

INSPECTION REPORT

Cruddas Park Early Years Centre
Cruddas Park

LEA area: Newcastle Upon Tyne

Unique Reference Number: 108428

Headteacher: Janet Rogers

Reporting inspector: Malcolm Massey

Dates of inspection: 15 - 18 November 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 706906

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:	LEA Nursery School
Age range of pupils:	2 yrs to 4 yrs 11 mnths
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Brunel Terrace Cruddas Park Newcastle Upon Tyne NE4 7NL
Telephone number:	0191 2736682
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	John O'Shea
Date of previous inspection:	6 - 9 November 1995

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Malcolm Massey, RgI	Language and literacy	Attainment and progress
	Knowledge and understanding	Teaching
	Physical development	Leadership and management
	Equal opportunities	Efficiency
Judith Menes, Lay Inspector	N/A	Attendance
		Support, guidance and pupils welfare
		Partnership with parents and the community
Pauline Smith	Mathematics	Attitudes, behaviour and personal development
	Personal and social development	Curriculum and assessment
	Creative development	Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
		Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

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MAIN FINDINGS

What the school does well

- The senior management team provides high quality leadership with a clear vision for the future.
- The school enables children to make very good progress.
- Very good relationships exist within the school and good standards of behaviour are achieved.
- There is a rich curriculum which provides children with a wide range of experiences.
- There are very good systems for assessing children's progress and staff know children well.
- The school makes very good provision for children's social development.
- Community links are excellent.
- The provision of support staff is excellent.
- Parents are made very welcome in the centre.

Where the school has weaknesses

- I. The monitoring of teaching and learning is not systematically carried out.
- II. The school development plan does not include all the major developments going on in the school.
- III. Exactly what children will learn is not always clearly stated in teachers' planning.

The school has many more strengths than weaknesses. All of the weaknesses have already been identified by the school in their recent self-evaluation exercise. However, the weaknesses identified in the report will form the basis of the governors' action plan, which will be sent to all parents or carers of pupils at the school.

How the school has improved since the last inspection

The school has made very good improvement since the last inspection. The Code of Practice for special educational needs has been implemented and children with special educational needs make good progress in their time at Cruddas Park. A curriculum framework was put into place immediately after the last inspection and this is now being reviewed and improved to provide increased guidance for staff. The curriculum provided for children is a rich and varied one which has improved considerably. Staff are allocated curriculum responsibilities and take a part in the planning procedures for other staff, although they do not monitor teaching. However, the senior management roles have been developed well and as a result the school benefits from clearly defined roles and strong leadership. Assessment procedures have been improved considerably and the use that teachers and nursery nurses make of these results contributes substantially to the very good progress that children make. Staff deployment is now very effective and this issue has been addressed creatively to improve provision for children throughout the nursery. The concern expressed in the previous report about admitting younger children has been fully addressed. The development of the centre into a much more comprehensive community asset has been a significant improvement since the last inspection and has a real impact on the progress made by children at the centre. The merging of the nursery with the local Rainbow Family Group has created a dynamic and forward looking school in a short period of time and the centre is in an excellent position to make further improvements.

Standards

When children enter the centre their attainment is well below what is expected for their age. During their time at Cruddas Park they make very good progress overall and by the time they leave they achieve standards that are above what is expected in physical development. In all the other areas of learning: personal and social development, language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development, standards are at the expected level. This rise in attainment over their time at the centre is due to the consistently sound teaching, the good knowledge that teachers have of the children, the very good staffing ratio, the rich curriculum and the support given to parents. Children with special educational needs receive

good support and make good progress.

• **Quality of teaching**

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

Teaching is satisfactory overall throughout the centre. In around one third of lessons teaching is good. In around one lesson in sixteen teaching is unsatisfactory. Nursery nurses teach the children in the family rooms without direct teacher supervision and are included in this section as teachers and graded accordingly. Teaching in the family rooms is sound. Where teaching is good teachers have high expectations of children and establish good relationships with them. This means that children behave well and concentrate hard. Teachers' good subject knowledge and day-to-day assessment ensure that a wide variety of activities are well matched to children's needs. The disruptive behaviour of a small minority of older children slows the pace of some lessons and as a result children make slow progress. Satisfactory teaching lacks clear learning objectives to enable more specific focus on the detail of what children should learn and as a result some learning opportunities are lost. The teaching of children with special educational needs is good and this is well supported by all staff at the centre. Since the last inspection the quality of teaching has been maintained overall. There has been sound improvement in teaching of knowledge and understanding of the world and very good improvement in the teachers' use of assessment

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	Good; children behave well around school and very well on visits. Only a small minority of children behaves inappropriately.
Attendance	Satisfactory; there are no national comparable standards for nursery age children.
Ethos*	Excellent; relationships are good and children and parents are included in the very good learning environment which is created.
Leadership and management	Good; the headteacher has a clear idea of where the school is going and gives strong leadership. The deputy headteacher provides valuable support to the development of the school but the governing body is dependent on the senior management team to provide it with information.
Curriculum	Good; a rich and varied curriculum is available to all children. An extensive range of visits is an integral and valuable part of curriculum provision. Assessment is very good with individual assessment booklets available for every child.
Children with special educational needs	Good; a care register is established to ensure that children settle well into the centre but a small minority of children is not moved on from this to the special needs register quickly enough.

Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	Good overall; the social development of children is very good and parents agree that the social behaviour of their children improves significantly. Teachers plan well to encourage children's independence.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Good; the high level of nursery nurse staffing supports children's learning well. Accommodation is improving and is planned to continue to do so when the Sure Start building programme is implemented.
Value for money	Good.

**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
IV. Parents find it easy to approach the school with questions and are encouraged to play an active part in school life. V. Parents are given a clear understanding of what is taught. VI. Children are encouraged to get involved in activities outside daily lessons. VII. Parents are kept well informed about their children's progress. VIII. The school achieves high standards of good behaviour. IX. Children like going to school.	X. There is not enough homework.

The inspection team fully endorses parents' positive views of the school. Homework, in the form of reading, is set in the workshop rooms and not in the family rooms, which is wholly appropriate. However, increased information to parents about how to improve children's skills in subjects other than reading is lacking.

· **KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION**

In order to remedy the weaknesses observed the headteacher, governing body and staff should:

XI. further improve the quality of teaching and learning by:

- establishing regular and systematic classroom monitoring;
 - providing information to staff on their performance and how they can improve;
- (paragraphs 59, 63, 83, 88, 94)

XII. ensure that the school development plan provides a clear overview of how the school will improve by:

- including all current initiatives, for example the Early Excellence bid, in the plan;
 - providing clear success criteria against which improvements can be successfully measured;
 - making clear links between budget setting and developments;
- (paragraphs 60, 68)

XIII. improve teachers' planning so that specific learning objectives are clearly indicated and a clear focus for children's learning is therefore established.

