very good accommodation, with a particularly attractive outdoor area for nursery, and high quality resources provide children with an exciting place in which to learn.

Personal, social and emotional development

36. This area of learning receives a high profile from starting in nursery and children achieve very well. They make rapid progress and by the time they start in Year 1 most children have reached the nationally expected levels. Very good teaching, relationships and planning provide an ordered environment in which children quickly settle and feel secure. Children with less understanding of English are heavily dependent on adults. They are encouraged by the confidence of others to work independently on tasks and to ask them in their home language what to do next. Children in reception give out milk and take registers to the office very responsibly. Behaviour is very good and children sustain their interest and concentration well because they find the range of activities they are given is exciting and challenging. This creates a strong desire to learn.

Communication, language and literacy

37. There are continuous opportunities during the day for children to develop their language skills, which are very low when they start in nursery. All achieve very well and many children make excellent progress but, despite very good teaching, the majority of children are unlikely to reach the nationally expected level by the time they start in Year 1. Children are taught to listen to one another as soon as they start school and this is consistently reinforced in all activities. As a result, listening skills develop well in nursery and in reception children listen very well to adults

and other children. Staff provide challenging activities that are matched well to children needs, including those with special educational needs. By the end of nursery, more able children write their name unaided and others write over models of their names and letters. Children share books with the teacher, trying hard to answer questions about the story. They listen with fascination as the teacher and specialist language teacher read a story together and join in the daily phonics session with enthusiasm. Their learning is fun and clearly effective. The very good progress and provision continue in reception with many activities in which language development flourishes. Very careful support is given to ensure that children form their letters correctly and the teacher and language specialist work very effectively together when teaching shared writing. As a result, children learn new vocabulary every day. More able children write sentences, complete with capital letters, full stops and finger spaces and are totally focused on their work. More able children are reading books confidently with expression and many others read simple sentences clearly, using strategies to work out words. Children enjoy the fact that their families take an interest in helping them with reading at home.

Example of outstanding practice

In the busy nursery classroom, a small group of Bangladeshi children gather round the computer where the teacher for pupils with English as an additional language has set up a program about a teddy bear. These children entered school with little or no oral English. The aim of the activity is to build on their current language skills and develop a wider range of English vocabulary. At the same time, it is evident that this is going to be fun. The teacher has learnt the pupils' home language in order to reinforce the learning. He encourages them to talk to the bear on the screen. 'Hallo PB Bear. Wake up, get out of bed.' To their delight, the bear responds, waving to them and climbing out of his bed. The teacher is controlling the program but the children believe that their commands are being heard. They laugh and exclaim and repeat the phrases, improving their skills and knowledge while having a purpose for the learning.

This is a simple stimulus which produces rich learning. The teacher is skilful in questioning the pupils in two languages and encouraging those who can extend their language to do so. When the activity ends, two pupils go voluntarily to the home corner to cuddle some teddies that are there. One is heard to say, 'Hallo PB Bear. Wake up, brush your hair'.

Mathematical development

38. The high quality of teaching mathematical skills through practical activities helps children to achieve very well. Many attain the early learning goals by the time they start in Year 1. Teaching and learning are very good because adults talk to children about their tasks and encourage them to use the correct mathematical language more confidently. Children develop an interest in numbers and counting, for example, when they carry bricks on a trolley to build a higher tower. They extend their mathematical skills successfully when sharing a book with an adult. The very effective teaching and learning is extended in reception because mathematics is everywhere. Children learn a good range of mathematical language such as 'half full' and 'empty'. By the end of reception, most children record numbers accurately and have a clear understanding of 'more' and 'less' when looking for numbers 'in between'.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

39. Children achieve very well because the very good teaching provides children with countless opportunities to learn about the world around them and to stimulate their curiosity. Visits, visitors and an extensive range of very good resources support this area of learning very effectively and help many children reach the nationally expected levels by the end of the reception year. The imaginative play areas are changed regularly to keep interest levels high. In the nursery, extensive use is made of the outdoor area to encourage imaginative play and help them learn about the world around them. In religious education, children celebrate festivals from many cultures and in reception children clearly understand the rules for 'circle time'. This is a discussion period that provides a good opportunity for pupils to talk over issues that face them as part of their daily lives. They take turns very well and suggest very seriously a range of things that they should not do at school. A few children do not feel able to contribute an idea but they listen to others very well. Computers are used thoughtfully in nursery to ensure that all children have an opportunity to learn how to use a mouse and see how they can control events on the

screen. Children are delighted with the pictures they create in the computer suite. In reception, children use the interactive whiteboard with enthusiasm, working out how to press a part of the board to change the pictures and build up a number sequence.

