

# INSPECTION REPORT

**Chichester Nursery School**  
Chichester

LEA area : West Sussex

Unique Reference Number : 125808

Headteacher : Mrs. D. Jarrett

Reporting inspector : Alison M. Cartlidge  
OIN23609

Dates of inspection : 29<sup>th</sup> November – 1<sup>st</sup> December 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 707860

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school :	Nursery
Type of control :	County
Age range of pupils :	3 - 4
Gender of pupils :	Mixed
School address :	Woodlands Lane, St. Paul's Road, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 3PA.
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Appropriate authority :	West Sussex
Name of chair of governors :	Mrs. V. Abraham
Date of previous inspection :	July 1996

## Information about the inspection team

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Mike Capper	Mathematics Knowledge and Understanding of the World Physical Development	Attainment and Progress Teaching Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development Special Educational Needs Equal Opportunities
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## Main Findings

### WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

- The provision and progress of children with special educational needs is very good.
- Children develop good levels of independence.
- The newly introduced 'key worker' system enables members of staff to monitor children's personal development effectively.
- There is a strong partnership with parents and the community.
- The school makes good use of available resources and accommodation.

### WHERE THE SCHOOL HAS WEAKNESSES

- I. Teaching is unsatisfactory in one in eight lessons.
- II. The monitoring of the quality of teaching and the monitoring of the assessment of children's attainment and progress are insufficiently rigorous.
- III. There continues to be insufficient challenge for higher attaining children in literacy and numeracy.
- IV. Group times are not always used effectively to develop children's learning.

**The school has more strengths than weaknesses. The governors' action plan will set out how the weaknesses identified during the inspection are to be tackled. The plan will be sent to parents or guardians of children at the school.**

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

The school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection. Since the appointment of the new headteacher in 1997 there have been many useful initiatives. The curriculum is being reviewed to include expectations for children of differing prior attainment and a successful 'key worker' system has helped members of staff to know children better and helped children become confident. However, many initiatives have not been in place long enough to have a significant impact on raising children's attainment. The school has identified appropriate targets for further development and is well placed to improve the quality of education provided.

### STANDARDS

There are national standards for children by the age of five years. By the time they leave school, children are on target to meet the expectations of the nationally recognised 'desirable learning outcomes' for children by the age of five, in all areas of learning.

Most children make satisfactory progress over time. However, higher attaining children do not always make enough progress in developing literacy and numeracy skills. Children with special educational needs make very good progress towards the targets set in their individual education plans.

### QUALITY OF TEACHING

Teaching in areas of learning	
Personal and social development	Satisfactory
Language and literacy	Satisfactory
Mathematics	Satisfactory
Knowledge and understanding of the world	Satisfactory
Physical development	Satisfactory
Creative development	Satisfactory

Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory in all areas of learning with one in four lessons being good. Teaching is satisfactory or better in eighty-six per cent of lessons and unsatisfactory in fourteen

per cent of lessons. The unsatisfactory teaching occurred, when nursery nurses lacked knowledge in how to develop children's learning and when lesson planning was insufficiently specific to support them in their work.

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

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
Behaviour	Overall good. Most children are well behaved when working independently, with other children or with adults. Occasionally younger children lack concentration at the end of the afternoon sessions when they are too tired to listen to the adults.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Rates of attendance are average. However, the school bus is frequently late bringing children to the school and these children miss part of their lessons.
Ethos*	Satisfactory. There are appropriate relationships between members of staff and the children. Children have sound attitudes towards the opportunities provided and there is a commitment to improve the quality of education.
Leadership and management	Overall satisfactory. There is a clear educational direction to the work of the school. Governors are well informed and very involved in the life of the school.
Curriculum	Satisfactory. The school is developing effective long-term plans for the curriculum. Assessments of children's work is satisfactory. However, the quality varies and they are not used consistently to support weekly lesson planning.
Children with special educational needs	Very good. Well-qualified learning support assistants are used very effectively, enabling children with special educational needs to take a full part in nursery life.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	Satisfactory. Children receive appropriate opportunities to learn the difference between right and wrong and to learn about other cultures.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Overall satisfactory. There is a suitable number of members of staff. The quality of resources is good and these are freely available to the children.
Value for money	Sound.

\* *Ethos is the climate for learning: attitudes to work, relationships and the commitment to high standards.*

## THE PARENTS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What most parents like about the school	What some parents are not happy about
V. the happy atmosphere VI. interesting activities are available VII. members of staff are caring VIII. the outside play area	IX. only one computer X. parents who do not collect their children do

Inspection findings support the parents' positive views. Children are very happy to come to school and there is a wide range of activities available for them to enjoy. Members of staff know the children well and take a genuine interest in their individual needs. The use of the outside play area has recently been extended providing greater access to a wider range of activities. The one computer in

the nursery is in heavy demand but together with tape players and a programmable toy, provides sufficient opportunities for children to learn about information technology. The school has taken reasonable steps towards providing information for parents who are unable to collect their children in person by providing three consultation meetings a year and regular newsletters.

## KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

In order to raise attainment and improve the quality of education provided by the school, the headteacher, staff and governing body should:

### XI. Improve the quality of teaching by

Monitoring lessons to identify and rectify weaknesses.

Making weekly lesson plans more specific about what children of differing prior attainment are expected to learn.

Providing training for the nursery nurses to increase their knowledge and understanding of the curriculum and how to assess children's attainment and progress.

Developing effective strategies for dealing with the immature behaviour of some of the youngest children during group times. ( paragraphs 20,22,24,54 )

### XII. Ensure higher attaining children are sufficiently challenged in literacy and numeracy by

Maintaining records on children's attainment and progress consistently.

Using the information provided by assessment to help individual children build on what they have previously learnt.

Providing greater opportunities for children to speak and listen particularly during group times. ( paragraphs 6,18,21,30,33,34 )

### XIII. Increase the effectiveness of group times by

Reviewing the timing and purpose of the sessions.

Providing sufficient time for children to share their ideas and evaluate what they have learnt. ( paragraphs 23,81 )

In addition to the key issues above, the following area for improvement should be considered for inclusion in the action plan. This refers to a weakness identified in paragraph 28.

### XIV. Improve the attractiveness of the role-play areas to make them more inviting

## INTRODUCTION

### Characteristics of the school

1. Chichester Nursery School is situated to the north of the City of Chichester. All children attend the nursery part time. There are 44 girls and boys on roll for the morning session and 36 for the afternoon session. Children are admitted to the nursery in the school year after their third birthday and most leave at the end of the year. On entry to the nursery, there is a wide range of attainment but this is broadly average. Many children have poorly developed speaking skills. Children live in a mix of privately owned property as well as rented accommodation and several children come from outside the immediate catchment area. Seven children come from homes where English is not the first language and there are 11 children on the school's special needs register. Three of these children have statements of special educational need. There is a new headteacher since the time of the last inspection in 1996. County admission arrangements have changed recently and most children no longer stay in the nursery until the term before they become five years old. This means that on average, children are younger than at the time of the last inspection and spend less time in the nursery.

