

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **TANGLEWOOD NURSERY SCHOOL**

Chelmsford

LEA area: Essex

Unique reference number: 114698

Headteacher: Mrs J Arnot

Reporting inspector: Mrs C Skinner  
23160

Dates of inspection: 15<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> May 2000

Inspection number: 182762

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

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Nursery
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 5
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Melbourne Avenue Chelmsford Essex
Postcode:	CM1 2DX
Telephone number:	01245 352788
Fax number:	01245 490248
Appropriate authority:	The Local Education Authority
Name of chair of managers:	Mrs A Davidson
Date of previous inspection:	8 <sup>th</sup> to 11 <sup>th</sup> July 1996

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Area of learning responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Carole Skinner	Registered inspector	Knowledge and understanding of the world Creative development Equal opportunities	What sort of school is it? The children's achievements. How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
Pamela Goldsack	Lay inspector		Attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Alan Britton	Team inspector	Mathematics Physical development Special educational needs	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to children?
Audrey Quinnell	Team inspector	Language and literacy Personal and social development English as an additional language The work of the speech, language and communications unit	How well are children taught?

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Tanglewood Nursery School is a school for boys and girls between the ages of three and five. One hundred and eighty-one children attend on a part-time basis in the morning or afternoon. This is equivalent to a full-time roll of 91 children, which is larger than most schools of the same type. The number of boys and girls on roll is almost the same. Nearly all of the children are three or four years old. Most leave the school at the age of four, having spent an average of three terms in the school. The school is heavily oversubscribed and has a long waiting list. Six children are learning English as an additional language, three of whom are at an early stage of language acquisition. Fifteen children come from ethnic minority backgrounds. The school does not make provision for midday meals. Thirty children are identified as having special educational needs, of whom one has a statement of special educational need and 23 are currently undergoing statutory assessment. Three children entered the school and three left at times other than those of the normal leaving or entry. The school makes provision for children who have speech and communication difficulties in an integrated speech, language and communication unit, which caters for 16 children. The attainment of children when they enter the school is broadly average. The school remains under the control of the Local Education Authority and does not have a delegated budget.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

This is an excellent school which achieves very high standards in all of its work. Children make very good progress in their learning as a result of excellent teaching and an exceptionally good range of opportunities for learning. By the time they leave the school, they have achieved standards that are well above those expected for children of a similar age. The leadership and management of the school are very good. All staff work very effectively as a team and are committed to achieving excellence in all areas of school life.

#### **What the school does well**

- The headteacher provides excellent leadership for the school and is very well supported by all staff, who make a very good contribution to its management. This results in very high standards in all aspects of the school's work.
- The excellent quality of the teaching enables the children to make very good progress in their learning.
- The children attain very good standards by the time they leave the school.
- The school offers an outstanding curriculum, which makes a highly significant contribution to the very good progress made by the children.
- Children's attitudes to learning, their behaviour and their personal development are excellent and have a significant impact on the progress they make.
- The school's excellent relationships with parents enable it to develop a very effective partnership to support children's learning.

#### **What could be improved**

- There are no significant areas of weakness in the school.

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

The school was last inspected in July 1996. Since that time, it has made a very good improvement. Its capacity to continue to improve in the future is excellent. In response to the issues identified in the previous inspection, the school produced a very detailed action plan, which was implemented with great thoroughness. Curricular organisation is constantly under review and the excellent planning ensures that all children receive the same balanced, highly stimulating curriculum. The school's assessment

procedures have also been revised and improved and these are now excellent. They are used consistently and constructively to ensure that each child's needs are met and that comprehensive records of children's progress are kept. The school has improved its provision for information technology by providing a computer for each classroom and planning a range of activities to develop children's skills in this area of learning. This has helped to raise children's attainment in their knowledge and understanding of the world, as has the introduction of food technology, which involves all children in making their daily snack. The quality of teaching has improved significantly and the school has taken on a new role as a training centre for the Essex Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

## STANDARDS

The table summarises inspectors' judgements about the achievements of pupils in relation to the national learning objectives by the time they leave the school.

Performance in:		<b>Key</b>  well above average    A above average        B average                C below average        D well below average   E
Language and literacy	A	
Mathematics	B	
Personal and social development	A	
Other areas of the curriculum	A	

Most children leave the school when they are four years old by which time they are achieving standards that are well above those expected for children of a similar age in language and literacy, personal and social development, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development and physical development. In mathematics, standards are above average but are not as strong as in other areas of learning. Children with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language make very good progress and attain very good standards in relation to their previous attainment.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Children have excellent attitudes to their work. They are eager to take part in all activities and sustain concentration very well. This has a very positive effect on their rate of learning.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	The children's behaviour is excellent at all times, both in classrooms and when engaged in outdoor activities. They show consideration for each other and are very polite and well-mannered.
Personal development and relationships	Excellent. Children show initiative and independence when selecting resources and carrying out activities. They quickly develop confidence and self-assurance. They form excellent relationships with other children and adults, all of which helps to promote very effective learning.
Attendance	Although children are not of statutory school age and attendance figures are not required to be calculated, attendance and punctuality are good, and each child's attendance is carefully monitored by staff.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

<b>Teaching of pupils:</b>	
Lessons seen overall	Excellent

*Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Satisfactory' means that the teaching is adequate and strengths outweigh weaknesses.*

