

INSPECTION REPORT

ROCKWOOD NURSERY SCHOOL

Burnley, Lancashire

LEA area: Lancashire

Unique Reference Number: 119065

Headteacher: Mrs R Donnachie

Reporting inspector: Mr A C Davies

Dates of inspection: 27 – 29 September 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 707500

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:	Kingsland Road Burnley Lancashire BB11 3PU
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Councillor Mr A C P Martin
Date of previous inspection:	September 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr A C Davies, RgI	Mathematics	Characteristics of the School
	Physical Development	Attainment and Progress
	Creative Development	Teaching
		Leadership and Management
		Staffing, Accommodation and Learning Resources
		Efficiency of the School
Mrs J Garland, Lay Inspector	Equal Opportunities	Attendance
		Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development
		Support, Guidance and Pupils' Welfare
		Partnership with Parents and the Community
Mrs L Moran	Special Educational Needs	Attitudes, Behaviour and Personal Development
	Personal and Social Development	Curriculum and Assessment
	Language and Literacy	
	Knowledge and Understanding of the World	

[this table should list all team members and also indicate, in the subject column, the team member with responsibility for under fives, special educational needs, equal opportunities and English as a second language]

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MAIN FINDINGS

What the school does well

- The school is well led by the headteacher who has a special eye for ensuring that the provision for the children has a stamp of quality.
- All children make good progress during their time in the nursery and many are on course to exceed the learning goals expected of them by the time they are 5 years of age.
- The school has formed very good relationships with its parents. The quality of information sent home to them is particularly good.
- The stimulating way each room has been organised makes an immediate impact on adults and children. Resources are very well organised and used to good effect.
- The behaviour of children is very good and they sit and listen attentively for long periods.

Where the school has weaknesses

- I. There are times when the day-to-day planning is not specific enough about what children are to learn after participating in a given task.
- II. The school's planning and assessment arrangements are not clearly linked to learning goals anticipated for children aged five.
- III. The governors see their role mainly as that of 'critical friends' and do not involve themselves more fully in aspects of whole-school decision making.
- IV. The staff lack specific knowledge to help them deal more specifically with the few children who have English as an additional language.

This is a school that has many qualities that it can feel proud of. The weaknesses identified are minor ones while the strengths are the special qualities, that help to provide so well for the needs of the young children in its care. The weaknesses will form part of the governors' action plan and will be sent to all parents or guardians of children at the school.

How the school has improved since the last inspection

The school has made good progress since the previous inspection. There are many improvements evident and the school has dealt appropriately with each of the key issues identified in the previous report.

The quality of teaching is even better than previously reported with good teaching now a prominent feature. The headteacher has had more time to stamp her presence on the school and this has resulted in better systems being in place for checking on the quality of the provision for the children. There is also a strong sense of staff working together for the benefit of the children. The improvements noted have been done by establishing good routines for the children and effective systems of working for the staff. The very positive attitudes that exist amongst the staff are central to ensuring that the school has a good capacity for improving still further.

Standards

There are national goals for children to achieve by the time they are five years of age. The majority of

children are on course to achieve beyond these goals. The good progress made in personal and social development is particularly pleasing and this helps children make gains in all other areas.

• **Quality of teaching**

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

Teaching is never less than satisfactory. It is good in 60 percent of lessons and very good in another 13 per cent.

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	Very good. The children can sit and listen for long periods and have quickly learnt about what is and is not acceptable when working in the nursery.
Attendance	Good. It is rare for children to arrive late for school.
Ethos*	Very good. The quality of relationships at all levels is particularly good.
Leadership and management	Good. The headteacher has ensured that everything and everyone the children come into contact with is of high quality. However, the governors have a very low-key role in the school.
Curriculum	Satisfactory. There is a good range of activities provided for children but the planning and assessment of work is not as clearly linked to the expected learning goals for 5-year-olds as they could be.
Children with special educational needs	Good. Children are well supported from both within the school and from a range of outside agencies.
Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. This is a school which helps children understand what is and is not acceptable and uses every opportunity possible to talk to the children about right and wrong.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	There is a good range of resources available to children. These are used effectively by staff to provide a range of quality experiences for children. The accommodation has been adapted particularly well and is used very effectively.
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
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They are unanimous in their support for what is happening at the school. • They appreciate that their children enjoy coming to school. • They recognise that their children are provided with a safe and secure environment where they are well looked after, both pastorally and academically. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None noted

The inspection team can fully understand why parents feel so pleased about the provision made for their children. The team agrees with all the positive points made by parents.

KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

As the school seeks to build on the good progress identified, the governors and staff should:

Reconsider their planning arrangements so that:

- V. adults are more focussed on the learning goals identified for each area of learning when developing whole school plans and assessments; (Paragraph 29, 33) and
- VI. greater consideration is given to what staff want groups of children to learn as a result of their teaching input. (Paragraph 24, 30, 34, 35)

Consider how the governors can be more fully involved in the work of the school by:

- VII. having appropriate checks in place so as to enable them to be more aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses. (Paragraph 58)

As well as these two main key issues the staff need to be provided with appropriate professional development in order to make them more aware of the needs of children who have English as an additional language. (Paragraph 26, 38) There are also health and safety issues that need to be dealt with. (Paragraph 51)

· **INTRODUCTION**

· **Characteristics of the school**

3 Rockwood Nursery is situated in Burnley and is accommodated in a large Victorian town house in its own grounds. This provides a very special setting for the education of the young children who attend. The school has a large garden area and rooms within the building are spacious.

4 There are 84 children attending, all on a part-time basis. The group is split in two with a morning and afternoon group. Children do not stay to have their lunch at school. At present, 50 children attend the morning nursery and 34 attend the afternoon session. All the children are either 3 or 4 years of age. They can start school after their third birthday and leave in time to start at a primary or infant school before their fifth birthday.

5 There are 4 children attending who have English as an additional language. Each of these children is able to communicate a little in English. Three children are at some stage of the special educational needs register.

6 Most of the children live in close proximity to the school, which includes many owner-occupied terraced houses. Some children come from the nearby village of Cliviger and a small proportion of children live in rented accommodation. When children start school they demonstrate a wide range of ability. Many are quite confident and use good communications skills. There is an equal number who are not as mature and require help to settle to the routines of nursery life.

7 The school aims put much emphasis on creating a happy and secure school so as to enable children to learn about the world around them. There is an appropriate emphasis given to academic as well as social needs. The staff of the school are aware that new guidance is about to be produced for the provision of children aged under five in all schools. It is anticipated that much of their staff development energies will be devoted to ensuring that the necessary adjustments are made in order for the school to meet the new requirements.

·

- **Key indicators**

-

Attendance

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

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

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- **Exclusions**

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

	Number
Fixed period	nil
Permanent	nil

- **Quality of teaching**

Percentage of teaching observed which is:

	%
Very good or better	13
Satisfactory or better	100
Less than satisfactory	0

· **PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL**

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

· **Attainment and progress**

8 There are national goals for children to achieve by the time they are 5 years of age. The majority of children in Rockwood are on course to exceed the expected goals by the time they are 5 in each of the six areas of learning identified for young children. There is some variation apparent between the achievements of the morning and afternoon groups but this still represents good progress overall for all groups of children. There have been improvements in children's progress since the previous inspection. At that time of the previous inspection it was reported that children were on course to achieve the expected learning outcomes by the time they were 5 years of age.

9 When children start in the nursery, the morning and afternoon groups have different starting points. A typical morning group will have approximately a third of the children showing levels of maturity and skills that exceed their age. Most of the others are in line with the levels expected for their age with only a few having communication and social difficulties. In the afternoon this trend is reversed, with a large group showing immature characteristics, and only a few showing signs that their speech and personal and social development is beyond the level expected for their age. When put together, this indicates that on average children demonstrate the skill levels expected for their age when they start in the nursery but with a wide variation in their levels of maturity. The baseline assessments undertaken with the children soon after they have started school confirms this picture.