2. The school's main aims are :

XV. 'To build a successful partnership between home and school providing continuity to the child's education, recognising the value of parents as their child's first educator.

XVI. To support the child to feel valued and confident and to develop sound interpersonal skills and relationships.

XVII. To create a secure, happy and stimulating environment which supports the all round development of the child.

XVIII. To offer a broad balanced curriculum across all areas of experience, so challenging and motivating each child to their full potential. In so doing providing a learning platform for the next stage of education and for life itself'.

3. The school's main priorities in the current year are:

XIX. To continue to develop the curriculum planning

XX. To review record keeping and the assessment of children's attainment and progress

## 4. Key Indicators

### Quality of teaching

Percentage of teaching observed which is :

	%
Very good or better	0
Satisfactory or better	86
Less than satisfactory	14

## **PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL**

### **EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL**

#### **Attainment and progress**

5. The attainment of children on entry to the nursery is broadly average, although many have poorly developed speaking skills. By the time they leave the nursery, children's attainment is on target to meet the expectations of the nationally recognised 'desirable outcomes of learning' by five in language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical and creative development and personal and social development.
6. Overall, children make sound progress in all areas of learning. Higher attaining children are well motivated and are provided with suitably challenging activities in many areas of the curriculum. These allow them to develop appropriate skills and knowledge. However, in language and literacy and mathematics, they are not given sufficiently challenging tasks to extend their skills and they make unsatisfactory progress in these areas.
7. Children with special educational needs achieve standards that are appropriate to their prior attainment. They make very good progress towards the detailed targets for improvement, which are identified in their individual education plans. There are no significant differences in the attainment of children of differing race, gender or background.
8. There have been significant changes in children's attainment and progress since the time of the last inspection in 1996. Overall, standards of attainment have fallen since then, and weaknesses identified in the attainment of higher attaining children in language and literacy and mathematics remain. At the time of the last inspection, children's attainment and progress were found to be at least good in many areas of learning, with very good standards achieved in speaking and listening. This is no longer the case. This is partly due to changes in admission arrangements in the local authority, with children spending less time in the nursery than they did at the time of the last inspection. As a result, there are fewer older children in the nursery. In addition, there is less very good or good teaching and more unsatisfactory teaching than in the last inspection.
9. Standards of literacy are satisfactory. By the time they leave the nursery, most children speak confidently and handle books with care. They are beginning to use paper to record their own ideas and feelings either by making marks or by writing down letters to represent their name or whole words.
10. Standards of numeracy are satisfactory. The children use their knowledge of number to help them in everyday situations, for example when counting the number of children in a group.

#### **Attitudes, behaviour and personal development**

11. The children's behaviour and personal development are good. The school has maintained the good standards of behaviour identified at the time of the last inspection. The nursery continues to provide good opportunities for the children to develop independence, self-confidence and self-esteem.
12. The attitudes of children to their work are satisfactory overall. Most children are enthusiastic and keen to participate in activities. However, some of the less mature children find it difficult to listen to each other and the teacher and do not settle sensibly during small group times, particularly at the end of afternoon sessions. When this happens, the work of the whole group is affected, with the teacher or nursery nurse spending too much time trying to gain attention rather than developing the learning of the group. For example, during a story time, a few children in a group of eight were uninterested in listening to a story and disturbed the concentration of the other children. Nevertheless, when working independently, children concentrate well, persevere with tasks and select and use resources carefully. Parents report that children enjoy coming to school.

13. The behaviour of the children is good and most children know the difference between 'right' and 'wrong'. Members of staff are calm and patient and have a positive approach to behaviour management. Most children demonstrate a good awareness of the expectations for good behaviour and co-operate well with each other sharing resources and playing games. They are polite to each other and treat their school and each other's property with respect. As at the time of the last inspection, there is no evidence of bullying taking place. Parents are pleased with the calm and purposeful way that children work in the nursery.

14. Children are very happy and have sound relationships with each other and members of staff. The recent initiative for children to remain in the same group for the whole of their stay in the nursery helps them to feel confident and secure. Most children take turns and share fairly and help each other when required. For example, they help to do up each other's aprons. Children mix well with each other regardless of age, race or gender. In role-play, children are beginning to play together, listen to each other and accept each other's ideas. However, several of the less mature children who attend in the afternoon are self-centred and have not yet learnt that other children are equally important.

15. The children's personal development is good. The rooms and resources are very well organised enabling children to see the available resources and select their own activities. Children are knowledgeable about where everything is kept and are happy to find the things they need for a task. Most children help to tidy up at the end of each session.

## **Attendance**

16. Rates of attendance continue to be satisfactory. Registers are kept up to date and most parents inform the nursery of any absences. Most children arrive on time. However, the school bus is often late and this means that some children miss part of their lessons.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED**

### **Teaching**

17. Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory in all areas of learning with one in four lessons being good. Teaching is satisfactory or better in eighty-six per cent of lessons and unsatisfactory in fourteen per cent of lessons. This represents a fall in the quality of teaching since the last inspection when there was no unsatisfactory teaching and a greater percentage of good or very good teaching. Where there are weaknesses in teaching it is largely due to the inexperience and lack of training of nursery nurses who have a greater responsibility for teaching, planning and assessment than they did at the time of the last inspection.

18. Nevertheless, some of the weaknesses identified in the last inspection have been successfully addressed. Members of staff now take more care to ensure that children have full access to all areas of the curriculum. Teachers and nursery nurses have a greater awareness of the needs of higher attaining children. Long-term planning clearly identifies expectations for this group of children, particularly in the area of recording work in literacy and numeracy. However, members of staff continue to have low expectations of what higher attaining children can achieve when planning work from week to week.

19. Very effective support is given to all children with special educational needs. Members of staff know these children very well and work hard to achieve the targets identified in the children's individual education plans.

20. The school has a good teaching and learning policy that gives clear guidance to members of staff on what is expected of them. Teachers have a good understanding of the needs of young

children and the areas of learning for children under five, with an appropriate knowledge and awareness of the next stage of learning. They are careful to use the right words when talking with the children about particular objects or activities to teach them correct vocabulary. For example, in an investigation about mirrors, the teacher encouraged children to use words like 'reflection'. However, the nursery nurses have not received sufficient training to enable them to carry out effectively their increased, teaching role.

21. Members of staff have appropriate expectations of the standards of work the children should produce, with the exception of higher attaining children who are not sufficiently challenged in literacy and numeracy. Teachers use questioning effectively to extend children's learning, sometimes changing their questions according to the ability of the child. This was used to good effect in a mathematics lesson involving fishing different two-dimensional shapes out of a water tray. Children were set different challenges according to their prior attainment. However, on other occasions where members of staff are less experienced, questioning does not consistently challenge the higher attaining children.

22. Teachers' and nursery nurses' short-term lesson planning is unsatisfactory. Members of staff plan work on a weekly basis, taking as their starting point 'learning intentions' identified in the school's 'curriculum maps'. However, weekly planning does not identify clearly what children are expected to learn from a particular activity, with many objectives lacking focus. For example, during the week of inspection weekly planning identified as an objective the intention to teach children 'two-dimensional and three-dimensional shape language'. This objective does not give clear guidance about what children are expected to learn and, where staff are less experienced, makes it difficult for them to plan suitable activities.