(paragraphs 39, 82, 87, 93, 100)

In addition to the key issues identified on the previous page the following less important weaknesses should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:-

XIV. identify a governor to be responsible for special educational needs and reduce governor dependence on the headteacher;

(paragraphs 58)

XV. make earlier consideration of which children on the care programme should be moved on to the special educational needs register;

(paragraphs 34)

XVI. improve behaviour management strategies for the more extreme circumstances which occasionally occur.

(paragraphs 19, 100)

· INTRODUCTION

· Characteristics of the school

1. Cruddas Park Early Years Centre is situated in the West City ward of Newcastle upon Tyne. There are 65 children on roll, 42 boys and 23 girls with an age range of two to five years. All the children attend the centre full time and the number eligible for free school meals is very high at 70%. Around one in seven children is from a minority ethnic group and around three quarters of these children speak English as a second language. The majority of children come from the surrounding area where there is a high rate of unemployment and a large proportion of single parent families. It is estimated that around three quarters of children in the area come from homes where there is no regular earned income.
1. The centre has evolved over the last few years as a direct response to the needs of families in the area. It was initially formed as an amalgamation of Cruddas Park Nursery School and The Rainbow Family Group in April 1998. This means that the provision has changed significantly since the last inspection in 1995. The Centre is now open for 50 weeks a year. Adult classes are offered regularly and after-school provision for primary age pupils is offered daily.
2. Children are admitted in the September of the school year in which they will be three. They leave the school in the August of the year in which they are four. Children's attainment on entry to the school is well below average.
3. There are three pupils on the school register of special educational needs. There are no children with statements of special educational need. There is a high ratio of adults to children, particularly in the family room, where the youngest children are based.
4. The Centre has undertaken, and still undertakes, a wide range of initiatives aimed at meeting community needs and enhancing provision for the centre. Recent building work has enabled a meeting and creative arts room to be established and the school is currently being considered for Early Excellence status and has been successful in being accepted on the Sure Start Trailblazer project. It aims to engender a positive attitude to learning in every child and to develop self-confidence and self-esteem in all members of the school community. The Centre sees the development of children's language skills as a key element in their learning. Current priorities for the school are to develop the

role of the teacher in curriculum management, to develop and manage new financial systems in readiness for managing their own budget and to continue to support family and community development. The school would like to extend after-school provision to children over the age of eleven.

5. **Key indicators**

6. **Attendance**

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year:

		%
Authorised Absence	School	19
	National comparative data	n/a
Unauthorised Absence	School	n/a
	National comparative data	n/a

6.

7. **Exclusions**

Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school age) during the previous year:

	Number
Fixed period	0
Permanent	0

8. **Quality of teaching**

Percentage of teaching observed which is:

	%
Very good or better	0
Satisfactory or better	94
Less than satisfactory	6

8. PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

8. EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL

8. Attainment and progress

1. Although children enter the centre with differing abilities, attainment on entry is well below average overall. Many children have poor language and social skills and do not communicate well with adults or with other children.
1. Children are working at the expected level in personal and social development, language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development. In physical development children's gross motor skills are above average and their fine motor skills are what one would expect for children of this age. Overall, standards have been maintained since the last inspection and children are in line to achieve the standards expected of them by the age of five.
2. The steady progress outlined in the last report has improved and children now make very good progress in their time at Cruddas Park. The very good progress that children make is due to a number of factors. The quality of teaching is consistently sound and in 28 percent of lessons it is good. As a result children have clear expectations of good behaviour and classroom routines. They form good relationships with adults which gives them confidence and security. Assessment is very good. Teachers know children well and identify individuals on a daily basis who need extra support. The staffing ratio is very good and therefore individual children receive much better support than would be the case if they were in larger groups. The curriculum presents children with a richness of activity which is both stimulating and relevant and encourages them to enjoy and participate in learning freely. The high value placed by the centre on supporting and involving parents means that parents value the work done and give positive messages to their children which encourages them, in turn, to view education positively.
3. In personal and social development children make very good progress. They quickly feel secure and valued and develop a sense of belonging. Their self-confidence and independence develop well and they soon learn to move happily from one activity to another. The vast majority of children behave well and knows what is expected of them in school. Older children take turns well, although some younger children still have a problem with this. Children show respect for property and animals and value the ideas of others, often seeking approval from their friends and teachers. When out on a visit they have a responsible attitude and behave well, showing that the patterns learned in school are successfully transferred to other situations.
4. Children make very good progress throughout the centre in language and literacy. The limited speaking skills which children exhibit when they start school develop well. Children gain an increased vocabulary, for example through activities like baking and visits to Jesmond Dene, and this is evident in their discussions with adults. They learn to listen carefully, although a small minority of older children finds this difficult when the whole class is required to sit and listen. In reading, children learn to handle books carefully and often gain great enjoyment from them. Older children understand that print carries meaning and know some of the sounds that letters make. Most children recognise their own name when it is written down. In writing, younger children experiment by making marks on paper while older pupils successfully develop their writing skills by writing their own cheques. A few children write their own name without help but there is no evidence, at this stage, that they are aware of writing for different purposes.
5. In mathematics, children make very good progress. Younger children use blocks to increase their understanding of number and shape and match simple objects by colour. On visits they develop their mathematical language successfully, for example through the correct use of "under" and "along" when talking about a pedestrian tunnel under the River Tyne. They become familiar with number through

rhymes and songs. Numeracy is further developed with older children in the workshop rooms and most of them count to five without help. They use numbers regularly in various activities, for example counting the number of steps on outings and painting eight legs on a spider. Children count and sort objects to three and record their findings on a chart. They are developing a good awareness of size, shape and colour, for example accurately identifying a small blue circle. They have an increasing understanding of mathematical language such as “over” and “above” and understand the meaning of “empty” and “full”.

6. Children make very good progress in their knowledge and understanding of the world. Younger children have a good knowledge of their local environment, often gained through visits that they have made. They talk about different forms of travel, for example road and rail, making their own observations on the differences. They use commercial materials to make models and glue and cut paper sensibly. Older children further develop their local knowledge through a wide range of visits and talk about local features, such as waterfalls. They know the most likely places to find minibeasts in the school grounds and use magnifiers to look at them carefully. They use the computer confidently and are skilled at manipulating the mouse. They are very interested in the Roamer and are just beginning to understand how to program it to follow their instructions. In science, they are beginning to make predictions and accurately identify the properties of some materials.
7. Children make very good progress in their creative development. They explore texture freely and work well with clay, for example when they make hedgehogs. In music, children use percussion instruments to accompany taped music, maintaining a satisfactory rhythm and further successfully develop their creative skills through imaginative play activities, such as using the telephone and having a tea party. In physical development children make good progress overall. Younger children handle tools and equipment appropriately, for example when using paintbrushes and glue spreaders. Older children further develop these skills in their writing and show increasing fine motor control when using pencils. Younger children start the centre with appropriate physical skills in activities like climbing and running. The good progress that children make is reflected in the confidence and skill that they show when climbing above head height and jumping and balancing using large apparatus.
8. Children with special educational needs make good progress throughout their time at Cruddas Park. They are well supported by both nursery nurses and teachers who make regular assessments of their attainment. These assessments inform the targets on children’s individual education plans, which are regularly updated. Children with special educational needs take a full part in all lessons and visits.

17. Attitudes, behaviour and personal development

1. Children's good attitudes to learning make a significant contribution to the very good progress which they make in all areas of learning. Parents recognise the positive attitudes and enthusiasm displayed by their children. The majority of children are interested in their work, and listen attentively to their teachers and nursery nurses. Children generally concentrate well and persevere to finish a task. Younger children readily explore favourite activities, and will happily be guided to extend their learning. They often require support to investigate new activities, but soon increase their confidence. Children in the workshop generally approach new learning with confidence and enthusiasm. They frequently become totally absorbed in practical tasks such as music making, claywork and pottery. They concentrate for extended periods of time. Children display high interest levels and good levels of concentration during visits beyond the school environment.
2. High standards of good behaviour have been maintained since the last inspection. Children generally behave well, and occasionally they behave very well. Only a very small minority of children display unacceptable behaviour. Behaviour on visits is very good. Most children treat equipment with care and tidy it away after use. Work and artefacts on display are valued and respected by the children who enjoy talking about them. Children learn how to work as part of a group and they generally take turns and share equipment well. Children readily help each other when carrying equipment and tidying up. They seek approval from friends about the quality of their work, and value their opinion.