Physical development

40. Children from nursery and reception achieve very well in this area of learning and many are likely to achieve above the expected levels in the early learning goals because of the very good teaching from the specialist physical education coach and his assistants. Staff monitor lessons very carefully and make perceptive observations about the children, noting those who have particular skills and those who still lack confidence on any apparatus. Children in nursery learn to use the space and stop and listen whilst children in reception run, skip and jump around the hall in extended positions. They do this very well as soon as they are sure about what 'wide' and 'thin' mean in this lesson. Children in nursery extend their skills and confidence as they climb and balance on apparatus outside. Plans are agreed for outdoor space for reception so that they, too, can develop skills in the playground. Children's skills in handling equipment develop steadily because staff provide opportunities for mixing, cutting, sticking and painting every day.

Creative development

41. Staff plan a wide range of stimulating activities so that children achieve very well in this area of learning. Most achieve the expected levels by the end of reception year. Children need much support to learn new skills when they first start school. They achieve well because these are taught carefully and through interesting tasks. In reception, children paint in tones of colours and paint portraits with careful attention to features because staff encourage them to look carefully around them before they start. Music times are joyful. Children in nursery know the names of several instruments and the majority know which sound each one makes. They join in singing with the specialist language and music teacher enthusiastically because he teaches them songs in up to seven different languages. This sensitivity causes them to smile with pleasure when the language is their own. Children in reception make up their own verses to songs and sing in languages other than their own with pride. Playing the guitar with a plectrum whilst they sing a rhyme is a great honour and children clearly value this. They are building up skills in music very successfully as well as gaining in confidence and increasing their understanding of language.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching in Years 2, 4, 5 and 6 enables pupils to achieve well.
- Very good support for pupils with English as an additional language, particularly in the lower school, helps them to achieve well.
- The school uses assessment well to identify those pupils who could benefit from a good range of additional support or extension activities.
- Writing is not promoted sufficiently within other subjects across the curriculum to increase pupils' attainment.
- The leadership of the subject is good and provides a good focus on raising standards.
- Assessment information is not consistently used to set challenging activities in lessons.

Commentary

42. Pupils attain standards that are below the national average. Inspection evidence shows that pupils attain below average standards in reading and writing in Year 2 and Year 6. The standards of speaking and listening are below average in Year 2 and average in Year 6. There has been a significant improvement in the standards attained by the end of Year 2 since the last

inspection, particularly in writing, both in national tests and classroom lessons. An analysis of pupils' work in Year 6 confirms that the proportion of pupils likely to attain the nationally expected Level 4 meets the national average and has improved since the last inspection. The percentage of pupils who are likely to attain higher levels is well below average.