10 The children's personal and social development is very good. Their behaviour is very good and sometimes excellent. The vast majority of children are in line to exceed the expected learning goals anticipated for children at the age of five. Most children start each session showing confidence and a willingness to come to school. They locate their badge, which is used as part of the registration system, and show good levels of independence as they move into the room where they start their session. During the initial whole-group activity, they are able to sit and listen attentively and join in with tasks as and when requested to do so. The majority know when it is time for their group to leave the room and start on different tasks in a smaller group identified for them. The levels of independence the children demonstrate when working away from direct adult supervision are impressive. They show that they are able to follow instructions by, for example, not entering the domestic play area when the capacity allowed inside has been reached. Many are able to organise their own activities and consistently tidy up after themselves. This represents good progress. Children who have mature skills when they start school are able to build on this good position while those who have immature characteristics quickly settle to school routine.

11 At the age of three, when most children start in the nursery, their ability to listen, talk and show early skills in reading and writing are very varied. Many are not able to listen for extended periods and have very limited experiences with books. Others are good communicators and have had many books read to them. One of the most impressive features of the nursery is the ability of children to listen, individually, in small groups or as a whole group. During these times children show that they are able to listen to instructions and respond to questions asked of them. When they are asked to respond the majority are able to make themselves understood with clarity. However, some children have minor speech impediments that restrict their ability to explain things clearly. All children show that they love stories and many are able to follow the storyline by looking at the pictures. The higher attaining children are beginning to recognise the individual letters and know that print carries meaning. Most children are able to write their names by the time they move on to their infant schools. They quickly learn to hold pencils appropriately and respond in writing to different stimuli presented to them. Children make good progress in language and literacy and the majority exceed the level of attainment expected of them

according for their age.

12 Children make good progress in mathematics and by the time they leave the nursery the majority are in line to exceed the goals expected at the age of five. Children who are able to count up to 10 when they start the nursery learn about the value of numbers up to five and can recognise that some have a greater value than others during their time at the nursery. There is much attention given to matching and sorting with children being able to use different attributes to sort out a range of artefacts. The matching and sorting is continued into their play as these skills are used appropriately when setting the table during domestic play sessions.

13 In knowledge and understanding of the world, children are on target to exceed the goals expected of them by the time that they are 5 years old. This is as a result of the good progress they make throughout the nursery. Children use photographs and artefacts to help them develop an awareness of the past. Although the visits made to places of interest are limited, the children learn a great deal from visitors and artefacts brought into the nursery. They are able to grow plants from seeds and they keep careful checks on how they grow. This helps to develop their understanding about caring and taking responsibility.

14 The majority of children are on course to exceed the anticipated learning goals for physical development by the time they are five. Some children show quite advanced physical skills when they are riding tricycles and can manoeuvre them across the playground with great skill. Similarly, some children show good accuracy when kicking a ball. Most children are confident when using the climbing frames and show that they can jump from a relatively high position and land safely.

15 Children are on course to achieve beyond the expected outcome in creative development by the time they are five. The children show that they are able to print using paint and sliced potatoes. The images they create are sharp and they form interesting patterns. They are beginning to understand about rhythm and tempo when using musical instruments. A group of children are able to work together to create music that has many admirable qualities. Children are able to move into the imagined world quite well when using the domestic play area and use their own experiences appropriately when doing so.

16 The few children who are identified as having special educational needs are well supported and the school has good links with a range of services to help them meet the individual needs of these children. This helps them make good progress. This is an improvement since the previous inspection, when their progress was satisfactory. Children are identified early enough for work to be adjusted for them and their parents work with the school to help provide continuity in their learning. There is particular attention given to children's speech and to listening to their responses.

17 The few children who have English as an additional language also make good progress. However, there are occasions when they do not receive targeted help in the planned activities, in order to develop further their knowledge of the English language. In mathematics, they are not always introduced to appropriate vocabulary to help them develop their understanding of this work.

· **Attitudes, behaviour and personal development**

18 Children's attitudes to learning are good. They show that they have good concentration during the initial part of each session when they sit as a whole group for approximately 20 minutes and participate fully in discussions and activities presented to them. This good level of concentration is repeated during story sessions with a smaller group, when children give undivided attention to the book being read to them.