3. Relationships within the school are very good. High levels of mutual respect are clearly evident in an atmosphere which generates warmth, caring and harmony. Children feel secure and valued, and share ideas comfortably and confidently. Children feel safe and cared for on visits, despite exploring a new environment away from school and home. Through planned opportunities, appropriate resources, and varied role-play situations children are beginning to develop an understanding of other people's feelings and cultural traditions. Visitors to school, such as the Dragon Dancers celebrating the Chinese New Year, effectively enrich cultural understanding. A visit to the fish quay successfully increases children's understanding of the life-style of the fisherman.

4. Children's personal development is good. They respond well to the thoughtful opportunities planned for them. All members of staff help children to build up confidence and self-esteem. Personal independence, in such matters as dressing and attending to personal hygiene, develops well. Through the wide range of investigative activities, children learn decision-making, and begin to develop as independent learners. They discover how sand turns a wheel around, and that three people in the home-corner require a matching number of cups, saucers and plates. Through planned opportunities and the high expectations of staff, children display increasing self-control and self-discipline. They develop a willingness to help others. They tidy up resources, help the teacher and collect litter from the school grounds. Parents agree that children grow in self-confidence and display improved levels of personal control as a result of nursery experiences.

21. **Attendance**

1. Attendance is satisfactory and stands at around 81%. The nursery allows for flexible starting and finishing times for children and has made arrangements to ensure that directed teaching time takes place after all children have arrived. Most children attend regularly and parents report that they enjoy coming to school.

- 22.

22. **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED**

22. **Teaching**

2. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. During the course of the inspection 28 percent of lessons were good, 66 percent were satisfactory and only 6 percent were unsatisfactory. Teaching standards have been successfully maintained since the last inspection.

3. The teaching in the family rooms is carried out by nursery nurses and the results of observations of their lessons are fully included in this section. Throughout the remainder of the section they are referred to as teachers.

4. The sound teaching enables the children to make very good progress because it is combined with a very good staffing ratio, a very rich curriculum, very good assessment and close and constructive work with parents.

5. The teaching of personal and social education and physical development is good. In all other subjects teaching is sound. Good teaching is characterised by high expectations, for example in personal and social development, to which children respond well and this leads to good relationships and high standards of good behaviour. Teachers' good subject knowledge means that they provide a wide range of activities and this gives children a rich variety of experience on which to develop their knowledge and understanding of the world and their language skills. Teachers' control is generally good and children are able to concentrate on tasks without being disturbed. Teachers' assessment of children is very good

and these means that individual children are given support and activities at an appropriate level and contribute substantially to the very good progress that children make.

6. The pace of lessons is satisfactory, although the disruptive behaviour of a small minority of older children makes the pace of some whole class lessons unsatisfactory. Class organisation is sound and this gives children a sense of security which increases their confidence and independence. The use of the corridor as a teaching space is not effective and leads to children losing concentration when children from other classes pass by. Resources are plentiful and made readily available to children. Some good use of resources was observed to enable teachers to make specific teaching points, for example in information technology. Homework is soundly promoted and most children take the opportunity to borrow reading books for use at home.
7. Children with special educational needs receive good support and are presented with a modified curriculum to match their needs. The day-to-day assessments made by teachers are recorded formally and complement targets on children's individual education plans. The good level of staffing and the very good knowledge that teachers have of the children are important factors in the good progress that children make. Teachers work hard to ensure that all children have full access to all the activities.
8. Teachers plan collaboratively, to ensure equal opportunities for children. Short-term weekly plans take good account of the wide range of activities relevant to this age group. However, planning often lacks precise statements about what children should learn in the various activities, which means that opportunities to re-inforce learning are sometimes missed. Assessments made during the day are recorded in children's individual files using stick-on labels. This is a very good system which saves duplication of effort and makes the results of assessments readily and quickly available to both parents and staff. Parents know where to find their own child's folder and read the results of assessments frequently, often on the day that they were written. This provides a valuable method of keeping parents up to date on their children's progress.
9. Inspection evidence shows that the quality of teaching has been maintained since the last inspection. A major strength of the teaching remains in the individual and responsive work undertaken with regard to specific children. However, there has been sound improvement in the area of teaching about knowledge and understanding of the world and a very good improvement in the use of assessment to monitor children's progress. The school does not have a system for monitoring improvements in teaching. Therefore, teachers are not given systematic information on how to target learning more precisely, how to increase the pace of lessons or improve classroom organisation to further improve the rate of children's progress.

30. **The curriculum and assessment**

1. Significant improvements have been made in response to the key curriculum issues of the previous inspection report. There is now a curriculum framework in place which ensures a broad and balanced curriculum. An appropriate policy is now in place which closely follows the Code of Practice for children with special educational needs.
2. The curriculum is good. It is very rich, stimulating, broad and balanced. It effectively promotes very good learning opportunities throughout all of the curriculum areas and leads smoothly to the desirable learning outcomes for five-year-olds. Curriculum provision is offered over a full day extending to six hours for the older children. There is an appropriately strong focus on social and personal development, which is effectively interwoven throughout the school day. Health education, in which the children are taught to keep themselves clean and fit, is appropriately included in the curriculum. Statutory requirements are met. Although a flexible starting time remains in operation at the centre the activities are now suitably organised to ensure that children receive direct teaching at an appropriate time when they have all arrived. This is an improvement since the last inspection.

3. All children have equal opportunities to make very good progress. Boys and girls have the same choices throughout the day and have the same access to equipment. All children are valued and respected as individuals and have good access to the curriculum according to their learning needs. The provision for children whose first language is not English is good and reflects the high level of support which they receive from teachers and nursery nurses.
4. Since the last inspection there are significantly fewer children on the special educational needs register. This is mostly due to the very favourable staffing levels which allow all children to learn in small groups. All staff sensitively identify those children who experience difficulties, and place them on a special care register. Early opportunities are occasionally missed, however, to transfer a small but significant minority of children from the care register to the special educational needs register. Curriculum provision for children with special educational needs is good. Their needs are currently met through an appropriately modified curriculum.
5. The curriculum framework developed in response to the previous inspection report gives a clear overview of the experiences offered to children over six terms. It appropriately covers all areas of learning. It effectively guides planning to ensure the curriculum is fully covered. There is, however, insufficient detail in teachers' plans to show precisely what is being taught, or the systematic development of skills. Weekly planning is well structured and detailed in the range of rich experiences offered and activities planned. However, precise details of specific learning targets are frequently missing. Planning for workshop mathematics is well structured with clear learning targets. Lessons are planned around themes and good, effective curriculum links are made to consolidate learning across all curriculum areas. When playing with large toys outside, children gain an understanding of positional language. When carefully recalling the story of "The Three Billy Goats Gruff" in literacy, children accurately count to 3 and precisely compare the size of the goats.
6. Well-planned and relevant visits to wide-ranging places of interest are a very strong feature of curriculum provision. They add stimulation, and have a positive impact on children's progress. The curriculum is considerably enriched by the innumerable experts who share their experiences and talent with the children.
7. The children have the opportunity to enjoy structured activities and wide-ranging activities beyond the normal school year. The centre remains open for fifty weeks a year. Although children do not attend for five days a week during normal school holidays the learning activities and visits usually available remain a part of the provision. This good continuity means that children do not forget what they have learned during long holidays.
8. Procedures for assessing children's attainment across all areas of learning are very good. This is a significant improvement since the last report and effectively addresses the key issue raised. A comprehensive profile and assessment booklet is carefully completed for every child and shared regularly with parents. Very detailed observation procedures clearly enable the early identification of children with special educational needs. Individual records of achievement are conscientiously kept and effectively measure progress over time. While the process is systematic, there is sufficient flexibility to record achievements made by the child as a result of independent and self-initiated learning. A record of achievement effectively summarises personal, social, intellectual and physical attainment on transfer to the next school. The centre has recently trailed a baseline assessment scheme for the local authority and is awaiting the result before deciding whether or not it will be formally adopted.
9. All staff know the children very well. They meet regularly to share information and plan the next steps of learning. This is particularly successful in the area of personal and social development, where all staff have a very good insight into the learning needs of the children. The all-round attainment of children is regularly and systematically assessed and is used effectively to inform the next stage of planning. Weekly planning appropriately targets the needs of individual children who need additional support or more challenging activities. However, specific learning objectives are not always included.