43. Over half of the pupils who enter the school do not speak English as their home language and many are still in early stages of English language skills in Years 1 and 2. The school is effectively targeting the support of a very experienced teacher to work alongside class teachers and meet the needs of these infant pupils. Financial constraints limit teacher support in classes for older pupils. However, a bilingual teaching assistant gives good support to some pupils. A fifth of pupils are identified as having special educational needs, mostly in literacy. Improved provision for these pupils since the last inspection, including well-constructed individual programmes and targets, allows them to make a similar rate of progress to their peers. Consequently, all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, achieve well in their speaking, reading, writing and listening skills from often well below average starting points. Good teaching encourages pupils to develop a positive approach to their work and to make good progress in their learning, especially their spoken English language skills.
44. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The subject leader analyses teacher assessment information well. She identifies accurately those pupils who have not progressed as fast as they should or those who could attain higher levels in English. For these pupils, the school provides a good range of literacy support, booster and extension groups for more able pupils, some of which take place before morning school. Additionally, there are good initiatives to extend pupils' learning, such as in the after-school literacy club and some Year 2 pupils have 'reading partners' one lunch-break each week with local business people. The subject leader monitors lessons and pupils' work well and, with the help of local education authority advisers, effectively identifies areas of the subject that need to be developed. Recent developments include well-focused, daily word-building sessions for the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2 and separately timetabled reading sessions with clear guidance by teachers. Teachers give a good emphasis on reading comprehension in the junior classes, as pupils have difficulty with more advanced reading skills.
45. Teaching is good overall and ranges from satisfactory to very good. The consistently good teaching, especially in Years 2, 4, 5 and 6, is raising standards. Teachers plan interesting activities for pupils to write and read across a wide range of styles. For example, Year 6 pupils worked on the story of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and wrote poetry in a similar style to *The Jabberwocky* by Edward Lear. In most lessons pupils behave very well and participate enthusiastically in oral activities. Teachers develop oracy well, giving pupils many opportunities to decide with their 'talking partners' what a certain word might mean or what answer they could give to the teacher's question. From their assessments and marking of pupils' writing, teachers set challenging individual or group targets to help pupils to improve and attain the next National Curriculum level. These are entered into the front of pupils' books and, in all classes except Year 3, reviewed frequently. Some teachers, for example in Year 4, refer to these targets consistently in their marking of pupils' work, which is effective in raising standards. However, other teachers are less effective in their marking. Although pupils are grouped well by ability for literacy lessons, some teachers do not match the work to extend pupils' knowledge and skills in all lessons. This impedes progress. Regular homework is set that links well with classwork.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

46. Teachers have taken very positive steps to increase the opportunities for speaking within lessons, to increase pupils' vocabulary and fluency. Pupils read in a variety of subjects for information. For example, in a guided reading session Year 4 pupils researched soundly how a torch works for their science lesson. Pupils use the Internet frequently to find information, through a research program, and use the range of word processing tools to present their own writing satisfactorily. In other subjects, such as religious education, history and geography, writing is not practised and developed at the pupils' ability levels sufficiently to raise standards

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well, especially in Years 2, 5 and 6.
- Good subject leadership provides a strong focus on raising standards.
- Inconsistencies in some teachers' expectations and in their use of assessment restrict achievement.
- Pupils' positive attitudes to mathematics promote an enthusiasm to learn and to achieve well.
- Pupils do not apply their numeracy skills and knowledge enough in other subjects.

Commentary

47. Year 6 pupils attain standards that meet the national average. Year 2 pupils attain standards that are below the national average. Standards are similar to those reported in the last inspection. Inspection evidence shows that standards are higher than those attained in the 2003 national tests for Year 6 pupils. The school is on target to meet the national average and achieve its challenging target of 75 per cent of pupils to attain the nationally expected Level 4. The proportion of pupils likely to attain Level 5 remains below average. The current Year 6 has benefited from having the same good quality teacher for two successive years and from good support and booster programmes in mathematics. These have resulted in improved standards, particularly for pupils from Bangladeshi and other ethnic minority backgrounds. Inspection evidence shows Year 2 pupils attain standards that are similar to those attained in the 2003 national tests. However, the current year group has a higher proportion (over 50 per cent) of pupils with special educational needs or with English as an additional language. Good teaching is enabling these pupils to make good progress in mathematics. Although most will achieve the nationally expected Level 2¹, too few will attain the higher Level 2A or Level 3. Most pupils achieve well in all aspects of mathematics, although some English language uncertainties limit the progress of some pupils, especially in Years 1 and 2. Most junior pupils achieve well, especially in Years 5 and 6. However, some are not secure in their knowledge and understanding of number values and this slows their progress.
48. Teaching is good overall. It is consistently good in Years 2, 5 and 6 and is a significant factor in helping pupils to achieve well. Teachers in these years use a good range of challenging activities to extend pupils' learning. They work successfully with other teachers and support staff to enable all pupils to be included fully and to achieve well. Teachers maintain a brisk pace to lessons and have high expectations of the amount and quality of what pupils should achieve. Pupils respond enthusiastically to meet these expectations. This results in good achievement and a desire to do even better. This promotes pupils' interest in mathematics. Many pupils, especially in Year 6, indicated that they look forward to the additional support and booster sessions that teachers organise before the school day starts or at different times throughout the day. They feel that these sessions are improving their understanding of the range of different strategies to use to solve different types of questions.
49. An analysis of pupils' work shows that teachers' expectations are not consistently high enough in some classes. The school has good procedures for assessing how well pupils are doing in mathematics. However, teachers do not use the information gained from these procedures to ensure that they match activities to pupils' different learning needs in each class. Too often all pupils are given the same task and this results in the more able pupils not being challenged enough or the less able finding it too difficult. Where good support staff guide pupils effectively, particularly those with English as an additional language, they are helped to achieve at least satisfactorily. However, this support is not always effective in some classes, particularly on helping pupils to understand mathematical language and contribute to whole class discussions.