23. Members of staff use an appropriate range of teaching methods. These include small group sessions, co-operative and individual work. The good organisation and management of the teaching areas allows the children easy access to a wide range of well-prepared resources in each area. This helps children to work independently, enabling them to choose their own resources and undertake their own work. Where teaching is unsatisfactory, it is often because children are not encouraged to work independently and there is too much inappropriate direction from the member of staff. For example, in the construction area, when children were working with big blocks the children were not able to try out their own ideas. Children are given appropriate opportunities to develop their social skills, in both indoor and outdoor activities. However, group times at the end of sessions are not always used effectively. The purpose of these sessions is often not clear and they are often too short. Members of staff do not give children sufficient opportunity to describe their work or to think about how they could develop their learning in a future session.

24. Members of staff are relaxed and friendly towards the children and each other. Good expectations of behaviour are conveyed through careful use of praise and encouragement, with quiet reminders if necessary. However, on occasions, particularly towards the end of afternoon sessions behaviour is not always managed effectively. Less experienced members of staff sometimes give in to children to avoid conflict, and where teaching is unsatisfactory during group sessions, children are not effectively encouraged to stay on task.

25. Time is generally managed effectively and imaginative use is made of a wide range of resources to make learning interesting. For example, a teacher lined the water tray with silver foil to help children learn about reflection.

26. The quality of day-to-day assessment is satisfactory. A useful assessment of children's levels of attainment is made after they have been in school for about six weeks. Members of staff are knowledgeable about the personal and social needs of the children in their group and sometimes adjust what they have planned in the light of assessment information. Responsibility for assessing children's attainment and progress is shared between all staff and this is generally effective. However, the lack of detail in weekly planning makes assessing gains in knowledge on a daily basis very difficult, as it is not always clear what children were expected to learn. As a result, there is often insufficient

information to help members of staff decide what needs to be taught next. This has the greatest impact on the higher attaining children, particularly in literacy and numeracy, where members of staff are not always aware of what children have already achieved.

27. Homework makes a satisfactory contribution to children's learning. They are able to take storybooks home to share with their parents. Particularly noteworthy are the 'story sacks' that are shared by children and parents and are greatly valued by both. These activities help to maintain home/school links and allow parents to become more involved in their children's learning. The school has identified the need to give children and parents opportunities to share mathematical activities at home.

### **The curriculum and assessment**

28. The school provides an appropriate curriculum, based on the nationally recommended areas of learning for children of this age. The curriculum is broad and balanced and successfully promotes children's intellectual, physical, social, moral and cultural development. Teachers and nursery nurses work for two weeks at a time in either the 'creative', 'graphics', 'construction', 'books' or 'outdoor area' and a variety of inviting and interesting experiences are provided for the children in each of these areas. However, during the week of inspection insufficient use was made of role-play, with the role-play area being unattractive and uninspiring.

29. There have been some improvements in curricular provision since the last inspection. In particular, children are now provided with a more balanced curriculum and they have equal access to all the activities planned by teachers and nursery nurses. The school has successfully monitored whether children make equal use of all the available activities. The use of the outdoor area has greatly improved, with children now having the opportunity to choose whether to work indoors or outdoors. The school has begun to improve the provision of more extension activities for higher attaining and older children by identifying expectations for these children in their long-term planning. However, this improvement has not been in place long enough to have a significant impact on the progress of more able children.

30. Planning is well structured and follows an agreed, shared format. All planning is closely linked to the nationally recognised 'desirable learning outcomes' for children by the age of five. Long- and medium-term planning provides a clear picture of what is to be taught. Members of staff have worked hard to introduce 'curriculum maps' for most areas of learning. These clearly show which parts of the curriculum need to be taught and are helpful to teachers and nursery nurses when planning activities. However, short-term planning often gives insufficient detail about what children are expected to learn from a particular activity. This means that it is difficult to assess children's gains in knowledge on a day-to-day basis. The school's curriculum policies give members of staff appropriate guidelines on the school's expectations but some are out of date and do not reflect current practice.

31. All children have full and free access to all the activities and resources provided for each session. Children are given appropriate opportunities to learn about cultures other than their own through a mix of planned experiences and incidental learning. A suitable range of visits and visitors give further opportunities to learn about other cultures. Boys and girls show a similar interest in all activities.

32. There is very good provision throughout the school for children with special educational needs. The requirements of the special needs' Code of Practice are fully met. Individual education plans are very clear and are revised frequently. Targets identified in individual education plans are very successfully incorporated into weekly lesson planning.

33. Overall, arrangements for assessing children's attainment and progress are satisfactory. There have been many recent improvements in this area since the last inspection. The most significant of these is the introduction of a 'key-worker' system to enable the progress and personal development of

individual children to be more closely monitored. Children are now allocated to a specific member of staff when they join the nursery and they stay with this teacher or nursery nurse for the whole of their stay in the nursery. Parents are very appreciative of the 'key-worker' system and inspection findings are that it is a strength of the school's provision. The 'key-worker' is responsible for maintaining individual children's records of achievement. All members of staff contribute to this process by noting achievements as they happen and then passing this information on to the 'key-worker'. However, the quality of children's records of achievement is variable, being best when the 'key-worker' is a teacher. In addition, nursery nurses currently have insufficient expertise to enable them to participate fully in the assessment process.

34. Appropriate use is made of most assessment information to help to decide what needs to be taught next. This is most effective when teachers' or nursery nurses' short-term planning has identified clearly what children are expected to learn from a particular activity. When the objective of an activity is less specific, it is difficult for achievement or the next step of learning to be identified. In particular, in writing, reading and numeracy assessment information is not used effectively. Planning does not always take account of what children have already achieved and, as a result, the needs of higher attaining children are not always met.

35. Each child has an individual portfolio of his/her own work. Children help to choose pieces of work to go into the portfolios and are very proud of their achievements. Portfolios provide a clear picture to teachers and parents to show how well a child has progressed over time.

### **Pupil's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

36. The provision for children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. As at the time of the last inspection, the school has a positive, welcoming and caring ethos. Members of staff successfully promote these attitudes through all aspects of school life. Parents are very supportive of the attitudes and values promoted by the school.

37. In spiritual development, children learn about some of the festivals of major faiths, such as Diwali and take part in a Harvest service that is held in school. They enjoy discovering things for themselves, for example, exploring how to use different materials in art lessons. The garden is a peaceful and stimulating haven where children can sit quietly or be lively and active. It has been significantly enhanced by the addition of a 'willow arbour' which provides a quiet retreat for children when the weather is good. However, children are given few opportunities to talk about their feelings and experiences in small group sessions.

