

# Seven Mills Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	100931
<b>Local Authority</b>	Tower Hamlets
<b>Inspection number</b>	307528
<b>Inspection dates</b>	7–8 July 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	June Woolhouse

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	228
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Kumar Kotecha
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Mike Thurley
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	23 February 2004
<b>School address</b>	Malabar Street Alpha Grove London E14 8LY
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 7987 2350
<b>Fax number</b>	020 7538 3118

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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This is an average size primary school which serves its local community. The majority of pupils are from Bangladeshi families. The proportions of pupils eligible for free school meals and those who learn English as an additional language are well above average. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is above average. These include pupils with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties and speech, language and communication problems. The school has several formal partnerships with local businesses, which have enhanced its resources and opportunities for pupils to benefit from extra sport, art and visits.

## Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

Seven Mills Primary School is outstanding. It successfully achieves its aim to educate its pupils in the broadest possible sense. They make exceptional progress in English, mathematics and science and reach high standards in sport, art and music by the time they leave. Pupils of all abilities, backgrounds and interests are very well cared for, nurtured and challenged to do their very best. Standards are average when compared with national results, which represents excellent achievement, given pupils' very low starting points. However, the school offers so much more than academic opportunities. Pupils' personal, sporting, artistic and cultural development is given equal importance by the very rich curriculum. This extends to before and after the school day, promotes pupils' self-confidence, builds character and adds greatly to the quality of life and their happiness. They know they are healthy, feel very safe and are developing the skills to equip them to get a job. In addition, the headteacher and governing body successfully ensure that all the school's work embraces the needs and aspirations of the parents. There is a high level of cohesion within the community and pupils' attitudes, ability to work together and all-round achievements reflect this very well.

Children get off to a marvellous start in the Foundation Stage and this sets the tone for the rest of their time in school. High quality resources, talented staff and very effective links to the community guarantee that children make very good progress by the time they reach the end of the Reception year. Exceptional provision for those whose first language is not English, right from the start, results in children developing socially, emotionally and in their speaking and listening at a rapid rate.

Outstanding teaching and learning across the school builds on this very good beginning. The curriculum is planned to be practical, exciting and relevant to all pupils. Teachers engage their pupils' interests well because there is very good subject knowledge and specialist teachers are employed to extend this to all subjects. Teachers encourage them to assess their own work to decide what they must do to improve it, although this is not consistent. Not all teachers are confident or skilled in this approach and the headteacher is planning to provide further training.~

There are high levels of care, guidance and support for all pupils. Vulnerable pupils are identified early and all staff contribute effectively to their well-being and achievements. Parents and carers receive detailed information about their children, important dates and practical advice on school uniform, attendance and behaviour. Staff give generously of their time to translate the information into the mother tongue. Parents and carers support the school and express satisfaction with what it provides.

The leadership and management of the headteacher and governing body are outstanding and at the core of the school's successes. They know precisely where they want the school to go and work tirelessly to attract funds from the local business community, which enables them to give that extra quality to pupils' experiences. They are keen to move forward further. For example, there are long term plans to improve community involvement, by accommodating adult training facilities and encouraging volunteers to formalise their experiences.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 1

Provision is outstanding and contributes very well to children's development and well-being at a critical time in their lives. They join school with very few language skills but the planning

is so well-matched to their needs that they soon learn to explore, investigate and practise through play in rich and stimulating conditions both indoors and outside. The level of adult intervention increases as they get older and the informed and skilled attention to language acquisition means they make very good progress by the time they reach the end of the Reception class. Attainment is in line with national expectations, showing continued improvement since 2006. Children enjoy enormously everything on offer because all Early Learning Goals are skilfully interwoven into the planned curriculum. The constant access to the outside learning area, whatever the weather, means they are healthy and active. Leadership and management are outstanding. All staff are valued and work very well together as a team. Assessment is integral to learning and teaching and high quality displays are testament to the quality of provision. Parents and carers are very pleased with what goes on.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Refine how pupils self-evaluate their work to match best practice and ensure it is consistent across the school.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils' achievement is outstanding. Standards are now broadly average at the end of Year 6, which represents outstanding progress given the well-below average attainment of these pupils when they started. There has been an upward trend in attainment overall for the last three years in both key stages. A slight dip in results in science and mathematics in 2007 is attributable to casual entrants to Year 6. There is no significant difference between boys and girls' attainment. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, especially those with speech, language and communication problems, also make very good progress because their needs are quickly identified. Well-targeted support by teaching assistants ensures they keep up with their classmates. Virtually all pupils reach their challenging targets. An effective tracking system means that intervention programmes happen quickly and have a very positive impact on pupils who start to fall behind.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. By the time they leave the school, most are developing into mature young citizens. Pupils behave and co-operate very well with each other in class, at lunchtimes and in the playground. They learn about a wide range of cultures. They reflect in a mature way upon wider issues in assemblies, such as bullying, what people believe and learn from people and events of the past, such as the life of Anne Frank. They are proud of their school and speak enthusiastically about what it provides. Bullying and racist incidents do occur occasionally, but pupils explain that the school deals with them appropriately and quickly. Pupils have a very good understanding of healthy living and now enjoy healthy lunches. They like the range of fresh vegetables and fruit. Pupils make a very good contribution to the community. They help the Royal British Legion to produce their newsletters twice a year and work with the Island History Association. They are developing well their skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT), to help them in their future lives. Religious festivals reduce attendance and, although the school is persistent about promoting better attendance, it remains average.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 1