¹ By the end of Year 2, pupils are expected to attain Level 2. This is divided further into three separate levels from 2C up to 2A to track pupils' achievement. Year 2 pupils who attain Level 3 are attaining above the nationally expected level.

The achievement in some lessons is limited because pupils spend too long writing out the learning intention and reading what is expected of them. This restricts pupils' progress in some classes.

50. The enthusiastic subject co-ordinator provides good leadership and she manages the subject well. She works closely with the headteacher, numeracy consultants from the local education authority and other staff to maintain and analyse information on how well pupils are doing throughout the school. She keeps well informed about the subject's strengths and areas for improvement. The co-ordinator uses termly action plans effectively, as well as the full school development plan, to focus on improvement. She makes good use of some regular non-teaching time to check on how well mathematics is taught by lesson observations, looking at pupils' work and discussions with other staff. She has promoted a more consistent use of homework and this helps to raise standards.

Mathematics across the curriculum

51. There was some good evidence of pupils using their mathematical skills in science and ICT, for example using their knowledge of angles to control the movements of an on-screen robot. Teachers do not identify links with other subjects consistently in their planning. This does not ensure that pupils are required regularly to apply their mathematical skills and understanding and contribute to improved standards.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The support from the advisory teacher has had a significant impact on the raising of standards in science and pupils now achieve well.
- The strong attention given to investigations and practical experiments gives good support to pupils' understanding and their enjoyment of lessons.
- Teachers use talk partners well to encourage pupils to answer or ask questions and this enables pupils to retain a clear focus during lessons.
- Although there is some good practice in ensuring that all pupils have tasks that match their abilities well, assessment is not used consistently to match tasks to targets.
- Marking does not always inform pupils of what they need to learn next and what they should improve.

Commentary

52. The standards seen in science were below average in Year 2 and average in Year 6. They are improving and are higher than the very low levels attained in the 2003 national tests for Year 6 pupils. A small number of pupils in both Year 2 and Year 6 are likely to achieve at the higher level and in Year 6 fewer children are attaining at below average levels. Achievement is good in all years. These judgments represent a significant improvement in achievements in most years since the last inspection because of the very good leadership of the subject from the advisory teacher this year. There are now good guidelines for the subject and planning for units of work and teachers' confidence are improving.
53. Teachers encourage pupils to investigate and think about science in an enquiring way. Pupils enjoy the subject very much and say that they find it interesting and stimulating. Practical investigations help them remember what they have done even when they have some difficulties with the written task of explaining their experiments and conclusions. Good use is made of ICT to support discussions and experiments. Skills of enquiry are taught well, mostly through questions about work done previously. For example, in Year 4 a pupil referred back to a text read in literacy to explain about electrons and generated a discussion about batteries and electrical currents. Teachers draw out ideas well from pupils so that they predict and reason thoughtfully, making great progress in their understanding.

54. Teaching and learning are good and are raising standards of pupils' attainment. The strength in practical work runs right through the school because teachers share a vision of the true importance of enquiry in the nature of science. Teachers are aware that it is vital that pupils know and understand the key words to be used in units of work so these are introduced very carefully. They ask pupils to discuss points with a partner at various times during the lesson, in some cases giving them the first question to ask. These discussions are enjoyed and pupils respond very well after the brief period of talk. Teachers discuss and review lesson objectives with pupils and work hard to meet the needs of different ability pupils with probing questions and helpful support. However, sufficient attention is not always given to making lesson activities different for different attaining pupils. Overall assessment of science is good but pupils do not always know how well they are doing or what they should be aiming for because targets are not consistently identified when teachers mark work. There has been a significant improvement in the amount of organised and well presented written work since the second half of the autumn term. This is still an area of difficulty for many pupils whose skills in written English are not as good as their verbal skills.
55. Leadership and management of the subject are very good because the advisory teacher works with teachers, ensures good resources are available and monitors teaching across the school. She has identified aspects of good practice that can be shared. This is improving standards of teaching and helping pupils to achieve well.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The very good resources are used well to promote pupils' skills and knowledge.
- Teachers make good use of specialist support staff to improve their own subject knowledge and extend pupils' skills.
- Some teachers do not extend pupils' ICT skills enough in other subjects.
- Good subject leadership encourages the ICT curriculum to be enhanced effectively by computer clubs and a good range of support and extension activities.