38. When learning about moral development, children are taught the difference between acceptable and unacceptable behaviour and by the time they leave school, most have a good understanding of the difference between right and wrong. Members of staff act as good role models. Their own politeness and courtesy and their willingness to respect the opinions of others have a positive impact on the children. Members of staff work hard teaching worthwhile values and effectively remind children to apply them. However, on occasions, they give in to children and this has a negative impact on moral development. Children are not always shown by example that poor behaviour will not be rewarded.

39. In social development, co-operative work is encouraged and children are encouraged to form friendships. Children take part in an appropriate range of visits to places of interest including the cathedral and local shops. Visits from members of the local community such as the army and the police service provide good experiences beyond home and school. All children are encouraged to help to keep the school tidy and many help to clear up at the end of an activity. Children are encouraged to look after each other and living things. They feed the school's guinea pigs and goldfish and recently helped to bathe a baby. Parents are pleased with the way children are taught to be kind to each other.

40. When providing for the children's cultural development, members of staff value the cultural heritages of the children and effectively encourage them to learn about each other's families and

traditions. Children are introduced to a suitable range of traditional stories, poems and songs. Visitors to school help children to learn about cultures other than their own and children cook food and recipes from different countries. For example, a parent who had recently visited her family in Japan brought in a kimono and other artefacts for children to dress up in and look at. Children celebrate different festivals throughout the year. These include Christian festivals such as Harvest, Shrove Tuesday and Easter as well as festivals from other faiths. Such activities are enjoyed by all the children and make a sound contribution to children's learning, helping them to develop an appropriate awareness for their age of different cultural traditions.

### **Support, guidance and pupils' welfare**

41. The school continues to give good support and guidance and effectively promotes the welfare, health and safety of all children. Appropriate assessment procedures are in place to monitor children's academic and personal development. An effective system of 'key workers' where children stay in the group of one teacher or nursery nurse during their time in the nursery is effective in helping members of staff to know the children well. The progress of children with special educational needs is carefully monitored using well written individual education plans. Parents are pleased with the care provided by the school and the way that members of staff identify and remedy any difficulties a child might have.

42. Overall, procedures for promoting good behaviour are satisfactory. However, members of staff are not always successful in managing the less mature children during group times. There is a suitable behaviour policy and members of staff act as good role models. No incidence of bullying was noted during the inspection.

43. There are effective procedures for monitoring attendance. Registers are marked accurately by the 'key workers' and any unexplained absences are followed up.

44. Procedures for child protection continue to be effective. The headteacher is the designated person for child protection matters and is very aware of the local authority procedures. The school continues to maintain good links with the appropriate specialist agencies.

45. All matters of health and safety are dealt with purposefully. There are appropriate first-aiders appointed and minor accidents are dealt with professionally. Children with special educational needs receive very good support, with some being allocated very effective individual help from experienced learning support assistants.

### **Partnership with parents and the community**

46. The school continues to have a good partnership with parents and the community. This partnership fully supports children's attainment and personal development and is a strength of the school. Parents are effectively encouraged to become involved in the work of the school and they respond willingly and enthusiastically. They continue to help regularly in the school and are very complimentary about the work of the school.

47. The school values its partnership with parents and provides an area for parents and toddlers to meet. Parents and governors help to organise fund raising events. These contributions enhance the children's progress and personal development and are valued by the school.

48. The quality of information provided for parents is good. They receive a range of letters and regular newsletters and feel aware of the events held in school. Termly meetings are held between parents and their child's 'key worker' to discuss progress. Parents find members of staff very approachable and appreciate the portfolios of children's work that they can share with their child at any time. Reports to parents are satisfactory and give helpful information about what the children can do and the progress they have made. Individual education plans for children with special educational

needs are appropriately shared with parents. The governors' annual report to parents includes the required information about the work of the school.

49. The school values the links with the community and many local companies donate goods. There are effective links with other schools in the area and several pupils from local schools are welcomed on 'work experience'. A secondary school visits to perform its latest drama production and some Year 6 pupils regularly work with the children. The school generously supports a number of children's charities and takes harvest gifts to the local senior citizens ' home.

50. The children make useful educational visits to the Cathedral, local shops, a farm and the seaside. In addition children and parents attend swimming sessions at a nearby school in the summer term. The children have successfully taken part in local plant growing competitions and parents and governors have helped the children and an expert to make a willow arbour in the school grounds.

51. All these activities help to enrich the children's awareness of the world around them and helps to prepare them for the next stage of their development

## **THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL**

### **Leadership and management**

52. Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. The headteacher has a good vision for the future of the school and has clear plans to bring about the developments made necessary by a change in local admission arrangements. The nursery now caters for younger children who stay in the school for a shorter time. One successful initiative has been adopting a 'key worker' scheme where children stay in the group of one member of staff for the whole time they are at the school. The previous system where children changed groups several times during their time at the nursery would be unsettling now that most children are only at the school for a year. The changes in admission arrangements have also necessitated a complete revision of the school curriculum. This has been successfully carried out for most of the areas of learning. However, the provision in literacy and numeracy for higher attaining children remains a weakness from the time of the last inspection. The long-term plans now include provision for a range of abilities but weekly lesson plans do not make these differences in expectations sufficiently clear. Progress since the last inspection is satisfactory overall. Whilst there have been many initiatives towards improvement, these have not been in place long enough to have an impact on raising children's attainment.

53. The support and monitoring of curriculum development was found to be a weakness at the time of the last inspection. The headteacher with the help of other members of staff has carried out an extensive survey to evaluate the balance of the curriculum for every child in the nursery. Results of this work indicate that all children receive a balanced education over time and changes in the way the curriculum is organised have further enhanced provision. Members of staff now find ways of providing similar experiences in different areas in the nursery. For example, when children are learning about types of fruit they can make models of fruit in the creative area, play with pretend fruit in the role play area, listen to stories about fruit and taste fruits. The monitoring of the assessment of children's attainment and progress is unsatisfactory. The quality of assessments varies and there is an inconsistent amount of comments kept on each child.

54. The monitoring of the quality of teaching is unsatisfactory. The headteacher and governing body are aware of some weaknesses in teaching by the nursery nurses. However, there is no formal monitoring system to ensure that weaknesses are formally identified and acted upon. Members of staff make appropriate use of their strengths by leading different areas of the curriculum. Job descriptions are clear and regularly reviewed. All members of staff demonstrate a strong commitment to their work.

55. Governors have a good relationship with the headteacher and have maintained the good support provided at the time of the last inspection. They are kept well informed about the work of the school and are very knowledgeable about its day to day organisation. The governing body fulfils its statutory duties.

56. The school continues to have suitable aims, values and policies. However, some of these are new and are not fully put into practice. All members of staff are working hard to achieve these aims and they are well supported in this by parents and governors. Success is evident in the happy and confident children who persevere with tasks and are prepared to try out new activities.

57. The quality of the school development plan is sound. As at the time of the last inspection, it is a useful working document and forms a satisfactory basis for school development. There are realistic priorities and information on how success is to be evaluated. When the headteacher started at the school she carried out a worthwhile survey of provision and evaluated progress made towards targets set in the post inspection action plan. This has helped establish clear guidance for future developments.