19 Children are very interested in their work and become very involved in the topics they are studying. For instance, they are all aware that the colour of the week is red and that oval is the shape being looked at. Many parents also know this because their children frequently talk about what they are doing. Much excitement is generated when children play together outside and they are quick to point out new things to each other. For example, the discovery of a spider by one child was soon to be the centre of interest for many more.

20 When working away from the direct supervision of adults, children demonstrate good levels of responsibility and independence. They are sometimes lost in their own world as was noted when two children were planning a road in the sand tray. Children know where resources belong and are very capable of putting away resources after they have finished with them. During 'snack time' they know the procedures to follow and can talk about safe and healthy practices. In this way their personal development is being enhanced.

21 The behaviour of the children is very good and sometimes excellent. They share and co-operate with each other very well indeed. There are many examples of children sharing toys and equipment with others. Many children show consideration towards each other. In the rare event of one being upset then others are quick to try and make them feel better. The children are developing clear ideas of right and wrong. They listen to stories and are able to talk about the good and naughty characters. They also express their own views of what they would do in similar situations. For example, some can explain why it was unfair for the 'Little Red Hen' to have to do all the work.

- **Attendance**

22 Attendance is good. The school endeavours to ensure good habits of attendance and pupils arrive on time for the morning and afternoon sessions. An effective method of self registration means that the time is used as a positive learning experience. Children recognise their names and photographs and pick up a badge as they come into school. This is a sensible and mature system, which the children operate very well.

- **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED**

- **Teaching**

23 The quality of teaching is good. It is never less than satisfactory, is good in 60 per cent of lessons and very good in 13 per cent. In four of the six areas of learning teaching is good. The exceptions are in the areas of personal and social development, where teaching is very good and for physical development, where the teaching is satisfactory. The main characteristics of the good teaching are the way in which resources are used and organised, the way in which adults direct their questions and the way individual children's needs are known to the staff. This shows significant improvement since the previous inspection. Although there was no unsatisfactory teaching evident in the previous inspection, the amount of good and very good teaching has increased substantially in this one.

24 Although the teaching is of a high quality, there are some minor weaknesses. These are characterised by aspects of planning that do not always clarify what children are expected to learn from a specific task and the way that the learning goals are not always used well enough when assessing children's progress. However, these minor weaknesses do not detract from the high quality work that is carried by the adults who work with these young children.

25 One of the most successful features of the teaching is the exceptional level of organisation that is apparent in each area in the school. The creation of a stimulating learning environment together with the carefully structured way that tasks have been organised make a very positive impact on children's learning. For example, there are trays in the mathematics area which include instructions explaining to the adult who work with children exactly what the intended learning intention is for children using the apparatus. In this way, both visiting adults and the permanent staff are clear about what they ought to be aiming for when working with a group. There are similar features evident for other aspects of learning. The quality of preparation is exceptional with staff thinking of stimulating and interesting tasks for children to follow.

26 The adults' intervention with children is also of a high quality. For example, if a child makes a remark that is not clear, the adults take time to ensure that they have a chance to restate their remark and there is much emphasis given to listening to what the individual says. This is done with a high degree of sensitivity, which does not put pressure on the child. In this way staff provide evidence that they know their children well and that their own knowledge and understanding of the needs of these young children is good. There are occasions when the lack of experience of working with children who have English as an additional language results in lost opportunities for exploring different meanings of phrases and words. However, these are rare occurrences and are outweighed by the mainly good levels of intervention that occur.

27 Adults use an effective range of methods when working with children. During whole-school sessions at the beginning of the morning and the afternoon sessions, there are excellent examples of children being taught to listen and to participate in activities aimed at developing their language, literacy and personal and social interactions. There are also excellent examples of children being involved in story sessions, usually involving a group of about 15 or 20. During these sessions the stories used enable the staff to talk of issues of right and wrong. For instance, the story of the 'Little Red Hen' is used very effectively to engage children in discussion about helping others and the story of 'Red Riding Hood' is used equally as expertly to discuss issues related to being kind or unkind.