Commentary

56. Pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 attain standards that meet nationally expected levels. Standards are similar to those in the last inspection. Many pupils achieve well in collecting and presenting information. For example, Year 6 pupils use the Internet successfully to gather information about their topic on the Tudors. They present it very effectively using a multi-media approach with good use of photographs and graphics. The word processing skills of some pupils are limited by weaknesses in their English language skills. These restrict the pace of their work and the amount achieved. Most pupils are making good progress overall in improving and applying their ICT skills and knowledge, especially those who do not benefit from using a computer at home. Their achievements were limited by the disruption caused by the recent building programme. However, pupils now are benefiting greatly from the considerably improved resources. The new computer suite, combined with the good use still being made of the older resources, provides teachers with a level of resources that is well above that provided in most primary schools nationally. It allows teachers to teach all aspects of ICT. The school is set up well to improve standards.
57. Most teachers have good subject knowledge, although this is not consistent in each class. The school makes good use of a part-time specialist support teacher. He uses his expertise successfully to work well alongside other staff, to improve their confidence and subject knowledge and to improve pupils' learning. He also uses his technical knowledge effectively to enable the school to continue to use older resources well and to adapt computer programs to meet the range of pupils' needs. This helps teachers to use these programs well, particularly

for pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. This results in good progress in improving their language skills.

58. Teaching was good in the three junior lessons observed and extended pupils' skills and knowledge successfully. There were no lessons observed in Years 1 and 2. Teachers use national subject guidance effectively to teach basic skills consistently in all required aspects of the National Curriculum. Where teachers have good subject knowledge, they use it well to extend pupils' skills and knowledge. For example, in a good Year 5 lesson, the teacher used her very good knowledge to illustrate the importance of framing questions when searching a database. This improved pupils' understanding and enabled them to more detailed and accurate answers. Good team teaching by the class teacher and the support teacher ensured that all pupils were involved fully in the learning activity and their skills and knowledge extended well. Teachers make good use of ICT partners so that more able pupils help those who are less confident. This improves pupils' skills, their self-esteem and their attitudes to learning. An analysis of work that pupils have saved in their folders and a discussion with staff and pupils show that teachers do not always expect more able pupils to achieve consistently good standards, for example, by expecting more detail and greater accuracy when applying their word processing skills. This limits their achievement in some lessons.
59. The subject is well led and managed. The co-ordinator works well with the support teacher, local education authority consultants and other staff to gain a good understanding of the subject's strengths weaknesses, for example, by completing an audit of teachers' subject knowledge and confidence. She uses this effectively to plan staff training to improve weaknesses. The co-ordinator, with support from the local Action Zone, has encouraged staff to use whiteboards in lessons to guide pupils' learning. This has encouraged pupils' enthusiasm for ICT, with many expressing their enjoyment of the new resources and how the whiteboards make learning fun. The co-ordinator monitors standards by looking at pupils' files saved on CDs. She is currently introducing new assessment procedures, developed by the local education authority, and has planned opportunities for evaluating their impact on teaching later this school year.
60. The co-ordinator, with the support of other teaching and support staff, has encouraged a very good range of out-of-school and extra-curricular ICT activities that contribute considerably to pupils' achievements. A small group of pupils, identified as gifted and talented in literacy and ICT, are working together to produce a brochure about school clubs. They apply their word processing skills very successfully, incorporating text and pictures, to produce good quality articles. The co-ordinator plans that this group of pupils will then use their advanced skills to train other pupils and so contribute to raising standards. Support staff work well with groups of pupils before school and during the school day to improve their language and numeracy skills. The school has held some sessions for parents. These are increasing their interest in ICT and their knowledge of how it can be used to support their learning and that of their children.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

61. An analysis of teaching plans and discussions with staff and pupils show that, although opportunities to apply pupils' ICT skills and knowledge are identified in curriculum planning, they are not developed consistently in each class and across a broad range of subjects. There was some evidence of teachers using ICT in science, researching information in history and geography and to promote pupils' basic literacy and numeracy skills. However, this is not consistent across the school and this results in inconsistencies in pupils' achievements.