58. The management of the provision for children with special educational needs is very good. The school fully complies with the Code of Practice for such children. The governor responsible for overseeing special needs visits the school every week to meet with the special needs co-ordinator and to work with children in the nursery. This is very effective in keeping the governing body informed of changes in provision for children with special educational needs.

59. There is a sound ethos and all children are given equal access to the curriculum. There is a commitment to further improving the children's standards of attainment and improving the learning environment. The clear vision of the headteacher means that the school is well placed to further raise attainment and the quality of education provided.

### **Staffing, accommodation and learning resources**

60. The school has a sufficient number of suitably qualified teachers. The provision of members of support staff is satisfactory overall. There is a suitable number of nursery nurses. However, they are insufficiently trained in their new role working with older children in the nursery and taking responsibility for group sessions. There are well-qualified learning support assistants to help children with special educational needs. Members of staff are given the opportunity to receive some relevant training and to visit other schools to improve their expertise. These opportunities have a sound impact on the quality of education provided by the school. Members of staff meet regularly to plan work.

61. Arrangements for the induction of new members of staff, are sound and there is a useful staff handbook. Appraisal has not taken place under the new arrangements pending further advice from teaching unions. Job descriptions are regularly up dated and clarify the specific roles and responsibilities of all members of staff. Students are provided with helpful guidance when they start working at the nursery and they give effective support to individuals and groups of children.

62. The accommodation at the school is good overall. There is adequate space for the number of children on roll and all available space is used effectively. The furniture is efficiently arranged to make interesting work areas. There are two pleasant small rooms for groups to meet and a room set up as a valued drop in centre for parents and toddlers. The school is attractively decorated with displays of children's work. A conscientious and hard-working caretaker ensures that the building is cleaned to a high standard. The outdoor accommodation is good with a large covered area, hard play surface and grassed area. The school has won awards for its colourful hanging baskets. The outdoor area supports a full curriculum for the children. Facilities include seating and tables, climbing and role play equipment, a large sand-pit and suitable space for riding vehicles. Since the last inspection the school has made much better use of these facilities providing children with greater choice and time to develop

skills. Children, parents, governors and members of staff recently made an attractive willow arbour in the school grounds.

63. Resources remain good from the time of the last inspection. These are well displayed to help children find what they need for themselves. Since the last inspection, the school has spent a considerable amount of money on increasing the number of good quality storybooks and making the book area more attractive and inviting.

64. Effective use is made of resources outside the school. Children have opportunities to visit the local shops, cathedral, farm and seaside. Every week during the summer children make use of the swimming pool in a neighbouring school.

#### **The efficiency of the school**

65. The school has direct control over a small part of its budget only, with most being managed by the local education authority. Parents and governors are successful in raising additional funds. The allocation of available funds is based on the clear educational priorities identified in the school development plan. Members of staff are fully involved in deciding how money should be spent. However, the governing body does not formally evaluate the effectiveness of spending on training and educational resources.

66. Teachers and nursery nurses are deployed appropriately and effective use is made of the available accommodation. Learning resources are used well. The school has worked hard to make the book area more attractive to children and this has started to improve its effectiveness from the time of the last inspection.

67. The day-to-day control of finances continues to be efficient. The school secretary is hard working and makes a good contribution to the life of the school. Daily routines are well managed.

68. Funds allocated for staff training are used appropriately and members of staff have opportunities for attending training courses and visiting other schools.

69. Children enter the school with broadly average attainment. They make satisfactory progress and are on target to meet the nationally recognised 'desirable learning outcomes' for children by the age of five in all areas of learning. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Taking all these factors into consideration, the school continues to provide sound value for money.

## **PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS**

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE**

#### **Personal and Social Development**

70. By the time they leave the nursery, children's attainment is on target to meet the expectations of the nationally recognised 'desirable outcomes of learning' by the age of five, in personal and social development. Parents are pleased that the children are happy at school and learn how to become independent. This was also found to be a strength at the time of the last inspection.

71. Children are confident and enjoy the many opportunities they are given to make choices about their work. They move freely between tasks and often show good perseverance in their work. When they encounter a difficulty they use their initiative and are willing to think about and try different solutions. Most children remember to use the toilet and wash their hands without being reminded. They play sensibly side by side and sometimes together, and share resources amicably. They handle equipment with care and most help to tidy up at the end of the sessions. Children are beginning to show interest in each other and help each other to put on aprons. However, several of the less mature children are self-centred and are easily upset when not chosen for a particular activity.

72. Children of all ages make satisfactory progress in developing personal and social skills. Older children observe and copy the good examples set by the adults in the nursery. They become more confident as they get older and begin to play together well in small groups. By the time they leave school, most children have developed a sound understanding of what is 'right' or 'wrong'.

73. The quality of teaching of personal and social skills is satisfactory. Members of staff are calm and caring and treat children with respect. They act as good role models most of the time, subtly guiding children into behaving well and making the right responses. However, occasionally they give in to less mature children to avoid conflict rather than making it clear that unacceptable behaviour is not rewarded. Members of staff successfully encourage children to look after living things such as the school guinea pigs and goldfish. They show children how to care for the environment by helping them to plant and care for flowers and other plants.

74. There is a clear policy statement on the school's approach to personal and social development. This provides valuable guidance on aspects to be covered and how to support children in this area of learning. However, children are given insufficient opportunity to share ideas, feelings and experiences with each other. This means that their speaking and listening skills are not well developed. Children are given suitable opportunities to learn about and respect the culture and lifestyles of others and learn to provide for the less fortunate by giving to several charities. Children have good opportunities to learn to accept and accommodate children with special educational needs. The quality of medium-term planning is satisfactory and based on the 'learning intentions' that have been identified for this area of learning. Children's work and behaviour is carefully monitored and observations by members of staff are regularly recorded as part of assessment arrangements. Information is shared with parents at regular consultation meetings. The newly introduced 'key worker' system has been effective in helping children to settle quickly into the nursery and gain confidence and self-esteem. A thorough anti-bullying policy is implemented successfully by all members of staff. Reports to parents on children's attainment and progress give helpful information about children's attitudes to work and their relationships with others. A useful portfolio is being compiled to illustrate the opportunities children have for developing personal and social skills.

## **Language and literacy**

75. By the time they leave the nursery, children's attainment is satisfactory for their age and on target to achieve the nationally recognised 'desirable learning outcomes' by the age of five. Attainment is lower than at the time of the last inspection when children were found to have above average attainment in speaking and listening. Many children in the nursery are younger than at the time of the last inspection and stay in the nursery for a shorter time.

76. Children's attainment and progress in speaking and listening is satisfactory overall. A large number of children enter the nursery with immature speech. Several find it difficult to listen during small group discussions and do not always benefit from these sessions. Most children are happy to talk to each other during role-play activities and some plan a story with the help of an adult. Most children, including those with speech problems, speak confidently when talking to adults and give opinions about subjects that interest them. However, children are provided with insufficient opportunities to develop speaking and listening skills during group times and make limited progress in speaking to a small audience and listening in a group situation. The progress of children with special educational needs continues to be very good. They receive well-targeted support from well-trained learning support assistants.