39. **Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

1. Provision for the spiritual, moral, and cultural development of children is good, and for their social development it is very good. Minor issues raised in the last inspection report have been effectively addressed to improve the spiritual and cultural provision.
2. Spiritual provision is embodied in the philosophy of the centre, which aims for each child to develop a strong sense of self-knowledge. There are good opportunities for children to appreciate the natural world around them. Good use is made of the centre grounds to observe mini-beasts closely. Children are encouraged to feed the hungry birds, and observe the many species which visit the garden. In the Spring term children have the opportunity to observe chickens hatch from eggs. Their knowledge and appreciation of the natural and man-made world are significantly extended through the wealth of experiences gained by well planned visits. Incidental opportunities which evoke a sense of wonder are cherished and celebrated by staff, for example the first observation of the roamer toy, the delighted response to painting footprints and the mystery surrounding rainbow reflections. Children are encouraged to reflect on what they have seen. Quiet corners, tranquil music, bubble blowing, scented candles, and circle time effectively support spiritual development. Through carefully selected stories, and discussion of relevant experiences, children are given opportunities to talk about their feelings and those of others. Children begin to develop an awareness of Christian festivals and those of other religions. Special times, such as birthdays and new family members, are happily celebrated within the group.
3. Provision for moral development is good. Parents agree that the school successfully promotes good moral values and a growing respect for others. Moral issues are specifically included in curriculum plans, and children begin to develop an awareness of the difference between right and wrong. Adults within the school are good role models and support the children sensitively and calmly. Good opportunities are provided to foster a respect for the environment. Children are encouraged to treat mini-beasts with care. Children develop an understanding of the routines of school, and what is expected of them. Even the youngest children understand the clear rules associated with visits out of school, and these are closely followed.
4. Provision for social development is very good. Parents agree that children's social behaviour improves significantly once they have settled into school. Social development permeates the school, and is a key feature. Children are provided with wide-ranging opportunities to play together, share equipment and take turns. They are encouraged to consider each other, and value the work of others. Adults know the children very well and frequently plan on an individual level to appropriately support their learning. Well-planned opportunities to visit places of interest effectively broaden social experiences, developing self-discipline and responsibility. Visits to busy venues, like the railway station and travel on public transport encourage good social behaviour in challenging circumstances. Very good opportunities are sensitively planned to develop personal independence. Praise and encouragement effectively support learning. Social skills at mealtimes develop well. The quality of relationships within the school is very good and this has a very positive impact on children's attitudes to good social behaviour.
5. Cultural provision is good. Planned opportunities within the curriculum effectively develop children's knowledge and understanding of their own and other cultures. The wide-ranging visits provide rich experiences which support children's development of their own culture. Children visit castles, museums, art galleries and the theatre. They closely observe the "Angel of the North" and work with a local artist to create their own sculptures. Interesting visitors to school such as the postman and fireman emphasise local culture, whilst musicians, artists, puppeteers, storytellers and theatre groups extend the cultural dimension. Children are encouraged to learn about the rich diversity of other cultures. They enjoyed the Dragon Dance performed by Chinese visitors. Special weeks are organised, such as a recent Japanese week, when role-play resources were carefully changed to Japanese costumes and artefacts to consolidate learning. Japanese writing was expertly demonstrated. Artefacts from other cultures promote interest, and stimulate discussion. Music and food from Eastern cultures are introduced. Learning resources such as jigsaws, books, dolls, puppets and dressing-up clothes successfully enhance

cultural development.

44. Support, guidance and pupils' welfare

1. The school is successful in providing very good support and guidance for its pupils. This is achieved through a holistic approach to the welfare of children and their families in school and in the wider community. Staff have created in the centre a secure and welcoming environment in which they can work in partnership with parents and other professionals to provide care and support for pupils for fifty weeks in the year. Through extending support and guidance to parents, for example by providing courses in family literacy and through the STEPS programme for parents, they have been able to have a positive effect on children's life at home. Staff continue to work with and support pupils at the after-school sessions twice a week and are responding to children's requests for provision beyond the age of eleven by planning an after-school club for 11 to 14 year-olds.
 2. Relationships between staff and pupils are good. Staff know pupils very well and are aware of their individual needs. They listen to the children and their response reflects the school's emphasis on building self-esteem and self-confidence. Staff keep detailed records of pupils' achievements and monitor their academic progress and personal development effectively. Induction to the nursery and transfer between classes and to primary school take place under careful supervision of staff who are sensitive to the needs of the child.
 3. The school is successful in creating a climate for good behaviour. Staff encourage pupils to behave well, to share, take turns and respect the feelings of others. Parents report that this has had a positive effect on children's behaviour at home.
 4. The school has appropriate procedures for child protection. The local health visitor and family support co-ordinator visit the centre regularly so that they know children and families well, and are available to give information and advice. There are appropriate procedures for the health and safety of pupils and staff, and care has been taken to ensure safety on excursions in the minibus and on public transport.
 5. Overall, provision has improved well since the last inspection.
- 49.

49. Partnership with parents and the community

1. Staff have worked hard to build a high level of partnership with parents in the care and education of their children, and have succeeded in establishing the centre as a valuable resource for the community. There has been significant improvement in this area since the last inspection. This has been achieved through listening to parents and being flexible in response to their needs. The nursery welcomes parents and younger children into the family rooms and workshops and a sitting room is also set aside for their use with refreshments available. They feel able to discuss any problems with staff and are very supportive of the school and its work.
2. The school provides parents with very good information, through constant discussion about their children's progress and any problems which arise, and pupils' files are always available for parents to read. There are progress reviews after six weeks and on transfer to the workshops in which all parents are involved, and on leaving nursery, pupils take home their files and a booklet outlining their achievements.
3. The school involves parents from the beginning by welcoming them into the family rooms when children start nursery, so that they can get to know staff and help their children settle in. The relationships which develop help parents to understand the school's objectives and adopt a consistent

approach at home, while enabling staff to suggest ways of improving children's self-esteem and overcoming difficulties. Parents are encouraged to be involved in a variety of activities and projects, to join in educational visits and choose books with their children to read at home.

4. Parents take good advantage of the many partnership opportunities offered by the centre. There has been a good response to the Family Literacy initiative and this has led to parents requesting further courses. The school has responded well by starting a classroom assistants course which is well attended by parents. This will mean that parents will have an initial qualification to work in schools and will also enable them to support their own children more effectively at home. The Pacific Institute's STEPS programme to improve self-knowledge and self-esteem has also proved to be very popular and beneficial.
5. Links between the Centre and the community are excellent with a range of provision for children and their families which offers continuity of care and opportunities for personal development. Staff and the health visitor hold a parent and toddler group every week in the Centre and all round provision for this age group is the focus of the successful Surestart Trailblazers bid. The After School facility offers extended experience and personal development to children of primary school age, for example through model making and individual personal development programmes. Staff collect children from their primary schools, enabling them to develop stronger links with these schools and a more secure social framework for the children.
6. The Centre is regarded as an example of good practice which leads to contacts and visits from the national and international community. Links have been established with local shops and services such as the clinic, library and post office, and good use is made of the local area, exhibitions and places of interest to support the curriculum. International and local businesses have sponsored various projects benefiting pupils, parents and older children and the Centre is successful in attracting funding from a variety of sources for this purpose.

55. THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL

55. Leadership and management

1. The headteacher provides strong and effective leadership, giving a clear educational direction to the school. She has a clear vision of where she would like the school to be and pursues this vision vigorously. She has been very successful with a number of bids, such as the Sure Start proposals, which outline an exciting and forward thinking future for the centre. The opening of the centre for 50 weeks a year is a dynamic initiative which is successfully meeting the particular needs of the local community. This has meant changing working practices, for example over the Summer and Easter holidays. This clearly indicates the commitment of the head and staff to continuing development through the identification of need and innovative practice in order to meet the needs identified. If successful, the Early Excellence bid is planned to further develop this constructive and forward thinking approach to education.
2. The centre deputy provides valuable support to the headteacher and is an integral member of the management team. Her expertise with younger children and in the provision of after school facilities for older children was an essential part of the development of this aspect of the centre. She takes a major part in managing the finances of the centre and acts as team leader for the two family rooms, initiating the Early Learning programme through Worcester University. There is a high degree of mutual trust and respect between the headteacher and deputy which allows each of them to fulfil their own roles confidently to the benefit of the centre. This is an excellent example of co-operative leadership leading to positive results and reflects a significant improvement since the last inspection.
3. The governing body is very supportive of the work carried out at the centre. They have recently established committees, for example for finance, but these have not yet had an impact on the running of

the school. The governing body does not make formal visits to the centre to review provision but a number of them, particularly the parent governors, are very active in the school community and have a good knowledge of developments within the centre. At the present time the governing body is dependent on the senior management team to provide them with information. There is no designated governor for special educational needs.

4. The monitoring of teaching is not systematically carried out and there are no formal records of the results of any such monitoring. This procedure has been started with the help of the local authority link inspector and is planned to develop to include all staff at the school. Informal monitoring means that the headteacher has a good knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses in the teaching but points for developing individual teachers' performance are not formally recorded. At present there is no release time for the special educational needs co-ordinator to work alongside colleagues or monitor children's progress. However, if the Early Excellence bid is successful it is planned to organise release time for monitoring and support.
5. Development planning is carried out at two levels within the centre. The most impressive and well thought out planning is in the approach to making bids for the development of the centre. These bids are carefully considered and planned for in detail and as a result are often successful. The school development plan is less well developed, does not provide a comprehensive overview of developments at the centre and has not improved noticeably since the last inspection. Individual bids, for example for Early Excellence, are not included and it is therefore difficult to get a full picture of where the school is going. The plan lacks clear success criteria and does not always include clear costings or sufficient detail. However, the recent school evaluation, carried out by the senior management team and the local authority, has successfully identified ways in which the school needs to improve and has acknowledged shortcomings in development planning and the monitoring of teaching and learning.
6. The school fully realises its aims to raise children's self-esteem and academic attainment. The value which is placed on parents and the local community is reflected in every area of the school's work. Relationships are good throughout the school and a very effective learning environment is created in which children and parents feel included. All staff make substantial and successful efforts to ensure that all children and adults are given wide-ranging and accessible opportunities. Overall the ethos of the school is excellent.

61.

61. **Staffing, accommodation and learning resources**

1. Since the last inspection, the number of qualified teachers has being reduced by one, but a significant improvement has been made to the number of qualified nursery nurses. In response to the last report a thermostat now controls the temperature of the water, and modifications have been made to the garden steps. In those areas where resources were limited, high quality provision has now been made.
2. There is a good level of well-qualified and highly experienced nursery teachers to meet the demands of the curriculum and the needs of the children. One teacher has only been in post for a few weeks, and has already made a significant contribution to curriculum planning. In response to the last inspection report, teachers have curriculum co-ordination responsibilities appropriate to their experience and expertise. Two teachers work effectively in partnership in a job sharing role. An excellent level of appropriately qualified and experienced nursery nurses effectively support learning in family and workshop areas. The special educational needs co-ordinator works in close liaison with all staff members, offering advice and support but she does not have any available time during the day to work alongside colleagues in class. All staff work effectively as a team, and meet very regularly for detailed planning meetings. They all have a shared understanding of the philosophy of the centre, and are committed to high level provision for the children. The very generous staffing level enables children to be taught in smaller than average groups. This provision makes a considerable contribution to the very good progress which the children make.

3. Teachers and support staff enjoy professional development through a positive appraisal system. Professional development is further supported through relevant in-service training organised by the Local Education Authority and school in-service sessions. Individual staff are positively encouraged to undertake specialised training such as an art course in Italy, or extended study of assessment at the university. Other outside agencies such as the Health Authority and psychological services work in close liaison with the school to add additional support and advice, particularly in the area of special educational needs.

4. Accommodation continues to develop effectively to meet the growing needs of the community. Since the last inspection the undercroft has effectively been developed to accommodate after-school initiatives and to provide a new art studio and community meeting rooms. This accommodation is occasionally used by the children for pottery, music and play space. The parents' room with play facilities for toddlers is small and currently underused. The family rooms and workshops are effectively used for the delivery of the curriculum. The family rooms are very sensitively furnished to a high standard, with sufficient space for large equipment to be enjoyed in safety. The workshops are less spacious, although adequate for the number of children currently on roll. During the inspection the corridor was used as an additional teaching area to accommodate a small group session. This is an unsatisfactory area and not conducive to concentrated learning. The accommodation has no access for wheelchairs. The caretaker and cleaning staff take a pride in the building and ensure it is well maintained and clean. Good interesting wall displays further enhance learning, and support children's self-esteem. The outdoor area is spacious, and creatively used. Grassy slopes and the different types of surfaces support learning well. Permanent adventurous equipment and flexible climbing apparatus stimulate physical development and personal challenges. The spacious garden is a natural habitat for mini-beasts and birds which fascinate the curious children.

5. Resources for learning are good. The mini-bus is an outstanding resource which allows the curriculum to be enriched through visits to local places of interest. The video and digital camera very effectively support the step-by-step progress which children make by effectively recalling prior experiences. Learning resources across all areas of the curriculum are mainly of high quality, with good emphasis placed on multi-cultural resources. They appeal to children and stimulate learning. The limited learning resources highlighted in the previous inspection report have been raised to a satisfactory level. Resources in the workshops are well labelled and easily accessible. Resources are also stored centrally to maximise their use. A number of wheeled toys, however, are in urgent need of repair or replacement. This issue will be addressed when the next phase of building is completed. Very rich learning resources come from the valuable visits beyond school and the expertise of the many visitors who are invited to school. This makes a considerable contribution to children's learning.

66. The efficiency of the school

1. The centre does not have a fully delegated budget from the local authority. However, the centre deputy monitors spending and works closely with the local authority finance officer as part of her training for full delegation. The governing body have recently established a finance committee in readiness for full delegation and the centre deputy has given a presentation to them as part of their training. This committee meets every half term and receives a full financial report.

2. Financial links to the school development plan are not always clearly identified and this is a weakness. However, other educational developments, such as the bids made for Sure Start and Early Excellence status are supported by very good financial planning and considerable developments have taken place, and are to take place, as a result of successful bids over the last two years. This is a strength of the school.