HUMANITIES

Geography and history

Only one junior lesson was seen in history and one infant lesson in geography so no overall evaluation can be made on provision. Inspectors looked at a sample of pupils' work, spoke to the subject co-ordinator and a group of Year 6 pupils and looked at teachers' planning.

Commentary

62. An analysis of pupils' work shows that most pupils do not achieve satisfactorily overall from year to year because teaching time is limited and teachers do not build pupils' skills and knowledge consistently on prior learning. There is insufficient time, as reported in the last inspection, to ensure the effective teaching of geographical and historical skills and knowledge. Teachers make good use of national subject guidance to teach all required aspects. The lack of effective assessments to track how well pupils are doing does not ensure that teachers match the work to pupils' different needs. This limits progress.
63. There is considerable variation in teachers' expectations of pupils' work in the alternating history and geography topics. Although some teachers require pupils to apply their writing skills satisfactorily to support their work in history and geography, this was not consistent across the school. Where teachers insist on pupils writing down detailed learning objectives before starting their activity, especially infant pupils, this restricts significantly the amount achieved. There was little evidence of teachers challenging pupils to explain reasons for the differences between people's lives in different ages or in different locations. This does not enable more able pupils to achieve consistently the standards of which they are capable.
64. The subjects are led and managed satisfactorily. The co-ordinator is improving the range of resources and learning opportunities, for example, by working with the Action Zone and the Museum of Docklands to provide a local history study unit for Year 6. She has had some time to look at pupils' work and to check on the coverage of different topics, although this was limited and did not focus closely on standards. Teachers invite a good range of visitors into school to help pupils' learning, for example, when Year 2 talked about life in Ghana. The school provides good opportunities for pupils to extend their historical research skills and geographical fieldwork skills during residential visits to Gorsefield and Haredelot. Teachers use these opportunities satisfactorily to develop specific mapping skills. The lack of information on how well pupils had understood these skills in earlier years does not ensure that all pupils, especially those with English as an additional language, build effectively on prior learning. This limits their achievement.

Religious education

Provision is **unsatisfactory** overall. It is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Year 6 pupils attain standards that are below expected levels.
- There is very little recorded work in Years 3 to 6.
- The programme of work is supported effectively by well-organised resources.

Commentary

65. Standards in religious education have been maintained in Years 1 and 2 and meet the expectation of the locally agreed syllabus for pupils in Year 2. However, very little work was seen in a work sample from junior classes and most of this was limited to sticking words with pictures from worksheets. There was little evidence of pupils using their writing skills to record their work. In discussion, Year 6 pupils remember some recent study of religions, but display knowledge, skills and understanding that are below those expected for their age. Standards are therefore lower than those at the last inspection and do not meet the expectations of the locally

agreed syllabus. From the analysis of work, all pupils achieve satisfactorily in Years 1 and 2, but unsatisfactorily in Years 3 to 6.

66. The subject is led and managed satisfactorily overall. The co-ordinator has used national guidance effectively to plan a satisfactory curriculum for each year group. However, this has not been monitored sufficiently to evaluate standards of teaching and learning, particularly in Years 3 to 6. This has not helped the co-ordinator to identify weaknesses in pupils' knowledge and understanding and has limited the standards attained. The school has a good range of artefacts to support the study of Islam, Christianity, Buddhism, Judaism and Sikhism, although disruption caused by the building improvements has restricted their recent use.
67. In the few lessons observed during the inspection, the quality of teaching was satisfactory overall. It ranged from satisfactory to very good. However, the quality of pupils' work from junior classes indicates that teaching is often unsatisfactory. Teachers do not have high enough expectations of what pupils should achieve. This inconsistency limits the development of pupils' knowledge and understanding. In a very good lesson, pupils in Year 2 were guided sensitively to think about worship in a variety of religions and the importance of holy days. Pupils were enthusiastic in their responses and recorded these in ways that were suited to their ability. Assembly themes link well with religious festivals and celebrations. For instance, in an assembly about Shrove Tuesday and the Christian period of fasting in Lent, the headteacher made good links with the Muslim fast during Ramadan. This promoted pupils' knowledge and understanding successfully. However, discussions with junior pupils and an analysis of their work show that they do not have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of different religious practices and beliefs and how they influence people's lives.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art and design