Throughout the school, the quality of teaching is excellent. During the inspection, 21 per cent of the lessons seen were excellent, 74 per cent were very good and five per cent were good. The quality of the teaching in personal and social development and language and literacy is excellent, and in mathematics, it is very good. The needs of all children, including those with special educational needs and those who are learning English as an additional language, are very well met. The consistent pursuit of excellence by all staff has a very significant impact on the progress children make. Teachers, nursery nurses and assistants have an excellent understanding of how very young children learn through play and this underpins all of their work. They work very well in partnership to plan an outstanding range of learning experiences and all have very high expectations of what children are able to achieve. As a result, the quality of children's learning is very good. They sustain concentration for lengthy periods, and demonstrate independence and initiative in selecting and carrying out activities. As a result of their eagerness to learn, they acquire new knowledge and skills at a rapid pace.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides children with a highly stimulating, varied and challenging curriculum. The quality of curricular planning is outstanding and has a significant impact on the progress made by the children.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The school makes very good provision for all children with special educational needs, including those who attend the speech, language and communication unit. Children's needs are identified and met very well through very good individual programmes of work. All children are fully integrated into the daily classroom activities.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Children who are learning English as an additional language receive very good support. They are taught key words and rhymes in a structured way, which helps them to take part in all class activities and promotes very good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The school's excellent provision for the children's personal development is reflected in all aspects of school life. Very good spiritual and cultural development take place through storytelling and imaginative play. Excellent moral and social development are achieved through all of the school's routines and its very high expectations of the children.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school has very good procedures for child protection and the health and welfare of the children. There are excellent arrangements for assessing children's progress and teachers keep comprehensive records which help them to meet every child's needs. All staff know children very well and take great care to ensure that they feel safe, secure and happy.

The school's excellent partnership with parents makes a significant contribution to the progress made by the children.

### HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The leadership and management of the headteacher are excellent and she is supported very well by all other staff. Teachers, nursery nurses, speech and language therapists and assistants work very effectively together as a team, and all are constantly seeking to achieve excellence in all that they do.
How well the managers fulfil their responsibilities	Although the managers do not have the same statutory powers and responsibilities as governors, they are well informed about all aspects of school life and provide good support for the headteacher and staff. They make regular visits to the school and keep abreast of all developments.
The school's evaluation of its performance	This is a self-critical school, in which all members of staff are constantly seeking ways to improve their practice, reviewing new initiatives and assessing the impact of their work on how well children learn. There is no complacency, despite the very high standards already being achieved.
The strategic use of resources	The funds that are made available to the school by the Local Education Authority are administered very efficiently and spent very wisely to ensure that the school receives the best possible value. The school makes excellent use of its staff, accommodation and outstanding range of resources to support children's learning.

The adequacy of the school's staffing, accommodation and learning resources is very good.

### PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children like school.</li> <li>• The way in which the school helps their children to become mature and responsible.</li> <li>• The way the school is managed.</li> <li>• The quality of the teaching.</li> <li>• The progress which the children make.</li> <li>• The approachability of all staff.</li> <li>• The way the school works closely with them and keeps them well informed about their children's progress.</li> </ul>	

The parents at the pre-inspection meeting with members of the inspection team expressed unanimous support for and confidence in the school, as did those who replied to the inspection questionnaire. A number of parents wrote to the registered inspector to express their appreciation of and admiration for the work of the school. Particular mention was made of the excellent qualities of the headteacher and staff and the very good progress made by the children, including those with speech and communication difficulties. The findings of the inspection team agree with the views of the parents in every respect, that Tanglewood Nursery School provides an excellent education for their children.



## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and achievements**

1. The standards achieved by children at Tanglewood Nursery School are well above average by the time they leave the school, which, in most cases, is at the age of four. By this time, they are well on the way to achieving the national objectives that are set for five year olds. The attainment of children on entry to the school is broadly average. This represents very good achievement, which results from a combination of the excellent quality of teaching and the outstanding range of opportunities for learning that all children receive during their time at Tanglewood. Children achieve standards that are above average in mathematics, as at the time of the previous inspection. In personal and social development, language and literacy, creative development, physical development and knowledge and understanding of the world, standards are well above those expected for children of a similar age. These very high standards have been maintained since the last inspection in all areas of learning except knowledge and understanding of the world, where they are now higher than they were four years ago. This is due to the introduction of computers in every classroom and an excellent programme of food technology, which involves the children in preparing their daily snack.

2. Children who have special educational needs, including those who receive specialist support in the speech, language and communication unit, also make very good progress in their learning and achieve very well in relation to their previous attainment. This results from careful identification of individual children's needs and very well structured support. The few children who are learning English as an additional language also make very good progress in their learning and achieve very well. They are closely monitored and given very good support to help them acquire a new language. Throughout the school, boys and girls make equally good progress in their learning as the school devotes much attention to ensuring that all children have equal opportunities to develop skills and acquire knowledge and understanding.

3. Children achieve very good standards in their personal and social development. They quickly develop confidence and independence, and form excellent relationships with each other and with adults. They are eager to explore a wide range of learning experiences and show persistence and sustained interest in all activities. Children take turns and share toys and equipment fairly. Standards are also very good in language and literacy. Children develop very good listening skills because they are given numerous opportunities to listen to stories and instructions and respond to questions. They speak clearly and audibly, and many have the ability to express their ideas in coherent sentences. Children hold conversations of varying degrees of complexity as they engage in stimulating role-play activities. They enjoy books and handle them with care. Older children associate sounds with letters of the alphabet and recognise their own names.

4. In mathematics, standards are higher than expected for children of a similar age. Children count objects up to ten and sing familiar number rhymes and songs. They sort objects according to their size and are beginning to use appropriate mathematical language when comparing them. Older children make tally charts to show what each child wants to eat for a snack. Children recognise and name squares, rectangles, triangles and circles accurately. Children achieve very good standards in developing their knowledge and understanding of the world. They know that ice is frozen water and that it will melt when warm water is poured on it. They observe and handle a trout and some can identify fins and scales. Through role-play, they learn that water is a very precious commodity in parts of Africa. Children explore and select from a range of materials and use cutting, joining and building skills to make items such as musical instruments, castles, flags and finger puppets. They handle tools such as hammers, nails and drills with safety and confidence as they work with wood, and they prepare

a wide variety of different foods for their daily snack. Children use simple computer programs which support their learning in other areas of the curriculum.