28 From the moment they enter the nursery all children are managed exceptionally well. There is a calm and purposeful working environment created without voices being raised and without disciplinary procedures being obtrusive. Routines are established quickly with children knowing what to expect as their day progresses. One of the main features of this excellent provision is the way in which adults help children to understand about what is expected of them by using stories, puppets and calm reassurance, when necessary. The adults are sensitive to the way these children need to be told if they have acted in an inappropriate manner. This results in few disputes between individuals and in a sense of harmony being created for both morning and afternoon groups.

29 The staff have recently developed assessment 'skill cards' which help them to keep track of progress made by individual children. These are mostly used appropriately and have helped staff ensure that they are focussing on continuity and progression in children's learning. However, there are some occasions when they tend to dominate adult activity. This was seen during an outdoor play session when looking to see if the child had met the criteria outlined on the skill card became more important than teaching the specific skill. The skill cards have been devised after much thought and consultation and are a very valuable vehicle to help staff assess progress. However, they are not always appropriately aligned to the learning goals outlined in the desirable outcomes for young children.

30 Although teacher expectations are high, as can be demonstrated by the level of independence expected of the children, there are times when the teacher's interventions do not increase the challenge for higher attaining children. This is in part due to the adults setting up activities to meet pre-set goals, resulting in missed opportunities to further challenge children who have achieved the goals quite easily. This is in contrast to the high expectations that adults have of children when developing their personal and social skills. There is also a great deal expected of the few children identified with special educational needs. The support provided for these children is good and staff are very careful to ensure that they do not under-estimate what they are capable of achieving.

31 All adults working with children, that is, teachers and nursery nurses all have equal responsibility for planning and preparation. There is a strong feeling of teamwork amongst the staff, which results in the high priority given to developing a quality environment in each room. Although each adult nominally has a group of children directly under their care, they all know each child and know of their needs. There are frequent opportunities taken to discuss individuals both formally and informally and this adds to the quality of provision.

• **The curriculum and assessment**

32 The curriculum is broad and balanced with an emphasis on learning through play and first-hand experience. All six areas of learning expected for children of this age, are provided for. There is an appropriate emphasis on personal and social development and planning for the development of literacy and numeracy.³³

The school's extensive documentation provides staff with clear reasons why certain activities are important in the development of young children's learning. Since the last inspection, the headteacher has attempted to link these activities to the required curriculum for children under the age of five. However, this documentation still does not give a clear progression of the steps needed for children to learn in all the expected areas of learning for children of this age. The lack of this important element in the planning is preventing the present good practice at the school from becoming very good. The lack of this clearly stated progression in long-term learning also hinders planning for the medium and short-term.³⁴

The staff work together to produce weekly, short-term plans but these plans still do not identify clearly what the children will be able to do or understand or know at the end of the lesson. Again, the lack of this detail is hindering the good practice of the nursery, from becoming very good. ³⁵

Although the staff make the activities stimulating and interesting there are some minor weaknesses in the planning. Plans do not identify the different needs of children within the class group. This is particularly true of children who have completed more than three terms at the school or are particularly high attainers. The lack of this detailed written planning to remind staff of this is preventing the good progress being made by these children from becoming very good. ³⁶

The school provides good support for children who have special educational needs. The headteacher and nursery nurse work closely with outside agencies to provide a very supportive learning environment for these children. This has had a direct and positive impact on the achievements of these children. The headteacher is very clear about her responsibilities towards the needs of all of the children who may have special educational needs, and procedures and arrangements in the school are good. The planning and record keeping for these children are also good. ³⁷

Staff ensure that all children have access to all of the activities and equipment and that quiet children can have their turn just as much as more boisterous children. The staff recognise that boys are more confident than girls in outdoor play and therefore keep a 'special eye' on involving girls in all activities. ³⁸

The one area which the school has yet to consider fully, is the needs of children who have English as an additional language. Although this applies to only a very small proportion of children at present, there are no clear procedures for assessing the language needs of such children. The planning therefore, does not take into account any modifications that might be needed for children to have access to the full curriculum.³⁹

Although the children do not make visits outside of the nursery, the headteacher ensures that the children's learning and experiences are enriched by visitors and exciting events within the nursery. The children are encouraged to take part in fundraising for a variety of charities and important dates are celebrated. ⁴⁰

Since the last inspection, the headteacher and her staff have worked extremely hard in producing skills cards in many areas of the curriculum. These are enabling staff to record what children have done each day and provide a record of achievement. However, staff spend a disproportionate amount of time on assessing children rather than directly teaching them. The results of the assessment are also unclear and are not referred to in any of the written weekly planning although in practice, staff do amend activities for some children. The skills cards do not always clearly link with the areas of learning goals outlined for children of this age. ⁴¹

The school is successful in sharing information about children's progress with parents. It holds parents' meetings throughout the school year. At the end of the year, there are good arrangements in place to assist the children's move from nursery to infant

school and the transfer of necessary information about how children are doing, to the children's next teacher.