3. The school is creative in making the best use of its financial resources. A good example of this, in conjunction with the local authority, was the purchase of the school mini bus. This was purchased when a teacher took early retirement and was seen as a more constructive immediate use of funds. The teaching commitment was covered by the headteacher and centre deputy. As a result the school now

possesses a valuable resource.

4. The school maintains a cheque account and this is efficiently managed by the centre deputy. This account is monitored by the local education authority. There has not been a recent local authority audit of school systems.
5. Teaching staff and nursery nurses are used very effectively. The establishment of the centre as a 50 weeks a year centre open from eight-thirty in the morning until five-thirty at night has necessitated a flexible and dynamic approach to staffing on the part of all staff, including the headteacher and deputy. This is a great credit to all concerned and has been achieved in a remarkably short time, less than 18 months. Accommodation is well used in the main part of the centre and good use is made of the newly built art studio and after-school centre. However, the downstairs community area is not always used to its full potential during the school day by the nursery children.
6. The school does not receive any specific grants or money for children with special educational needs.
7. Considering the very good progress made by children, the sound quality of teaching, the good attitudes to learning and the strong leadership, and despite the high unit cost, the school gives good value for money.

73. PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS

73. AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE

Personal and social development

1. Attainment is satisfactory and is broadly on course to meet the national expectations by the age of five. Most children make very good progress over six terms.
 2. Children quickly develop a sense of belonging in the warm, caring environment of the nursery. They grow in personal independence, particularly when dressing and attending to personal hygiene. Children observed hygiene rules when baking, and know that germs cause illness. They gradually become confident to move from one activity to another. They begin to make decisions, selecting their own musical instruments, wheeled toy, or work task. Most children respond appropriately to daily routines and know what is expected of them. They respond well to praise and encouragement, and confidence and self-esteem increase. Behaviour is generally good, and children have a good understanding of what is expected of them. The majority of them readily accept correction. Children develop self-control, although there is evidence of aggressive behaviour by a very small minority of younger pupils. They are beginning to develop a sense of right and wrong, particularly in relation to school routines and to one another. They show respect for school equipment, and are learning how to replace resources carefully in the correct place. They do not always do this without being prompted. They handle mini-beasts carefully, and learn to care for their goldfish. In both small and large groups children generally co-operate well with each other. Most children share equipment readily, but a very small minority is inclined to snatch tools from others. Most children take turns well but a minority of the younger children still finds this difficult. They happily play together in real and imaginary situations and share ideas. They value the views of others, and seek approval of their work from their friends. They work well together in paired situations. Children learn to persevere and most tasks are successfully completed. Christian festivals and those of other faiths are celebrated and wide-ranging resources support learning about their own and other cultures. Stories and relevant discussions allow sensitive children to explore their feelings, and begin to understand the feelings of others. Children develop a sense of responsibility. A minority confidently self-registers in the morning, but this opportunity is not extended to all of the workshop children. They all show a responsible attitude when on a visit, standing still when told, holding an adult's hand, and carefully following instructions.
76. The teaching of personal and social development is good overall, and permeates the school day. Teachers generally have high expectations of children and plan activities at an individual level to support individual needs. The very good quality of relationships is a strength of the school; children and adults respect each other, and there is a strong element of trust between them. The adults create a climate of security, warmth and caring. Children feel comfortable even when they make mistakes. Most staff are swift to intervene, and give firm but gentle reminders of appropriate behaviour. Aggressive behaviour is firmly yet sensitively managed. Not all unco-operative behaviour is managed successfully, however, and a clearer understanding is needed between teaching and support staff in extreme cases..

76. Language and literacy

1. Overall children's attainment in language and literacy is at the expected level for children of this age. Children make very good progress throughout their time at Cruddas Park and are well prepared for transfer to the next stage of education.
2. In the family room children listen carefully to adults in small groups and respond appropriately to questions and suggestions. Their speaking skills are limited and it is sometimes difficult to understand clearly what they are trying to say. A small minority of pupils does not communicate orally unless positively encouraged by an adult. However, the large majority of children talks happily to one another

and develops their speaking skills well through creative play activities. Older children, in the workshop room, listen carefully to stories and rhymes and ask relevant questions about what they have heard. They join in with rhymes and songs and know a number of them by heart. Children increase their vocabulary through activities such as baking, when new words like fragile are introduced. They have developed a good vocabulary based on their work on animals and name many of them correctly. This was illustrated in the conversations, which they had with the classroom teacher about the visit to Jesmond Dene when they were baking. A small minority of older children has difficulty listening in whole-class times and is disruptive to the remainder of the class, making concentration difficult.

3. In reading, younger children enter the centre with limited skills. By the end of the first term children handle books sensibly and carefully. They do not always turn the pages from front to back, although a few of them do know that this is the correct way to read a book. They gain great enjoyment from books and this a direct result of enthusiastic and sensitive teaching. Children enjoy looking at pictures and know that it is all right to respond appropriately to stories with laughter. They enjoy looking at books of photographs and this re-inforces the need to start a book at the front. Children do not know the sounds that letters make but correctly name animals from pictures in books. Older children know that words and pictures carry meaning and begin to associate the two through looking at big books and learning nursery rhymes and songs. They follow the teacher's finger when she is reading text and know some of the sounds that letters make; for example they know that horses neigh and know the sound that the letter "n" makes. The great majority of children recognises their own name and know the sound that the initial letter makes.
4. In writing, younger children make marks on paper to represent images and are beginning to experiment with crayons to develop their own form of writing. Older children are encouraged to develop their writing skills through the use of writing areas where they write out their own cheques and record their messages on slips of paper. Most of the writing is very much at the emergent stage and individual marks to represent individual letters are being formed. A few children write their own name with some help and most children write the first letter of their name using the correct upper case letter. There is no evidence that they are aware of the different purposes of writing at this stage.
5. Children's response is good overall and in around 40 percent of lessons it is very good. Younger children behave well and move from activity to activity sensibly and without fuss. They allow others to look at books and use crayons without being disturbed and often enjoy sharing books together. Older children generally have good relationships with adults and with other children. A very small minority has difficulty behaving sensibly in whole-class times and constantly seeks the attention of an adult. Most children know that they have to take turns and are patient when waiting for their turn. They concentrate well when stories are being read to them and are developing a love of books.
6. Teaching is sound overall. Teachers make very good use of day-to-day assessment to plan for children's future learning and they have devised a good system of passing this information on to others who work in the classroom, and to parents, through recorded observations on stickers and individual notes on short term planning. Opportunities are sometimes missed through the lack of a clear identification of specific learning objectives in teachers' short term planning. Although teachers have a good subject knowledge the main focus of what they want children to learn is not always clearly identified and therefore teaching does not always systematically re-inforce learning. Teachers and nursery nurses have good relationships with children and know them very well. They maintain good control in a caring and supportive atmosphere - this is a strength of the school. Routines have been well established and this helps the children to feel secure and promotes confidence and concentration. Resources are well used and made readily available to children. Overall the pace of lessons is sound but disruptive behaviour by a small minority of children slows the pace in some lessons and consequently children make slower progress. Children and parents are encouraged to join the class library system for borrowing books to take home and most families take advantage of this opportunity.
7. The co-ordinator wrote the literacy policy and carries out a regular audit of resources, ordering new resources in consultation with the headteacher and staff. She does not have the opportunity to observe and support other staff in their teaching. She occasionally provides support with planning but does not

formally monitor it. The co-ordinator has led staff training, for example on teaching to improve talking, and attends training for her own development.