5. Standards in creative development are also very good. Children produce pictures, patterns and models using a range of materials. They print using fruit and fish and paint with differently sized brushes to achieve different effects. They create backgrounds by marbling and add to them using collage techniques. Children listen to and create music and respond to it in dance and through imaginative play. The excellent opportunities that are provided for children to participate in imaginative play in a variety of contexts are a key factor in the children's very good attainment. The standards achieved by children in their physical development are also very good. This is due in no small part to the excellent and imaginatively designed outdoor environment, which provides children with a wealth of experiences. They use climbing frames, rope ladders, tricycles and large building equipment skilfully and confidently. They dig, pour and build in the sandpits and throw balls and wet sponges at targets. Children have very good awareness of space and of each other. They handle many different tools and smaller objects with increasing dexterity as they hammer, weave, cut and thread.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

6. Children are enthusiastic about coming to school and have excellent attitudes toward all aspects of school life. This judgement is the same as that made in the previous inspection. Children are confident when they arrive for each session and move comfortably from their departing parents to their class teacher or nursery nurse. Even the youngest pupils, who have only been attending for a few weeks, are happy to join in activities without hesitation. Children ask questions readily and concentrate very well for extended periods of time. A typical example was a group of children playing together as a crew on a ship. With the expert guidance of their teacher, they moved supplies with pulleys, consulted a map, made safety checks, donned life jackets and peered through a telescope. The direct link between excellent teaching and excellent attitudes and behaviour was evident throughout the inspection.

7. The children's behaviour is exemplary as at the time of the last inspection. They are polite and friendly to adults and to each other. They listen very well, and this helps to support learning very significantly. Children enjoy playing with the wide range of toys and equipment and treat these resources with care. They make regular use of the lending library, and books and displays are treated with respect. The excellent behaviour is implicit and children thrive in this atmosphere of calm and joyful learning.

8. The children's personal development and their relationships within the school are outstanding. This reflects the judgement of the previous inspection. The daily routine of eating wholesome snacks together is one of many activities that enable children to be responsible, learn new practical skills and extend their social skills. Children are very kind to each other and reflect the excellent role models that all members of the staff represent. Children are patient with each other and this helps to support learning for pupils who have speech difficulties.

9. Attendance is good even though it is not a statutory requirement for children of this age. The same judgement was made in the last inspection. Children are eager to come to school and arrive punctually for the morning or afternoon session.

### **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?**

10. The quality of teaching is excellent and the quality of learning is very good. During the inspection, 42 lessons were observed. The quality of teaching was excellent in nine, very good in thirty-one and good in two. This represents a very good improvement in the quality of teaching since the previous inspection, when teaching was judged to be good overall. In this inspection, teaching was at least good

in all lessons and very good or excellent in 95 per cent of lessons. In the last inspection, teaching was very good or excellent in 11 per cent of the lessons observed. The excellent quality of the teaching has a direct impact on the high quality of the children's learning. The quality of teaching is excellent in personal and social development, language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development and physical development. The quality of the children's learning is excellent in knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development and physical development. It is very good in personal and social development, language and literacy and mathematics.

11. The teachers, nursery nurses, speech and language therapists and learning support assistants are very knowledgeable about the way young children learn. Together, they form a very effective team, who create challenging, stimulating activities, which help to increase the children's understanding about a very wide range of themes and make learning fun. Lessons are meticulously planned to ensure that all children are given every opportunity to make very good progress in all areas of learning. Every activity has a focused area of learning, as well as details on how the activity is related to all other areas of the curriculum for the foundation stage of children's learning. There are excellent relationships between all adults and children, which enables children to feel secure, confident and keen to learn. All adults in the school have very high expectations of the children, are very supportive and know each child very well as an individual.

12. All adults place great emphasis on, and provide an excellent range of, challenging activities to develop the children's personal, social, language and literacy skills. This enables the children to become confident, independent learners, to have excellent attitudes to learning and faultless behaviour and to make very good progress. The interaction of adults with the children in stimulating activities, such as role-play in the 'African Village' or in the 'Cobbler's Workshop', greatly extends and enhances the children's language development. Adults listen with interest to what the children have to say and use open-ended questioning effectively to develop their language skills. Children are provided with many opportunities to write for themselves, such as 'sending a postcard' after their journey on the 'Good Ship Learn-a- Lot'. The children's interest in learning early reading skills is greatly stimulated by listening to expressively read stories and they eagerly talk about authors and recognise title pages. Children, including those who attend speech and language therapy sessions, know some initial phonic sounds, such as 's' for snake and 'f' for fish. At present, the school is taking part in a research project to try to find out what impact, if any, the presence of a male role model for reading will have on raising boys' interest in reading.

13. There is a very good mix of structured and independent learning activities in all classes, which enables the children to learn very well. Children quickly become absorbed in their activities and sustain concentration very well. They are fascinated when they investigate a large block of ice and discover how it melts, while other children listen attentively to the teacher explaining how a fish breathes and some enjoy feeling the scaly skin of the fish. Others work confidently and independently on one of the many activities on offer, such as 'reading' books quietly in the book corner or using a roller-ball to manoeuvre the cursor on the computer to 'dress the teddy bears'. Some choose to listen to a story about 'Rosie and Jim', or are outside riding tricycles, or making a boat out of large construction materials. Every activity is planned very efficiently and every member of staff, together with parent helpers, is so well deployed that all children are effectively engaged in learning. The adults treat each other and the children with respect and are very good role models for the children. They insist on good manners at all times and, combined with the inspiring curriculum, this results in the children being so interested in their learning that their behaviour is exemplary.

14. The quality of teaching for children with special educational needs, including those who receive speech and language therapy, is excellent. They are very well integrated within their class and also receive excellent additional help in small groups or individually. They are making very good progress due to the excellent support from the teachers, speech and language therapists and assistants, who make

learning interesting and fun. Thorough assessments are made of each child's stage of development in all areas of the curriculum and these are used effectively to inform future planning by class teachers, and by the speech and language therapists, to extend the children's learning. The quality of teaching for children who are learning English as an additional language is excellent. When they enter the nursery, they are helped to learn English in a similar way to that of young children learning their mother language. This includes learning rhymes and words that are important to each child, such as 'mum', 'dad', 'face', 'eyes', 'coat' and 'shoes'. Playing with the other children helps them to form friendships and to learn English in a very practical way. They make very good progress and they quickly become fluent in speaking English.