68. Only two lessons were seen in Years 1 and 2 Pupils' work was studied and the subject discussed with the co-ordinator and one of the team of visiting artists who work regularly with staff and children on projects during the year. Work completed with the artists provides a vibrant and aesthetic series of displays around the school, with examples of work from every class. Every piece of work is exciting and original. Standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are above expectations and the subject is covered in much greater depth than at the last inspection.
69. Pupils in Year 2 are developing an understanding of the range of items that can be described as sculptures. They designed superb totem poles with faces carved on oasis (material used frequently as a basis for flower displays) and an array of exquisitely coloured feathers. Each face is different with the 'scariest' at the top of the poles. In the lesson they made figures with clay, confident that whatever they did would be valued for its own qualities. In Year 1 pupils wove attractive patterns with strips of paper. Their skills improved with practice. Pupils in Year 6 have studied legends, myths and Shakespeare. They use knowledge gained from this work to produce masks suitable for characters in the stories. They have drawn remarkable portraits in black, white and grey to which they have added subtle and very appropriate masks. Pupils' work has been selected for the local Exhibition of Primary Arts and the school has already achieved Artsmark standards. The range of work produced with each class is individual and of a high standard and the information given about each topic explains how well art is woven into other subjects. The co-ordinator liaises with the team of artists and manages the subject well. She ensures that a good range of resources is available for all topics.

Design and technology

70. No lessons of design and technology could be seen, but pupils' work was studied and the subject discussed with the co-ordinator, staff and pupils. Displays around the school and

photographs of pupils at work on their projects indicate that standards are in line with expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Achievement is good because of the exciting opportunities for pupils to work with visiting teachers regularly and learn or practise new skills. Pupils make good plans and sketches of what they want to make but the majority of evaluations are verbal. Pupils frequently work in groups and discuss their work as it progresses, suggesting amendments and making decisions to use different materials from their plans because they predict that something else will be more suitable. Pupils in Year 4 are making torches and this is carefully planned to link with science and literacy. A small group of pupils attend the design and technology club and produce work of good quality. The subject is managed well and resources are good. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection.

Music

Provision in music is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is enhanced by the support of a very knowledgeable co-ordinator.
- Resources are very good and help pupils to achieve soundly.

Commentary

71. At the time of the last inspection, an additional specialist music teacher supported the teaching and learning in all classrooms. Owing to budget restraints, this is not now possible and the music co-ordinator, who is also a specialist, has a limited amount of time to devote to music in classes. Nevertheless, he provides good leadership through his unbounded enthusiasm for the subject and his expert knowledge of teaching and learning. This helps teachers to promote pupils' skills satisfactorily. He has supported all teachers informally but well in the teaching of the full curriculum. This follows a similar pattern to the national guidance. More formally, he observes lessons in Year 6 and provides good advice. The school plans to extend his work to other classes in the future. Teaching is satisfactory in lessons, with good teaching seen in Year 2 and singing sessions.
72. Standards meet those expected in Years 2 and 6 in music lessons. These have been maintained since the last inspection. Most pupils achieve satisfactorily. However, the subject co-ordinator leads communal singing sessions well. These develop pupils' sense of melody, pitch, dynamics and tempo, which they demonstrated well in the whole school singing of *If I had a hammer* in an assembly. Pupils' achievement is good in these sessions. Music contributes very well to pupils' cultural understanding and the inclusion of all pupils. Within assemblies and lessons pupils listen to a broad range of music, for example pop, jazz, light rock, new-age and Indian music. They participate well in songs that encompass all the home languages of pupils such as English, Sylheti, Turkish, Chinese and French. Music has many good links with other subjects, such as history and art and design. For example, pupils in Year 2 sing a song about Florence Nightingale to link to their lessons in history.
73. The school has a very good range of resources. Fifteen pupils in Years 5 and 6 receive well-planned individual guitar tuition and an after-school club provides good opportunities for pupils to practise and perform, for example in the musical *Grease* at the end of last term. The school encourages pupils to regularly perform to an audience, either in assemblies or to parents.