83. **Mathematics**

1. Children's attainment is satisfactory. The majority are broadly on course to meet average national standards by the age of five and make a smooth transfer to the National Curriculum. This attainment reflects the very good progress made over six terms by the children.
2. Children are familiar with numbers through rhymes, number songs and stories. They accurately match simple shapes in puzzles, and progress to more complex ones. Children accurately identify simple 2D shapes, and successfully choose specific shapes according to more than one criteria. They confidently select a small blue circle, for example, or a large red triangle. They compare sizes readily, and can order measuring jugs accurately by size. They accurately match domino pictures, animal shapes and geometrical shapes. Most children count to five and with support a small minority can count to nine. A significant minority recognises numbers in their everyday lives, such as their house number and local bus route numbers. The majority counts objects accurately to three and understands the order and value. They match three objects to the numeral three, and learn to trace the number. They record three animal pictures accurately on a chart by colour and also by animal, and talk about their task. Through physical activities with the large toys children begin to understand positional language such as "under", "over", "above", "behind" and "around". They begin to use mathematical language such as "circle", "triangle", "rectangle" and "square". They compare sizes such as "big", "little", "middle-sized". Through well structured water play, children understand "empty" and "full". In practical situations such as baking, children accurately measure three spoonfuls of flour. They set the table in the home-corner for three children to have tea. They count the steps in Jesmond Dene as they walk up them with the teacher and accurately count the animals at pets' corner. They know that a spider has eight legs and these are appropriately represented in their paintings and models. Children in the family room investigate number through a range of activities such as building blocks where they are encouraged to make tall towers. They explore shapes and a small minority posts the correct shapes through the appropriate spaces. They match simple objects by colour and shape. Children increase their knowledge of positional language through practical experiences such as going "up" and "down" in a lift and "along" the pedestrian tunnel, which went "under" the River Tyne.
3. Children are interested in mathematical activities and generally concentrate well. They respond well to praise. They use the computer confidently to consolidate number recognition. They are willing to talk about their work. In small group tasks the majority co-operates well with their teacher. Most children are very well behaved but a very small minority lacks concentration and disrupts the concentration of others.
4. The quality of teaching of mathematics is overall satisfactory and there are some good features. Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the subject, and use a variety of activities and methods to stimulate and interest children. There is a good balance of direct teaching and investigational activities. Teachers and nursery nurses are skilled at linking one activity with another to reinforce learning. "Baa, Baa, Black Sheep" was effectively used as a basis for exploring the number value of three. Through a well designed teacher-made chart, children began working in the very early stages of addition. Teachers extend thinking effectively by presenting children with fairly demanding tasks, such as recording pictures on a simple chart using two different criteria. Teachers make good use of high quality resources. They plan their lessons well and, in this subject, learning objectives are clearly indicated by teachers in the workshop rooms. However, learning objectives in the family room remain broad with insufficient focus on exactly what teachers want the children to learn. All staff ask appropriate questions to promote mathematical thinking. In some lessons, however, the pace was too slow because disruptive behaviour was not effectively managed. One lesson was inappropriately organised in the corridor, and constant distractions limited progress.
5. The co-ordinator has only been in post for a few weeks. She has a very good knowledge and

understanding of the subject, and has already reviewed the curriculum framework to ensure coverage. She has been successful in modifying planning to indicate clear learning targets. There is no policy in place specifically for mathematics. She does not yet have the opportunity to monitor the mathematical activities throughout the school. Assessment procedures are very good, and staff conscientiously record children's achievements. They make very good use of assessment to inform the next stage of learning.

6. Resources for mathematics are wide-ranging and are mainly of good quality.

89. Knowledge and understanding of the world

1. Children's knowledge and understanding of the world around them is in line with what one would expect for children of this age.
2. Children make very good progress throughout their time at the centre. The youngest children, in the family rooms, take part in a wide variety of visits which gives them a good knowledge of their local environment, for example when they visit the beach and the local shops. In a topic on transport they learn about rail and road links and gain good first-hand experience of this through using trains and buses. They talk about what they have seen and make observations about some of the features, for example of rail travel. They cut and glue paper and use commercial materials to make models, such as cars and buildings. The rich variety of experiences and visits is maintained in the second year at the centre, in the workshop rooms. A good example of this was observed on a visit to Jesmond Dene, a local attraction. The children fed animals, such as goats, and accurately identified a wide range of other animals. They had good knowledge and observational powers, differentiating easily between chickens, turkeys and ducks. They talk about local land features, such as waterfalls, and investigate tree roots. Children learn about their immediate environment through a search for minibeasts in the school grounds. They gain great enjoyment from this, particularly collecting creatures in their own individual pots. They know that the best place to find minibeasts is under objects such as logs and they use magnifiers to look more closely at what they find. Many children correctly identify sheep as having a fleece and develop their language skills well through learning rhymes such as "Baa Baa Black Sheep". When using the computer they have good mouse skills and a good understanding of how to use designated programs. They know how to print out their work and carry out these activities confidently. They are beginning to understand the capabilities of the Roamer and a few children programme the Roamer themselves. The majority of children manages this with help from the teacher, although they find the control panel has too much information for them to access easily. There are good literacy and numeracy links when children use information and control technology. Children are beginning to make predictions, for example of objects that will float or sink, and accurately identify the properties of materials as smooth or heavy.
3. Children's response is good. In around half of the lessons observed it was very good. Children's behaviour is good, which makes going on visits with them a pleasure and ensures that they make good progress in their learning. When using the Roamer and the computer children are often fascinated by the outcome of their actions and as a result concentrate very well. They take turns well, for example on the computer, and are respectful of the needs of others. This is often a feature of the lessons. A small minority of children is disruptive when they have to sit and listen and this occasionally spoils the concentration of others.
4. Teaching is satisfactory overall and sometimes good. Good teaching is exemplified by the wide variety of activities which are planned for children and the good access which they have to them. In these lessons teachers make use of individual children's own discoveries to extend the learning of others. Teachers give children clear instructions and use the work of other children as an example and inspiration for all. Resources are used well to help children's learning, for example when using the Roamer, and the wide variety of visits arranged by teachers has a significant impact on children's learning. Overall, teachers have good control and the resulting good behaviour means that children are able to concentrate on the task in hand. The pace of lessons is sound, although the staggered start to the day makes time management difficult. Teachers have a secure subject knowledge and high expectations

in this subject. Their short term planning is sound, although there is not always a clear focus on specific learning objectives for each lesson. Teachers' day-to-day assessment of pupils is good.

5. Co-ordination for the subject is split between two members of staff, one of whom is responsible for the humanities side and the other for scientific and technical aspects. The present curriculum ensures that there is sound progression throughout the school and this is being further developed at present to provide more specific guidance on individual aspects of the subject. When completed it is hoped that this will have an impact on teachers' short term planning. Co-ordinators help with planning although they do not have time to monitor teaching or learning systematically.