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

15. The school offers all children an exceptional range of opportunities to develop skills, knowledge and understanding across all areas of learning. This represents very good improvement since the last inspection, when a key issue directed the school to review curricular organisation to ensure that every child received a balanced curriculum. This has been achieved through outstanding curricular planning. It begins with a brainstorming session, in which all staff contribute ideas to the whole school theme for the half-term, and eventually results in each class having meticulously detailed planning sheets for every activity. These are displayed where the activity takes place and provide excellent guidelines for parent helpers and students, as well as showing how each of the six areas of learning is to be addressed through the activity. Computers have been introduced in each class since the last inspection and the school now ensures that all children learn basic computer skills. French is also taught to every class for a short time each week. The opportunities that are provided for children to select from a broad range of activities enable them to develop independence and initiative at a very early age. This results in very high levels of involvement and excellent behaviour. The strategies for teaching early literacy skills are excellent and those for numeracy are very good. These lay a very sound foundation for future learning. The ongoing assessment and recording of children's achievements ensure that all children participate in the full range of planned activities and make very good progress in their learning.

16. The curriculum is enhanced by excellent arrangements to involve parents in their children's learning. The school provides them with extensive information about what is being taught and how they can help at home. The school has also recently been involved in practical research intended to encourage boys to take a more active interest in reading. The school has carefully monitored whether having an adult in the book corner attracts more children to explore books, and whether having a male parent there has any significant influence on boys' attitudes to reading. The curriculum is further enhanced by excellent links with the local community. These include visits to places in the locality, including a launderette, a supermarket and a fish and chip shop. All classes also visit Colchester Zoo during the summer term. Many visitors to the school include grandparents, nurses, musicians, police and fire officers, bus drivers and parents with babies, who all add a further dimension to the children's learning.

17. The school prepares children very well for statutory education by laying the foundations of learning in many areas through a simple, but comprehensive, personal, social and health education programme. This includes the safe use of medicines and tablets, and awareness of health and hygiene issues. The children's preparation of their own snacks is also a novel but very important strength of the curriculum. The school also lays the foundations of religious education through retelling Bible stories, such as 'Noah's Ark', and singing songs. There is close liaison with local schools to which children will transfer at the end of their time at Tanglewood.

18. The school has excellent systems and policies to ensure equal opportunity and access to all areas of the curriculum for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and children who are

learning English as an additional language. Provision for children with special educational needs, including those who attend the speech, language and communication unit, is very good. A dedicated, experienced and well qualified team works under the direction of a full time co-ordinator for special educational needs. Teachers, nursery nurses, speech and language therapists and learning support assistants work constructively together to meet each child's needs. They provide very good support for children individually and in small groups. Some of this support takes place in the classroom, but sometimes children are withdrawn to work in a separate room. On occasions, children have to be taught in the corridor or in the staff room, as there is not enough space to accommodate all small groups. The school has identified this as an issue in its five-year development plan. Children's individual education plans contain appropriate details and include targets for developing speech and language, physical, social and intellectual skills. A weekly programme is devised for each child, which is revised each week in consultation with class teachers and parents. The school receives very good support from outside agencies, including community nurses, the community doctor and the paediatric department of the local hospital. There are close links with local primary schools and with the local community, where children are often taken on visits.

19. There is also excellent provision for children's personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This judgement agrees with the findings of the last OFSTED inspection. The curriculum provides many opportunities for children to reflect on their everyday experiences and there were many observed instances of children expressing awe and wonder during the inspection. On one occasion, children held a melting ice cube in their hands and poured warm water onto it, observing what happened. All staff value children's suggestions and ideas, which develops their confidence and self respect. The school's provision for moral development is exemplary and underpins every aspect of school life. Children are expected to behave well and they respond accordingly. They show a very good understanding of right and wrong and can usually explain why. They also show a developing awareness of wider moral issues, as when they are given opportunities to discuss and learn about the wars in Africa.

20. Provision for the children's social development is also excellent. This is due in part to the quiet, relaxed, friendly manner of all staff, who provide excellent role models for the children's social behaviour. Children become confident enough to resolve their own differences with gentle encouragement from staff. The provision of stimulating, exciting activities also encourages children to become competent, independent learners. Cultural development is promoted very well through several areas of learning. Teachers read stories, such as 'Handa's Surprise' and children prepare a wide range of snacks from different parts of the world. The 'African Village' role-play area gives children an understanding of various aspects of African culture. Plentiful multicultural resources include dolls, books, dressing up clothes, music tapes and musical instruments. Children are also provided with an insight into their home culture through seasonal religious festivals, visitors and various topics and themes throughout the year.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

21. The safety and well being of children is an important focus for all members of staff. The procedures for ensuring children's welfare and the arrangements for child protection are very good. This judgement reflects that made in the previous inspection. There are a number of well-written policies to guide staff and visitors regarding safe practices both in school and on trips. The head teacher carries out regular risk assessments of the site and improvements are ongoing. The school's excellent approach toward behaviour management meets the needs of these young children and results in a friendly and orderly community.

22. The headteacher holds responsibility for child protection and is supported in this role by the deputy. The school has its own policy, and regulations relating to child protection are reviewed regularly with members of the staff. Statutory requirements in this area are fully met. The school maintains good

links with outside health and support agencies that are called upon regularly to help meet the needs of the children. The school is very clean and the grounds are maintained to a very high standard.

23. Class registers are maintained very carefully. Although attendance at school for these children is not a statutory requirement, the school makes enquiries if a child does not attend on a regular basis. Great care is taken to promote safe practices among children without limiting their sense of adventure. Pupils are taught how to cut with scissors or knives and how to handle hammers and saws correctly. The very high level of care for the children has been maintained since the last inspection.