77. Children achieve satisfactory standards in reading for their age. Most children recognise their own names and some letters of the alphabet. They develop positive attitudes towards reading and are able to make informed choices about the books they wish to take home. Children learn to handle books carefully and enjoy sharing them with an adult. They understand how books are organised and begin to understand that words and pictures carry meaning. Higher attaining children join in with well

known parts of a story and draw pictures to represent a story they have heard. However, they have a limited knowledge of the sounds different letters make. Most children make satisfactory progress in developing early reading skills. As at the time of the last inspection, higher attaining children make unsatisfactory progress because of the lack of challenge.

78. In their writing, children continue to achieve satisfactory standards and make sound progress overall. Most know the difference between drawing and writing and some are able to make marks that resemble letters. They talk about their drawings and adults sometimes write captions based on these discussions. Children imitate writing found on packaging and commercially produced materials. For example, they copy parts of birthday invitations when designing their own. Higher attaining children can write their own names. However they are not yet using written 'words' sufficiently to communicate ideas. For example, children make limited use of writing 'notes' as part of their play. At the time of the last inspection higher attaining children made unsatisfactory progress in writing and this continues to be the case.

79. Children are keen to talk during group time. However they are given insufficient time for this activity and some of the less mature children are inattentive at this time. Children take a greater interest in looking at books than at the time of the last inspection. However, few children concentrate on this activity for long. Some children work well together on role-play activities and discuss how their game is to develop. For example, they discuss the role of each child in the 'family' and what they are going to do. Children share the resources sensibly and concentrate well when drawing and making marks on paper. All children enjoy playing 'guess the missing object' games and are keen to answer questions.

80. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall with examples of good and unsatisfactory teaching. This is lower than at the time of the last inspection when teaching was found to be good. The unsatisfactory teaching occurs during some group times when members of staff are unable to maintain children's interest. Members of staff are successful in extending the children's vocabulary. For example, in one lesson children were successfully encouraged to talk about the shape and names of various fruit. Effective use is made of questioning to encourage children to discuss illustrations in books. However, opportunities are missed to encourage children to join in with familiar parts of the text and members of staff do not always show the importance of writing by example. Lesson planning does not show clearly what children are expected to learn from a particular activity. This means that members of staff do not always know what to expect from higher attaining children. Teachers and nursery nurses mostly manage the children's behaviour appropriately. However, occasionally members of staff give in to children to avoid confrontation. Resources are well prepared and used effectively. For example, the books chosen for group times were well chosen to fit in with the topic of the week. The children are able to choose to read during the day and continue to take books home to share with their parents. In addition parents are successfully encouraged to teach children the words of songs used at school to help develop their sense of rhyme.

81. Overall the language and literacy curriculum is sufficiently broad and balanced. However, children have insufficient opportunities to develop speaking and listening skills within a group. There is a clear curriculum map showing what range of skills children are expected to develop. A detailed policy statement clearly states the school's aims for the subject and provides helpful guidance on how these are to be met. However, this does not include information on how members of staff assess the children's attainment and progress or how the quality of teaching is monitored. The subject is suitably promoted in the school development plan. Arrangements for assessing the children's attainment and progress are satisfactory. Every child is assessed once they have attended the nursery for six weeks and this information is recorded in their personal files. Members of staff make notes on individual children when they make significant progress in learning. This method of collecting evidence is not applied consistently and means that notes are more detailed for some children than others. Members of staff are beginning to use this information to plan work that builds on what children have learnt in the past. Reports to parents on their children's attainment and progress provide satisfactory information about basic literacy skills.

82. Resources are good. The school has recently increased the number of good quality story-books and successfully involved parents in the making of 'story sacks' containing objects related to a particular story. Several parents are successfully encouraged to stay at school and share books with children. Information technology is used effectively to support learning in language and literacy and children enjoy following stories played on the computer and tape recorder. Effective use is made of visitors to tell stories and Year 6 pupils from a neighbouring school also share books with the children. Pupils from a local secondary school recently performed a play for the children. A book bus visits the school every other week and children help choose books to borrow for the nursery. All these activities help to develop the children's interest in books.

83. Accommodation is good. There is an attractive and comfortable area for children to sit and enjoy books and a writing area fully resourced with pens and pencils, various types of paper and some word cards and dictionaries. There are role-play areas set up inside and outside. However, these are not made sufficiently exciting and few children were seen playing in them during the inspection.

## **Mathematics**

84. By the time they leave the nursery, children's attainment in mathematics is on target to meet the expectations of the nationally recognised 'desirable outcomes of learning' by five. At the time of the last inspection children's attainment was found to be good, although there was some underachievement amongst more able children. This change in attainment is partly due to changes in admission arrangements in the local authority, with children spending less time in the nursery than they did at the time of the last inspection. As a result, there are fewer older children in the nursery. In addition, there is less very good or good teaching than in the last inspection.

85. The school has started to improve the provision for the more able children. However, improvements made in planning and expectations have not yet had a significant impact on the attainment or progress of these children.

86. Most children can count up to ten and recognise some numerals. Children have a developing understanding of positional vocabulary such as 'down' and 'up', and they have a good knowledge of two-dimensional shapes. They can identify circles, triangles and squares and can successfully match shapes or objects according to common properties. Children recognise 'bigger' and 'smaller' objects and, with the help of adult, make simple block graphs showing, for example favourite types of bread. Higher attaining children count to higher numbers and can name some three-dimensional shapes. They can arrange numbers up to twenty in the correct order and write some numerals around the right way. However, children's recording skills are not well developed, with few higher attaining children accurately writing numbers up to ten. Younger children try to count to ten, but cannot do so accurately. They recognise simple patterns and can match objects on a one-to-one basis.

87. Overall, children make sound progress in developing mathematical skills. They increase their knowledge of numbers, shapes and patterns and understand more about measuring through their work in measuring plant growth. By the time they leave school, most children recognise circles, squares and triangles with higher attaining children beginning to identify the features of cubes and pyramids. However, the progress of older and more able children is unsatisfactory. They are given too few opportunities to record practical work in mathematics or to develop counting skills.

88. Children with special educational needs make very good progress and achieve standards appropriate to their prior attainment. The development of mathematical skills is given a high emphasis and children are given very good support. Work is closely linked to the targets identified in the children's individual education plans.

89. Children enjoy taking part in mathematical activities. They are keen to answer the teachers' questions and co-operate with each other when playing counting games. However, children are sometimes inattentive during group activities at the end of each session. They do not listen to what the teacher or nursery nurse is saying and do not participate fully in activities.

90. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teachers have at least a sound knowledge and understanding of the subject and of the needs of young children. Nursery nurses are hard working and very committed to raising children's attainment. However, they lack the subject knowledge to effectively carry out the role they have been given in the mathematics curriculum for children under five. Lesson planning lacks detail of what children of differing age or prior attainment are expected to achieve. This is most evident when less experienced members of staff are planning work. In particular, planning does not meet the needs of higher attaining children. Nevertheless, teachers and nursery nurses work together to plan work which is appropriate for most children and they support them effectively in their learning when they are working independently. Work is carefully prepared and resources are used imaginatively. Questioning is often used effectively to develop children's learning. This is most effective when the challenge of the question is adjusted according to the prior attainment of the child. For example, in a shape fishing game, the teacher put more difficult questions to the higher attaining children. Members of staff have sound relationships with the children and manage them effectively at most times. This is less so in group times with nursery nurses when children are not always encouraged effectively to stay on task. In the group times children are given few opportunities to review their work or to think about what they could learn next.

91. Overall, assessment arrangements are satisfactory. All members of staff are involved in noting significant gains in learning which they then pass on to the child's 'key-worker'. However, at the moment, assessment in mathematics lacks structure and is insufficiently systematic to provide useful information to members of staff when planning work.

92. The curriculum is broad and balanced and long and medium-term planning is thorough. Teachers and nursery nurses are well supported in their planning by a useful 'curriculum map' which clearly shows both expectations for children of differing attainment as well as, more generally, the areas of learning to be covered at a particular time. There is a satisfactory policy statement on the teaching of mathematics, but this does not reflect current practice. The development of the subject is being effectively managed by the co-ordinator. However, there are insufficient opportunities to support less experienced colleagues in the classroom or to monitor children's learning to help improve the quality of teaching.

93. Resources are good. They are used effectively to support mathematical learning both indoors and outdoors.

### **Knowledge and Understanding of the World**

94. By the time they leave the nursery, children's attainment is on target to meet the expectations of the nationally recognised 'desirable outcomes of learning' by the age of five, in knowledge and understanding of the world. At the time of the last inspection children's attainment was found to be often good or very good and attainment in this area of learning was a strength of the school. This change in attainment is partly due to changes in admission arrangements in the local authority, with children spending less time in the nursery than they did at the time of the last inspection. As a result, there are fewer older children in the nursery. In addition, there is less very good or good teaching and more unsatisfactory teaching than in the last inspection.

95. Children understand what a plant needs to grow and observe growth carefully over a period of time for example by taking part in a sunflower growing competition. They know how to look after the school's guinea pigs and explain confidently how to feed the school's goldfish. Visitors from the community such as the army and police service provide children with knowledge and understanding about different adult roles and occupations. Children know that some materials are reflective and that magnifiers make things look bigger. They successfully categorise food and know why we celebrate at harvest time.

96. Children have good skills in information technology. They use computers to draw pictures,

'write' down their ideas and to play games. Children are confident about working on the computer, developing good skills in manipulating the 'mouse' and using the various keys on the keyboard. With the help of an adult, they programme a toy to navigate around a maze and they confidently use tape recorders and headphones to listen to stories and music.

97. The children are encouraged to build and make things and do so with confidence. Higher attaining children have clear ideas about what they want to make and often show ingenuity when working. They experiment with different ways of joining things and explore different materials. For example, a group of children who were making musical instruments experimented with different types of sticky tape and tried-out different materials to put inside their 'shakers'.

98. Children make sound progress overall. Progress in information technology has improved since the last inspection and is now good. Children gain experience of different computer programmes and develop good basic skills. They gain knowledge and understanding of the world from the wide range of practical activities they experience during their time in the nursery. Children develop confidence at choosing which resource would be best for a piece of work. They ask sensible questions about things they see in the world around them.

99. The children's responses in this area of learning are satisfactory, being better in the morning than the afternoon when less mature children are tired and lose interest in their work more quickly. Children enjoy learning through play, carefully selecting the resources they need and developing their ideas productively. They often become fully absorbed and concentrate well, for example when making musical shakers. Children co-operate well with each other and share materials sensibly. At the end of sessions they tidy up carefully. Children are sometimes inattentive during group activities at the end of sessions, finding it hard to pay attention or listen to the teacher, nursery nurse or other children.

100. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, with examples of good and unsatisfactory teaching. Teachers have a good understanding of the curriculum. The subject knowledge of nursery nurses is less well developed to enable them to fulfil the teaching role they have been given. Weekly lesson planning is unsatisfactory because it does not clearly identify what children are expected to learn from a particular activity. Where teaching is unsatisfactory, it is because the purpose of the activity is not clear and the nursery nurses give children too few opportunities to think for themselves. Nevertheless, in most lessons, members of staff plan interesting and exciting activities and make good use of incidental learning both indoors and outdoors to develop specific skills. Resources are well prepared and teachers have realistic expectations of what children should achieve. In the best lessons, members of staff effectively work alongside children when they are involved in an activity and give them good support.

101. Procedures for the assessment of children's attainment and progress are satisfactory. Both teachers and nursery nurses are fully involved in this process. All members of staff carefully observe children at work and record significant progress that is then passed on to 'key-workers' to be kept in children's individual records of achievement. However, insufficient use is made of this information to help decide what needs to be taught next.

102. The curriculum is broad and balanced. There is a satisfactory policy and a very detailed 'curriculum map' that clearly identifies what children are to be taught. Teachers use this effectively in their medium-term planning to identify what is to be studied in each term. The monitoring of the curriculum is satisfactory and there have been some useful improvements since the last inspection. The quality of work in information technology is significantly better. The detailed 'curriculum map' and improved resources have had a good impact on teachers' planning and children's attainment. All children now have access to the full curriculum and the school has carefully monitored where children work from day-to-day in order to ensure this.

103. Resources are good. They are well organised and accessible to children. This enables them to make sensible choices about what they are going to use in their work. Appropriate use is made of visits and visitors to stimulate children's interest in the subject. For example, a visitor from a local

supermarket showed children how to bake 'cookies'.

## Physical Development

104. During the week of inspection, the use of the outdoor area was limited by poor weather. Evidence from observations of children at work has been supplemented by a scrutiny of photographs and teachers' planning.

105. By the time they leave the nursery, children's physical development is on target to meet the expectations of the 'desirable outcomes of learning' for children by the age of five. Children's standards of attainment in this area of learning have fallen since the last inspection, when they were judged to be good. Children stay in the nursery for a shorter time than at the last inspection and have less time to develop skills.

106. When working outdoors, children develop an appropriate range of skills. They play imaginative games using balls and bats, showing appropriate co-ordination and balance. Most children enjoy playing on the fixed play equipment. Higher attaining and older children show good skills in balancing and climbing on a fixed plank. They enjoy swimming and gain confidence in the water. They learn simple dances, for example dancing around the 'willow arbour' when it was first planted.

107. Children roll out play dough, hole-punch, cut, glue and sellotape and use tools confidently and safely when working indoors. They stack blocks to a considerable height and concentrate well when making models. For example, many children cut accurately and choose appropriate materials when making a sculpture.

108. Children make satisfactory progress in developing physical skills. They grow in confidence and use a wider range of apparatus as they get older. Their cutting skills improve and they begin to use a range of tools without adult assistance. They are able to choose from an extensive variety of activities. As they get older, they become more adventurous in their choice of activities and use the resources more imaginatively. For example, whilst younger children lack confidence in climbing and balancing, older children climb the outdoor apparatus in different ways and balance and turn on the fixed planks. Children make better use of construction kits as they get older, making more imaginative models using a wider range of skills.