Creative Development

1. Attainment is satisfactory, with most children broadly in line with what is expected by the age of five. Through the rich opportunities provided, children make very good progress.
2. Children explore colour freely through their own imaginative painting, with good control of brush and paint. They print repeating patterns using a range of interesting shapes including fruit and vegetables. They are beginning to develop an awareness of space. Charming self portraits show a developing awareness of detail. They paint swimming fish with fairly good representation of movement. They explore texture effectively through leaf collages, and sand and glue pictures. Younger children decorate 3D shapes with a wide variety of sparkling texture. They make collage models of spiders with accurate attention to detail. They collaborate to make larger papier mache models of characters from "Peter and the Wolf" and "The Angel of the North". Children investigate the quality of clay as they make imaginary hedgehogs. They slice the clay accurately and know that water successfully joins two pieces of clay. They experiment enthusiastically with textured decoration.
3. Children explore sound through planned and unplanned opportunities. Younger children choose percussion instruments carefully and investigate the variety of sounds they make. They enthusiastically accompany stimulating taped music with fairly good rhythm. They successfully keep instruments still in quiet times. The older children listen very carefully and discriminate precisely between the sounds of a variety of percussion instruments. They carefully observe hand signals and accurately respond to a change of volume. Rhythmic accompaniment to taped music is good. Children are developing an awareness of performance in their singing, and keep in time to the music. They correctly identify a range of instruments including percussion.
4. In the many areas for imaginative play, children respond well. The most successful experiences are as a result of effective adult support, such as when nursery nurses join the tea party in the home-corner, or go on an imaginary car ride. Children took their car ride to a "dark, dark place with deep, deep water". In the stimulating role-play area, children learn about everyday situations such as cooking, shopping, using the telephone and inviting friends for tea.
5. Children enjoy creative activities and respond well to the stimulating activities planned for them. They are proud of their work, and self-esteem is raised because of the way their work is valued and displayed. In music their response is very good. They sustain concentration for extended periods of time because they have a high level of interest. They manage materials and resources well and treat the instruments fairly carefully. They are confident as speakers and listeners in imaginative play. They generally co-operate well with each other, and take turns appropriately. Children display good levels of self-discipline in music, but a small minority in the art lesson finds sharing tools difficult.
6. The quality of teaching is always at least satisfactory, and often it is good. Nursery nurses effectively extend learning for the children by appropriately entering role play situations. They ask stimulating questions to extend imagination and promote language and social skills. Following a visit to the Tyne tunnel, the experience was successfully reflected in imaginary play through a very creative use of resources. Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the teaching of music, and this is

reflected in children's very good response and progress. Teachers nurture individual creativity through a wide variety of activities. They visit art galleries and the theatre. Visits from experts such as a sculptor, harpist, guitarist and puppeteer all effectively enhance provision. However, some planning lacks specific learning objectives and details of skills' development are not easily tracked. Although behaviour is generally well managed some inappropriate behaviour is not always challenged. Resources are wide-ranging and stimulating and all staff use them effectively.

7. Through the wide range of visits and experiences this area of learning has a positive impact on children's spiritual, social and cultural development.

101.

Physical development

1. Children's attainment is above what is expected for gross motor skills, such as in running and climbing. Children's fine motor skills, for example when they are writing or using jig-saw puzzles, are as expected for their age.
2. Children make good progress overall. Children in their first year at the centre handle tools such as glue spreaders appropriately, although the amount of glue spread is often copious! They are able to pick up resources without dropping them and many children use a paintbrush and crayons effectively to create their own pictures. Children develop their fine motor skills appropriately through threading buttons onto laces, filling bags with sand using a large spoon and screwing tops onto plastic bottles. They use large equipment and apparatus confidently. Many children manoeuvre buggies and tricycles accurately and they enjoy using the swings. They climb an inclined ladder and balance successfully across planks, which link two climbing frames. They have good climbing skills and dismount from the climbing frame by climbing over the top and using a slide on the other side. In their second year the good progress is maintained. Children develop their fine motor skills successfully by completing jig-saw puzzles and practising their emerging writing skills using pencils and crayons. The majority of children holds pencils appropriately and is beginning to have good control over their writing. Activities such as soft play give children tremendous confidence to develop their physical skills in a safe environment. They are developing good balancing and jumping skills, for example when they jump from above head height to land on a rocking platform. In dance, they develop skills such as hopping and skipping successfully, although a significant minority has difficulty coordinating their skipping steps. The majority of children throws and catches balloons successfully. They further develop their co-ordination when steering tricycles and buggies by following marked-out roadways successfully. Outings, for example to Jesmond Dene, further develop their physical skills and improve children's stamina through the amount of walking they do. All the children walked and climbed steps for more than one hour without flagging on this visit.
3. Children show great enjoyment when taking part in physical activities such as soft play and outdoor activities. They take turns sensibly and show a good awareness of the needs of others, for example by giving one another plenty of room when using equipment outside and there are very few disputes over equipment. Children share the resources very well. Children run, climb and balance with obvious enthusiasm and join in co-operative activities, such as dance, without a fuss. Behaviour is good and often very good. They are careful when they use equipment like scissors but are not in any way inhibited.
4. Teaching is good. In the classroom a wide variety of activities is provided and these give pupils constant opportunities to develop their fine motor skills. Teachers and nursery nurses are constantly aware of opportunities to develop physical skills and keep a careful record of children's development. In dance, the teachers' good subject knowledge leads to good planning and this ensures that children's skills are systematically developed. Children are shown how exercise affects their bodies, for example through feeling their heart beat after strenuous exercise. The cool-down at the end of lessons is good practice and effectively calms down children ready for the next activity. Both teachers and nursery nurses join in with the children at soft play and this encourages less confident children to try out activities. In some lessons the teachers' enthusiasm is a good motivator. Teachers' control is good and this leads to the

good behaviour observed. Throughout lessons teachers take opportunities to reinforce language and mathematical skills and this is a very positive aspect of their teaching. In one lesson the slope on the field was used effectively to demonstrate the effect that this had on a rolling hoop further improving children's scientific understanding.

105.
INSPECTION DATA

PART C:

105.
INSPECTION EVIDENCE

SUMMARY OF

1. The school was inspected by a team of three inspectors who, over a period of four days, completed a total of nine inspector days. The time spent in the following activities appears below:
 - 32 lessons were observed for a total of 20 hours and 25 minutes;
 - children were heard to read and discussions were held with them about their work for a total of 1 hour and 30 minutes;
 - samples of pupils' work, displays and photographic evidence were examined for a total of 3 hours and 35 minutes.

1. The total time spent on all these activities was 25 hours and 30 minutes

2. In addition, discussions were held with the headteacher, teaching and non-teaching staff, governors, parents and others connected with the school. Policy documents of the school and the school development plan were examined. Attendance registers, records kept on pupils and teachers' planning were analysed. Results of the 40 replies to the parents' questionnaire and the views of the parents at the parents' meeting were taken into account.

108.
108.
INDICATORS

DATA AND

109. **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	65	0	3	38

110. **Teachers and classes**

110. **Qualified teachers (Nursery school, classes or unit)**

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):

3
21.7 : 1

Number of pupils per qualified teacher:

110. **Education support staff (Nursery school, classes or unit)**

Total number of education support staff:

13
412

Total aggregate hours worked each week:

111. **Financial data**

Financial year:	1998/99
	£
Total Income	325,760*
Total Expenditure	303,900*
Expenditure per pupil	2,470*
Balance brought forward from previous year	nil**
Balance carried forward to next year	nil**

111.

111. * The centre budget includes finance for after school provision which is included in these figures.

111. ** As the budget is not fully delegated any balance at the end of the year is retained by the local authority and is not, therefore, carried forward.

111.

112. **PARENTAL SURVEY**

Number of questionnaires sent out:	67
Number of questionnaires returned:	44

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	55	39	5	2	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	66	30	5	0	0
The school handles complaints from parents well	55	32	14	0	0
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	57	36	5	2	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	50	43	5	2	0
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	48	41	11	0	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	52	39	9	0	0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	32	39	23	5	2
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	64	27	10	0	0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	64	30	7	0	0
My child(ren) like(s) school	80	19	2	0	0

112. **Other issues raised by parents**

1. The parents' meeting reflected the views expressed in the responses to the questionnaire, as shown above. Parents at the meeting were unanimous in their support of the work done by the centre.