24. The school has excellent systems for assessing and monitoring children's academic and personal development. This represents very good improvement since the last inspection, when assessment procedures were not sufficiently rigorous. All staff are involved in recording what children have achieved, and many instances of this were observed during the inspection in all classrooms. Assessment sheets are first formulated during the pre-school staff visit and these are compiled with the help of parents. An initial profile of each child is then completed by the end of the child's first week. A whole session observation of each child is carried out every term. Details of all observations and assessments are included in the child's individual folder, which also contains samples of work. Parents are kept very well informed during the process, and the special educational needs and speech and language departments also identify children who need extra help. Teaching and support staff are involved in recording children's progress and attainment during all activities. This includes careful observations of children's imaginative play to record milestones in their personal development. Teachers and nursery nurses meet every day after school to review and discuss the progress of individual pupils and the success of different activities. They use this time very productively to plan further activities for the children or to re-assess and revise lesson plans.

#### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

25. The quality of information provided for parents is excellent. Parents meet formally with teachers each term to discuss their child's progress and review a written report on all areas of development and learning. These reports are very well written and parents are invited to add their views on their child's progress. All members of staff are friendly and easy to approach. The cornerstone of the school's outstanding link with parents is the home visit made before a child enters school. Children are very well known as individuals and they arrive on the first day to be greeted by a familiar face. The headteacher sends parents regular, informative newsletters and these contain very useful details about helping children to learn at home. Blackboards outside each classroom are updated daily to keep parents fully informed about the activities that their child will be involved in that day.

26. Parents make a very good contribution to children's learning at school and at home. A number of parents and grandparents help regularly in classrooms and teachers can rely on this commitment and organise learning activities around them. Parents are very well directed and help with reading, cooking, crafts and games. Others contribute to learning on individual occasions, such as playing the violin for a class or providing ethnic food. The Friends of Tanglewood raise significant amounts of money to help fund improvements and provide extra equipment. Parents make good use of the lending library to read regularly with their children at home.

27. The overall effectiveness of the school's links with parents is excellent. This view is reflected in the very positive replies to the questionnaire and comments offered at the parents' meeting before the inspection. The school's outstanding partnership with parents has improved since the last inspection and helps children to reach the very high standards they attain.

## **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED**

28. The leadership and management of the school are very good, as at the time of the last inspection. Under the excellent leadership of the headteacher, all staff make a highly effective contribution to the management of the school. All are involved in making key decisions about changes and improvements, and there is a very strong commitment to achieving excellence in all aspects of the school's work. This ensures that the school's clearly stated aims are fully met. Its commitment to good relationships and equality of opportunity for all children is reflected in every area of school life. The main reason for the very high quality leadership and management is that all staff share the same philosophy of education for children of Nursery age. This underpins all that they do and ensures that everyone is committed passionately to the same vision and ideals for the school. Every member of the team is valued, and all work together successfully in an atmosphere of mutual respect and appreciation. This, in turn, creates a very warm and welcoming ethos, in which children feel secure and happy and parents have complete trust. The very high quality of the school's leadership and management has a significant impact on the quality of education provided for the children and the very high standards they attain.

29. The leadership and management of the provision for children with special educational needs are also very good. The co-ordinator for special educational needs makes a very effective contribution to the overall management of the school, ensuring that teachers, nursery nurses, speech therapists and assistants work well together as a team to meet the needs of each child.

30. The school has remained under the control of the Local Education Authority and, as such, does not have a delegated budget or governors with statutory obligations. The managers are well informed and very supportive of the school. They make regular visits and play an active part in the life of the school. The headteacher keeps managers abreast of all developments through informative and detailed reports, which are discussed fully at meetings and followed up in subsequent visits.

31. The shared commitment to excellence also guarantees a self-critical approach to the management of the school, which has brought about very good improvement since the previous inspection in 1996. Each of the issues that was identified at that time has been addressed in depth with meticulous attention to detail. All staff are involved in reviewing the curriculum on a regular basis, and the improvements that have been made now ensure that every child receives a balanced range of opportunities for learning. All children now have access to a computer, and teachers have planned a variety of experiences to familiarise children with how computers work and to help with their learning in other areas of the curriculum. The organisation of the curriculum now ensures that all children are able to participate fully in the whole range of activities provided. At the time of the last inspection, the school's arrangements for assessing children's attainment and progress did not ensure that all children were assessed systematically in all areas of learning. Since that time, staff have introduced excellent procedures for assessing and recording how children are progressing and what they understand. These enable teachers to meet every child's needs very well.

32. There has also been a very good improvement in the quality of teaching since the last inspection. In this inspection, teaching was judged to be very good or excellent in 95 per cent of the lessons observed, compared with 11 per cent in 1996. This is an outstanding achievement and can be attributed directly to every member of staff's commitment to excellence in all their work. It also results from rigorous monitoring and development of teaching that is accepted as an essential part of the leadership and management of the school. The headteacher, her deputy and more experienced staff provide excellent role models for less experienced teachers, and offer very good support and advice to their colleagues. Teachers and nursery nurses work successfully as a team in each classroom, sharing ideas and expertise and constantly searching for better ways of developing children's learning. In all other areas, the school has either maintained or improved upon the already high standards identified in the last inspection. The school's capacity to continue to maintain exceptionally high standards is excellent.

33. The headteacher and school secretary work closely together, and in liaison with an officer from the Local Education Authority, to check expenditure and ensure that the school obtains the best value possible when purchasing resources. All staff contribute effectively to the school development planning process and identify priorities for expenditure. The range and quality of the school's resources are excellent as a result of careful planning and wise expenditure. There is an extensive range of very good quality practical equipment to support each area of learning and a large number of books are attractively displayed in each classroom. Parents and children are able to borrow books from the amply stocked library to share at home. The wide range of high quality resources makes a significant contribution to the children's learning, as teachers are able to present ideas in many interesting and exciting ways to stimulate the children's interest and make learning enjoyable. For example, each classroom has a purpose built area for imaginative play, all of which have been created with great imagination and originality to provide splendid opportunities for developing children's learning. In an 'African Village', children dress in African clothes and headgear, draw water from the well and learn about wildlife. On board 'The Good Ship Learn-a-Lot', children hoist cargo on board using a pulley system, plan their voyage on a world map, prepare food in the galley and use a telescope to spy out land. The quality of the outdoor learning environment is outstanding. Playhouses become a castle museum and a cobbler's shop, children make music and instruments on the bandstand and learn the skill of weaving at the weaving fence. Play areas have been designed with great imagination and these are enhanced by an extensive range of climbing equipment, tricycles, targets to practise throwing and aiming, swings and sandpits.