Teaching and learning are outstanding because well-planned lessons meet the needs of all pupils. High quality resources contribute to interesting lessons where pupils can work actively to increase their progress and achieve very well. In the most effective lessons, teachers enable pupils to assess their own learning by making sure that what they are meant to be learning is prominently displayed. The use of interactive white boards contributes very well to this aspect of assessment. Teachers question pupils closely and reinforce the lesson objectives using precise technical language. There are high expectations for achieving well in English and mathematics. Support staff make a significant contribution to the successful learning of those pupils with individual needs and whose first language is not English. However, some teachers lack confidence and the skills in encouraging pupils to assess their own work.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 1

The school provides an exciting, well-planned and stimulating curriculum that addresses the needs of the pupils extremely well. Provision for pupils with special educational needs, for example those with behavioural difficulties or speech and language problems, gifted and talented pupils and those with English as an additional language is excellent. Pupils speak with enthusiasm about what they do in school, as well as their many visits out of school and these experiences help them to achieve well and enjoy their schooling. Pupils speak with excitement about a very wide range of extra-curricular opportunities such as visitors to school and taking part in interesting activities. These include visits to the Tower of London and to Hardelot, in France. The range of out of school clubs and activities is exceptional. These include netball, table tennis, football, horse riding and kayaking. One pupil said she was lucky to attend this school because, 'The extra activities provided are fun'. These well-planned activities help pupils to develop into well-rounded young citizens.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 1

The care of pupils is excellent. Child protection, risk assessments and health and safety procedures work very effectively. The school makes very good links within the local authority and health services to help and support pupils as necessary, contributing very well to pupils' social and emotional development. The school's well-organised procedures, to identify individual needs, take effect immediately pupils enter school. They receive very good help and guidance from well-trained support staff. The guidance and teaching given to pupils whose first language is not English is outstanding. Challenging targets are set in literacy and numeracy and prominently displayed in books for parents to see. Academic support is very effective and ensures that most pupils make excellent progress in their learning.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 1

Leadership and management, including governance, are outstanding because the headteacher, ably supported by the deputy headteacher, understands what it takes to make the pupils learn and thrive. Highly qualified governors bring a range of expertise to the school, know what high achievement looks like and constantly secure extra funds to allow it to happen. All who work at the school share this vision and it contributes significantly to how well the pupils achieve in all they do. There is rigour in the way the school evaluates all its work. Comprehensive tracking systems mean that all staff can check on the progress and standards of any pupil. The headteacher is very tough in his evaluation and there is much to show that the school is even better than he thinks. A culture of improvement exists which includes parents and carers. The high level of community cohesion brings with it positive attitudes to schooling and a common understanding about academic expectations, behaviour and attendance. The school has an outstanding capacity to improve further.

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## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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### Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1

### Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

### The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

17 July 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Seven Mills Primary School, London, E14 8LY

We had such a good time in school last week and I am writing to say thank you for helping us with the inspection. We think you have a brilliant school and you told us that you are very proud of it and like being there doing all the interesting things that the teachers plan for you. It was a shame that it rained on both days because I would like to have gone to the Sports Field to watch everyone taking part in the activities. I did manage to get a hamburger, though.

You are very fortunate that you go to a school where we think everything you do is very good indeed. This includes the lessons you are taught, the teachers that look after you but most of all your super headteacher, Mr Thurley. He makes things very special for you.

- We thought that the only thing you need to improve is the way you check your work, decide whether it is the best you can do and if not, how you will improve it.

Your teachers are going to talk about how they can make sure they help you to help yourselves.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Woolhouse

Lead Inspector