Physical education

Provision in physical education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils attain above expected standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6.
- The school makes very good use of specialist coaches to promote good quality teaching.
- The enthusiasm of the good subject co-ordinator.

- Pupils' skills are extended effectively by a very good range of extra-curricular sporting activities.
- Pupils have a very positive, enthusiastic attitude to physical education.

Commentary

74. Pupils attain higher standards than those reported in the last inspection. Inspectors observed lessons in gymnastics, games and dance. Most pupils attained standards that were above those expected nationally for their age in those areas of activity. In gymnastics, pupils displayed a very good range of controlled gymnastic movements. Year 6 pupils worked well in pairs to link a broad variety of movements together effectively. They created a well-co-ordinated gymnastic sequence that achieved a high quality performance. The specialist coach used his very good subject knowledge to identify ways in which pupils could improve the standard of their performance. For example, his awareness of the position of the head and legs in enabling pupils to retain their balance when landing after jumping from apparatus ensured a smooth transition between movements. His encouragement enabled pupils to improve their own evaluation skills and identify ways in which the quality of their sequences could be improved.
75. The subject is well led and managed. The headteacher and the subject co-ordinator work together well to focus on ways in which the pupils can benefit from improving resources and extending the range of physical activities. They bid for additional funds from, for example, Sport England and the Football Foundation. These are used effectively to improve resources, pupils' performance and to increase teachers' confidence in teaching the subject. Class teachers observe and assist specialist coaches who lead the teaching for two successive lessons. The class teachers then lead in the following lesson with the support and encouragement of the coaches. This improves the standard of teaching and pupils' performance. Teaching is good and promotes pupils' skills and knowledge successfully. It is often very good and occasionally excellent when the teacher's enthusiasm encourages all pupils, including boys and girls from different ethnic backgrounds, to participate and co-operate fully in all activities.
76. The good teaching promotes pupils' enjoyment of and enthusiasm for physical education. They want to take part and achieve well. The subject co-ordinator, supported well by other staff, builds successfully on this positive attitude by helping pupils to extend their skills in a very good range of extra-curricular activities. Pupils identified as gifted and talented gymnasts were observed extending their skills in a club activity before school. Talented boys and girls improve their skills in football and dance in after-school clubs and, in cricket, through a club organised by the co-ordinator with help from the Action Zone. The school involves itself very successfully in the community sports programme and enables pupils to extend their skills by competing in local cricket, football, netball and rugby tournaments. This wide-ranging programme, together with good facilities and good teaching, encourages pupils' participation and enables them to achieve above expected standards.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has a strong ethos of inclusion for all pupils in all its work and this enhances their understanding of good citizenship.
- The work of the school council provides very good understanding of how pupils can play a positive part in the school community.
- It is promoted well through all subjects.

Commentary

77. The co-ordinator provides a satisfactory programme of study across all year groups using national guidance. Only two sessions of class discussion time were seen, but further evidence was gained from discussion with staff and pupils and analysis of teaching plans. Teaching in the sessions observed was satisfactory overall. In one lesson where teaching was

unsatisfactory, it was because the teacher's knowledge of the particular aspect of the course was not secure. The quality of teaching during circle time activities has been monitored well by the deputy headteacher and the teacher for pupils with English as an additional language. There are good arrangements for personal, social and health education, including sex and drug education, to be taught mainly through other subjects. For example, in science, pupils learn about healthy eating and care of teeth. Older pupils have a good opportunity to live and work together on residential visits and visitors, such as firemen and a nurse, give pupils a good understanding of how to stay safe and jobs that other people do.

78. There is very good use of the school council to represent pupils' views, with all infant and junior classes represented. Their current focus is on the environment and recycling in particular. Pupils of different ages are very willing to put their own views forward. Other aspects of school life are raised in the weekly class time set aside by each class. For example, Year 4 wanted more choice for school lunches. Assemblies provide a good focus on a broad range of cultural traditions and the need to support and look after each other. Appreciation and attendance awards have a good impact on pupils' awareness that they have responsibilities within the school community.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	4
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	4
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	2
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	4
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).