34. The accommodation is very well maintained, and imaginative use is made of all available space. Covered outdoor classrooms provide useful extensions to the work area and there is a very well equipped kitchen. The only drawback to the accommodation is that children who have special educational needs sometimes have to work in the staffroom or corridor when taken out of the classroom for specialist teaching. The school has recognised the need to address this issue in its five-year development plan.

35. Undoubtedly, key factors in the very good progress made by the children are the excellent ratio of adults to children, the outstanding quality, quantity and range of resources, and the imaginatively designed and organised indoor and outdoor learning environments. Overall, the school offers an excellent model for Nursery education, which has been recognised by the Local Education Authority. It works in partnership with the school to provide monthly training for other teachers, nursery nurses and professionals with an interest in Nursery education. The school also provides a highly effective training ground for students who are training to become teachers or nursery nurses. They are given excellent support during their time in school.

### **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

36. In the context of the school's many strengths, the following point for improvement should be considered in the action plan:

- Continuing to implement effectively the priorities already identified in the school's five-year development plan.



## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### *Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection*

Number of lessons observed	42
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	14

### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
21	74	5	0	0	0	0

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

### *Information about the school's pupils*

#### **Pupils on the school's roll**

	Nursery
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	91
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	N/a

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

#### **Special educational needs**

	Nursery
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	30

#### **English as an additional language**

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	6

#### **Pupil mobility in the last school year**

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	3
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	3

### *Attendance*

#### **Authorised absence**

	%
School data	N/a

#### **Unauthorised absence**

	%
School data	N/a

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

### *Teachers and classes*

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	15

Total number of education support staff	10
Total aggregate hours worked per week	278

Number of pupils per FTE adult	6
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*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### *Financial information*

Financial year	1999
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	£
Total income	314970
Total expenditure	316681
Expenditure per pupil	3519
Balance brought forward from previous year	(1711)
Balance carried forward to next year	(1892)

***Results of the survey of parents and carers***

**Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	181
Number of questionnaires returned	59

**Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	92	8	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	81	19	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	69	27	0	0	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	58	27	3	0	12
The teaching is good.	85	15	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	76	19	3	0	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	80	20	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	67	28	2	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	78	22	0	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	85	15	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	88	12	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	70	17	0	0	13

## **PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES**

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

#### **Personal and social development**

37. Children attain well above average standards in personal and social development by the time they leave the school. This includes children with special educational needs and those who are learning English as an additional language. These very high standards have been maintained since the last inspection. The excellent teaching helps the children to make very good progress in this area of learning. This inspection took place early in the summer term when some three-year-old children in each class had only been in school for a few days. These very young children were settling in extremely well. Children feel safe and secure in the Nursery, which enables them to become confident learners. All the children are eager to explore the wide range of activities, both in and outside the classes. They enjoy making and sharing the 'snacks' for their break, such as buttering rolls and cooking rice, popcorn, hot-dogs and pasta. These activities are used extremely well to help the children to develop good manners and to extend their language skills by the use of very effective questioning and clear explanations. Children co-operate with one another very well when working in pairs or small groups. They quickly learn to share and to take turns. Relationships between children and between children and adults are excellent. The staff value every child and use praise to encourage each child to succeed. Children demonstrate independence when washing their hands before and after handling food. They concentrate for lengthy periods on an activity and persevere with more difficult tasks. Children take great care when handling living things, such as plants and when cleaning out the goldfish. They show the ability to solve simple practical problems, such as choosing to use a vice to hold a piece of wood steady.

38. The quality of teaching is excellent and the quality of learning is very good. Personal and social development are promoted very effectively in all areas of learning. Teachers encourage children to be independent, both in physical activities, such as dressing themselves, and also in their choice of activities. The children respond extremely well to the many opportunities offered to them, which are expertly planned to promote fully their personal and social development. The children's behaviour is exemplary. Simple re-telling of stories, such as 'Noah's Ark' and playing in the 'African Village' help them to understand that there is a need to be friendly and to share with others. Visits to the local launderette and the fish and chip shop, together with visits to the Nursery by 'people who help us', enable the children to understand how others in society help them.

#### **Language and literacy**

39. On entry to the Nursery, the children's attainment in language and literacy is average, when compared to children of a similar age. They make very good progress and attain standards that are well above those expected of children of a similar age by the time they leave the Nursery. This judgement is in line with that made in the last inspection. Children with special educational needs and those who are learning English as an additional language also attain very good standards in relation to their earlier attainment and make very good progress in their learning. All activities are very well planned to help the children to develop their speaking and listening skills. The use of puppets, such as 'Molly' and 'Little Boy Blue' help the children to listen attentively, as they watch every action made by the puppets. 'Molly' is used to great advantage to hold the children's interest when they are working in the speech and language unit. The children find it fun to participate in a game by saying 'Molly behave', when she is not listening, and this helps them to learn quickly to have 'good listening' by placing their hands on their knees and looking at whoever is speaking to them. The very good interaction of adults in the role-play areas provide the children with many opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills.

During 'snack time' adults talk to the children individually and in small groups, which helps them to learn the art of conversation. The excellent understanding by the staff of how young children learn is enabling many of the children to have high attainment in speaking and listening, as they are able to hold conversations with each other and adults.