109. The children enjoy both indoor and outdoor play. Children are confident and adventurous and share equipment and resources well. They concentrate well and older children persevere on activities such as cutting or building using brick blocks. This is most noticeable in the morning sessions. In the afternoons, some children lose interest in their work and wander purposelessly from activity to activity. Most children help themselves to aprons when carrying out messy tasks and develop their independence by tidying away at the end of a session.

110. The quality of teaching is satisfactory, overall, with examples of unsatisfactory teaching. At the time of the last inspection, teaching was consistently satisfactory or better. Planning for children's physical development is unsatisfactory. The school has not yet developed a 'curriculum map' for this area of learning and there is little to support teachers or nursery nurses in their planning. Weekly lesson planning does not clearly identify the purpose of some activities or the expectations for children of differing prior attainment. As a result, it is difficult for members of staff to assess individual children's progress on a daily basis. Nevertheless, most activities are well organised and children are enabled to make sensible choices of what they will do. Equipment is changed on a daily basis to provide fresh challenges for the children. Where appropriate, teachers and nursery nurses intervene to teach specific techniques and to develop co-ordination and manipulative skills. For example, a nursery nurse carefully taught a child how to balance along a fixed plank. Members of staff remind the children of the need to work safely and are vigilant at all times. Teaching is unsatisfactory when children working in the construction area of the nursery are given too little opportunity to try out their own ideas. As a result, they lose interest and make few gains in skills, knowledge or understanding.

111. The curriculum is broad and balanced and all children have full and free access to all the activities both indoors and outdoors. This is an improvement since the last inspection, when the outdoor curriculum was not available at all times. There is a satisfactory written policy to support members of staff in their planning but this is out of date and does not reflect current practice. The school has identified in its development plan a realistic time-scale for completing a 'curriculum map' for physical development. However, the lack of co-ordinator for this area of learning means that curriculum development is not satisfactorily monitored and less experienced members of staff are not given effective support.

112. Resources are good and make a good contribution to learning. The outside play area provides good accommodation for physical development. It is a safe environment and is made interesting by the good use of available resources. The school has identified the need to develop further the outside area so that it can be used more effectively to support learning across the curriculum.

## **Creative Development**

113. Children's attainment is on target to meet the nationally recognised 'desirable learning outcomes' in creative development by the age of five. Children's attainment in this area of learning is lower than at the time of the last inspection although the quality of colour mixing continues to be a strength. Children stay at the nursery for a shorter time than at the last inspection and have less time to develop skills.

114. Children's artistic development is sound. A particular strength is their willingness to choose from the wide range of resources made available. They are very confident in experimenting with the various colours that can be achieved when mixing their own paints. Younger children experiment with different brush strokes and apply paint to paper boldly. Older children make recognisable paintings of people and birthday cakes and higher attaining children make good observational drawings of sunflowers and pumpkins. All children print accurately using various materials such as wooden blocks, cotton reels and hands and produce good quality models using reclaimed materials. For example, one child made an interesting three-dimensional flower and several children made attractive pretend birthday cakes with candles. They successfully use modelling materials such as dough and clay to make representations of fruit and weave and sew using various materials.

115. Children develop appropriate musical skills. They sing with enthusiasm and join in with simple actions. Children sing and stamp in time with the music and recognise well-known songs played on a tape recorder. They play with the musical instruments, know some of their names and experiment with the different sounds they make.

116. The level of imagination and the children's involvement in indoor and outdoor role-play is limited due to the role play areas being insufficiently exciting. Few children chose these activities during the inspection. Some children working in the playhouse discussed the game they were going to play and allocated themselves appropriate roles and tasks.

117. Children make satisfactory progress in developing creative skills. They become more confident in choosing materials and using tools as they become older and their painting skills improve. When playing imaginatively, they move from individual play to co-operating in groups.

118. The children's response to the variety of experiences they are given is enthusiastic and positive. Most children join in when singing songs. They show great interest in their work and often concentrate for long periods of time. Children work together sensibly when completing a piece of group art. They take good care of the resources and tidy away at the end of a session. All children are responsible for putting their finished work on the dryers and washing up the brushes and palettes they have used.

119. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall with some examples of good teaching. Children

are given good opportunities to experiment with and choose different media. Members of staff use praise well and children are effectively encouraged to express their own ideas. Children are managed successfully and resources are well prepared. Parents are encouraged to come to school and share their skills. For example, a Japanese parent successfully helped children to learn about origami. Weekly lesson planning is insufficiently specific to show what particular skills children are expected to develop in a lesson to help less experienced members of staff know what to expect of all children.

120. The curriculum is satisfactory overall. The school has not yet completed the curriculum overview to help members of staff to teach specific skills and the policy does not reflect current practice.

121. Members of staff keep satisfactory records of what children have achieved and are beginning to use this information to decide what needs to be taught next. However, the informal method of collecting information means that an inconsistent amount of information is kept on different children. Teachers keep samples of children's work and these form a useful record of what has been achieved. Reports to parents on their children's attainment and progress provide satisfactory information.

122. The school building is enhanced by some colourful displays. Resources are good and are accessible to children at all times. However, the role-play areas are not inviting and few children were seen taking part in these activities during the inspection. A visiting artist helped children to paint a colourful mural on one of the walls.

## **PART C: INSPECTION DATA**

### **SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

123. The school was inspected for a total of six days by three inspectors, one of whom was a lay inspector

XXI.28 lessons or part lessons were observed, totalling 13 hours 50 minutes.

XXII.Discussions were held with the children, staff, governors and parents.

XXIII.A selection of children shared books with an inspector.

XXIV.Samples of children's work were inspected .

XXV.Teachers' records and plans were scrutinised.

XXVI.A range of documentation and information supplied by the school was studied.

XXVII.Budgetary information was scrutinised.

XXVIII.Attendance records and pupils' records were scrutinised.

XXIX.15 parents attended a pre-inspection meeting.

XXX.Questionnaires completed by 31 parents were analysed.

## 124. DATA AND INDICATORS

### Pupil data

	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with statements of SEN	Number of pupils on school's register of SEN	Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals
Nursery School	40	3	11	0

### Teachers and classes

#### Qualified teachers

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent)	2.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	15.60

#### Education support staff

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked each week	82.5

Average class size:	11
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### Financial data

Financial year:	1998/99
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	£
Total Income	8,550
Total Expenditure	6,580
Expenditure per pupil	82.21
Balance brought forward from previous year	62.00
Balance carried forward to next year	1,970

## PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out:

80

Number of questionnaires returned:

38

### Responses (percentage of answers in each category):

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school	47	47	6	0	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	58	39	3	0	0
The school handles complaints from parents well	32	39	29	0	0
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	39	50	11	0	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	37	55	8	0	0
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	50	45	5	0	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	43	31	23	0	3
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	26	43	31	0	0
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	45	49	3	0	3
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	45	49	6	0	0
My child(ren) like(s) school	74	26	0	0	0