40. Adults have excellent storytelling techniques and are very good role models for the children on how to read. The children sat spellbound during one story-time listening to 'A fish out of water' being read very expressively to them, which enhanced the children's understanding of stories and stimulated their imagination. Many of the children are acquiring very good early reading skills and know that pictures and text convey meaning. They handle books correctly and enjoy 'reading' quietly to themselves in the attractive book corners. They are able to choose from a wide range of high quality fiction and non-fiction books in the classrooms. Children are also able to choose a book with their parents to take home from the excellent range of books in the school library, on a daily basis if they so wish. When the children come into their classroom at the start of their session, they are encouraged to recognise their names by finding their name card on a table and posting it in the post-box to self-register. They also have their names written on several sticky labels in small storage boxes, which they use independently to label their own work, such as their paintings or models.

41. Many opportunities are provided for the children to develop good hand control. They enthusiastically squeeze soapy sponges and throw these at the large 'clown' painted on an outside wall, which helps them to develop their fingers sufficiently to grip a pencil correctly. Manipulating construction toys and small world figures is also helping them to develop good hand control. The children are provided with many opportunities to write for themselves, such as 'booking a holiday' or 'sending a postcard'. Their own attempts at writing are valued and some are able to write their names or individual letters to represent words. Many are able to recognise some phonic sounds and know if they are at the beginning or end of words. Children who receive speech and language therapy are very good at this, which is helping them to make very good progress with their speech and writing. Some children are able to draw a sequence of pictures and dictate their accompanying story to an adult, who clearly writes the child's own words underneath. These stories are then made into books, which are valued and displayed in the class for others to read.

42. The quality of teaching is excellent and the quality of learning is very good in language and literacy. A major strength of the teaching is the excellent understanding and depth of knowledge demonstrated by all the staff on how young children learn. They realise the importance of the children participating in and experiencing a wide range of practical activities, combined with effective, open-ended questioning and clear explanations by an adult. The children's learning was greatly extended by the experience of looking intently at a real fish and a crab, and discussing with the teacher how the animals move and breathe. Their practical experience was further enhanced by clear explanations of how the animals are represented in books. The planning for every activity is extremely detailed, showing how each area of learning is encompassed within the activity. The focus of each activity is highlighted to ensure that this is the major area to be taught and for the children to learn. The inspiring curriculum for all the children enables each child to learn effectively and to feel successful. All adults work together as a very effective team, to which the children respond very positively.

## **Mathematics**

43. Children make very good progress in mathematics and have achieved many of the national learning objectives by the time they leave the school. The standards they achieve are above average in comparison with children of a similar age. Children with special educational needs also make good progress in their learning and attain standards that are in line with their capabilities. This judgement is in line with the findings of the last OFSTED inspection. Mathematics is very successfully woven into every aspect of children's everyday activities, and a very comprehensive range of resources is provided

by teaching staff to interest children and enhance their learning. For example, children recite well known nursery rhymes, like ‘Baa, Baa, Black Sheep’, to reinforce simple counting. They also use their fingers to count to five and back, showing the teacher the number of fingers that she asks for. Some children ‘catch fish’ with a magnetic rod and can order and count the fish up to ten. Children are beginning to use appropriate mathematical language, such as *bigger than* and *smaller than*, when comparing the size of fish or other objects. They also sort a variety of shells into large, medium and small sizes. Most children are able to recognise squares, rectangles, triangles and circles and use the correct mathematical vocabulary to name them. They identify these shapes correctly on a computer program. Older and more able children are able to produce simple tally charts to record their friends’ choice of snack. All children participate well in preparing the snacks and measure simple quantities. In the ‘Seafood Stall’ role-play area in one classroom, children are introduced to pricing and the use of coins, when buying cockles and mussels for one penny and crab sticks for two pence.

44. The quality of teaching in mathematics is excellent and the quality of learning is very good. All teachers and nursery nurses have excellent knowledge and understanding of the needs of young children and the way they learn. They ensure that there is a very wide variety of practical activities for children to participate in. Every activity, both indoors and in the outside classroom, has a planned mathematical learning outcome. For example, sand and water play activities are designed to teach children about equivalent quantities and the concepts of full and empty. During snack times, staff discuss with children, how many boys and girls are seated at the table. Through questions like ‘If I cut the bread across the middle, how many pieces do I have?’ they begin to teach the concept of fractions. All members of staff use every opportunity to ask questions skilfully in order to develop children’s learning and promote understanding. This is especially apparent in the role play areas, where children are given exciting opportunities to participate in independent learning, whether it be on board ship, in the launderette, in an African village or a seaside hotel environment. Teaching staff regularly assess all aspects of mathematics and these assessments are used very well to plan learning experiences for individual children and also to modify or improve curriculum and lesson planning. All adults have very high expectations of the children’s performance, and classes are organised and managed in a quiet, calm manner that nevertheless challenges children to reach new heights in their learning. Parents are kept very well informed of what children are learning each day and ways to help reinforce this at home.

### **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

45. Attainment is well above average in this area of learning. This represents an improvement since the previous inspection, when it was above average. Children with special educational needs attain very good standards for their capabilities. Children observe birds, fish and plants and describe what they see, noting differences in the way things look, feel and smell. They name parts of plants and animals and know that plants need water in order to grow, taking turns to water their own plants in the garden. They know that ice is frozen water and that it melts when warm water is poured on to it. Children explore the passing of time when learning about day and night, the seasons and growth. They compare old and new objects, such as different types of hot water bottle, and learn about the past from staff and visitors. Children know what a map is for, and some identify England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland on a large map. They visit the local shops and launderette and talk about where they have been. Outside, children follow a marked route on tricycles, as when ‘delivering pizzas’. They make observations of the weather and name the points of the compass. Children use portable cassette players and computers with roller ball controls to support and extend their learning across the curriculum. For example, they increase their understanding of size by matching three differently sized teddies to the right clothes, using the rollerball to ‘drag’ pictures across the screen. Children use real tools and wear goggles when working with wood, hammering in nails with great care. They use sewing skills to make finger puppets and three-dimensional models of ladybirds. One of the most outstanding aspects of this area of learning is food technology. Every day, children prepare snacks such as sandwiches, cakes, popcorn, cooked fish and rice. Through these activities, they learn how some foods change when they are cooked and

acquire a basic understanding of the importance of a healthy diet and good hygiene. In addition, they learn about different foods from around the world. All children also learn French through simple activities, including games, songs and rhymes.

46. The quality of teaching and learning is excellent. Staff provide an outstanding range of opportunities for children to explore the natural world, the outside environment and the local community, as well as extending their knowledge of countries further afield. They encourage children to ask and answer questions about what they have observed or learned, and capitalise on every opportunity to develop and extend their understanding. For example, one teacher noticed two children observing the tadpoles in the pond and took advantage of the situation to talk to them about how tadpoles change as they turn into frogs. Much of the teaching involves children in imaginative play, in which teachers and nursery nurses participate to ensure that children achieve the planned learning. For example, in the 'African Village' children were led to an understanding of how precious a commodity water is by 'drawing it from a well' and exploring all the things it had to be used for. On 'The Good Ship Learn-a-Lot', the teacher showed children how to use a pulley system to hoist cargo aboard and discussed the voyage with them by studying a map of the world. The superb range of activities that teachers and nursery nurses plan and design for children excites their interest and motivates them to learn. As a result, every minute is productive and children learn at a very good pace in an atmosphere of curiosity and wonder. They sustain concentration for lengthy periods and apply a great deal of effort to every activity, becoming totally engrossed in whatever they are doing.

### **Creative development**

47. Children attain very good standards in their creative development. This judgement is in line with that made in the previous inspection. Children with special educational needs also achieve very good standards in this area of learning. Children observe, draw and paint flowers and birds, showing imagination and sensitivity. They study paintings by famous artists and look at ways of achieving similar effects. Children print with fingers, leaves, fruit, vegetables and classroom objects – even with toasted muffins! One class printed 'goldfish' using real whitebait when they attempted to produce their own version of Matisse's goldfish in a bowl. Some children studied Van Gogh's picture called "Starry Night" and then mixed paint to create dark tones of blue and purple. They achieved excellent results using oil pastels over a painted background to create the illusion of movement. Children made cockles, mussels and crabsticks from clay to sell from their 'Seafood Stall'. They enjoy listening to and creating music as an integral part of daily activities. They often sing songs and rhymes spontaneously as part of imaginative play and enjoy singing together as a group, especially when the songs have actions to perform. In one class, children experimented with shells, pebbles and dangling chime bars to create sea sounds, varying the volume of sound to represent large and small waves. Children participate in role-play with infectious enthusiasm, showing great imagination and creativity. 'In the office', they 'write letters' and talk on the telephone. They take on the roles of landlord, landlady and guests at the 'Sea View Hotel' and visit 'the travel agent' to book a safari to Africa. They 'repair' boots and shoes in 'The Cobbler's Shop' and 'sell' cockles and mussels from 'The Seafood Stall'. Imaginative play in sand and water also involves children in creating imaginary worlds. They add soap suds to water and wash dolls' clothes, then hang them on the line to dry, and create castles from wet sand.

48. The quality of teaching and the quality of learning are excellent. Teachers provide an exceptionally good variety of opportunities for children to respond to what they observe and experience. They encourage children to express their ideas through painting, drawing, imaginative play, music and model making. Teachers' planning is exemplary. A planning sheet for every classroom activity shows how children's creative development can be fostered. All teachers and nursery nurses have an excellent understanding of how very young children learn through play, and this is reflected in the excellent learning experiences they provide. The organisation and resourcing of imaginative play areas, both in

the classroom and outside, are outstanding, and each has planned activities that address all six areas of learning. Staff have exceedingly high expectations of children and give them splendid opportunities to develop imaginative and creative skills. They make learning so exciting that children become completely engrossed in an imaginary world. By participating alongside children, adults extend the children's capacity to invent, to pretend and to step beyond the confines of the familiar. As a result, children's imagination takes flight, and they increase their knowledge and understanding across all areas of learning.

### **Physical Development**

49. In the Nursery grounds and outside play activity areas, there is an excellent range of equipment and planned activities to develop children's physical skills. They are given the opportunity to jump, run, climb and explore a splendid variety of apparatus and equipment including a rowing dinghy, climbing net, swing, trapeze and rope ladder. There is also a wide variety of wheeled toys, and children participate eagerly in imaginative play associated with shopping, travelling and driving on roads. The Nursery also has the use of the adjoining school hall for one day a week. This excellent provision of resources enables the children, including those who have special educational needs, to achieve well above average standards in their physical development compared with children of a similar age. This judgement is in line with the findings of the previous OFSTED inspection. When using wheeled toys and climbing apparatus, children move confidently and imaginatively, showing increasing control and co-ordination. Children also show a very good awareness of space and of each other, especially when negotiating the activity area on a tricycle. In all classes, children develop increasingly good hand control through a range of activities such as completing jigsaws, building with large and small construction toys, cutting, painting and sticking. They are also reasonably adept at using a hammer, nails, a vice and a drill in woodwork and model making activities. In outside activities, children really enjoy throwing soapy sponges at a clown, and rowing a rubber dinghy, both of which increase their co-ordination and manual dexterity. By the time they leave the school at the age of four, most children are already achieving most of the recommended goals for five year olds in their physical development.

50. The quality of teaching and the quality of learning in this aspect are excellent. Staff provide excellent and carefully planned outdoor facilities to enable children to move around easily and participate in an outstanding range of activities. This provision includes large, covered sand-pits, a boat with oars, a castle museum, climbing and activity apparatus and large wooden planks and boxes for construction. All staff also participate with the children in physical role play without compromising the child's independence. This excellent support also serves to help children gain confidence in using all the apparatus. Inside the Nursery, the very well planned role play areas all serve to enhance children's physical development as they climb stairs or operate equipment. This includes opening washing machine doors, folding and ironing clothes and using a ship's wheel and telescope. All staff participate in the various role play activities and assess children's performance continuously. Teaching staff and assistants work very closely with all children to show them how to use tools, equipment and materials carefully and safely, as when they prepare a range of foods each day for their snack.