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Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

42 This area of the school's work remains good as was reported in the previous inspection.

43 Spiritual development is good and is fostered well as children are shown the wonders of nature. In one example, children showed much awe and wonder as one child directed them and adults to a spider that he had found in the playground. On another occasion a butterfly on a tree was the source of similar excitement and interest. Children are taught to consider themselves and others and qualities such as kindness are fostered well.

44 Social development is very good. There is a caring atmosphere in school, appreciated by parents, and pupils are persuaded to take turns and to share. Children pour their own drinks during 'snack time' and show that they can sit together and behave appropriately. During sessions when they are not directly supervised by adults, they are encouraged to develop personal independence. Although the children do not go outside the nursery on visits there are many opportunities for them to meet with people from the locality who help them, for example, police personnel and firefighters.

45 Moral development is also very good. The morals of stories are pointed out to the children and even the youngest can enter into a discussion on whether something is right or wrong. For example, the story of the 'Red Riding Hood' allowed for much discussion about the rights and wrongs of the wolf's actions. In another story, the Little Red Hen's decision not to share her loaf with her reluctant helpers provides another source of discussion about right and wrong.

46 Cultural development is satisfactory. Music, books and poetry are introduced to the children and they respond well. However, multicultural sources are not sufficiently used, especially those which reflect the home life of the few children who have English as an additional language. In this respect, the school needs to widen its cultural focus.

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Support, guidance and children's welfare

47 The support, welfare and guidance system is very good. Children are well supported by their teachers in the classroom and the organisation into 'family' groups facilitates their smooth entry into school life with a familiar system of support. Children's achievements are recorded assiduously and shared with parents.

48 Children's behaviour is well managed with very good results. For example, all the children sit together in a circle in the initial greeting session in a well ordered and sociable atmosphere.

49 Teachers pay close attention to individual personalities and needs. Support for children with special educational needs is good. However, the school is not in a position to ensure that the cultural needs of children with English as an additional language are equally well assessed.

50 Policies for health and safety are clear. Child protection procedures are very good and well known by all staff. The school makes very good use of support services and the school is proactive in

finding help where it is needed for children and parents.

51 There are some health and safety problems which need or are scheduled for attention. These are the lack of an upstairs toilet which means that young children have to negotiate a long staircase to go downstairs. There is a hot water pipe running along the stairway which children learn to avoid when climbing up and some radiators are not boxed in.

- **Partnership with parents and the community**

52 Parents are overwhelmingly happy with the school, its ethos and the progress that the children make. In addition to almost unanimous support for the school on the parents' questionnaire, many parents wrote individual messages of support

53 The amount and quality of information provided by the school has improved since the last inspection. Parents appreciate booklets entitled '*How you can help*'. Good use is made of photographs to attract attention and graphic illustration of the areas of learning for the children, represented by various topics which are consulted by parents and carers. Good quality, regular newsletter inform parents of projects and dates. There are two formal consultation sessions per year, and many informal conversations about progress.

54 Links with the community are good and a range of speakers are invited into school, for example the emergency services,. The parent body fundraises generously. Primary school liaison with the many schools to which the children transfer is also good.

55 At the moment there is no formalised way to speak to parents or relatives of children whose first language is other than English and there are few representatives of the wider multicultural community who are invited into school. Nevertheless, the area of parent partnership is a strong area of the school's work in policy and practice.

- **THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL**

- **Leadership and management**

56 Leadership is good. The headteacher has a special eye for the quality of provision for the children. Since the previous inspection the headteacher has had a chance to stamp her presence on the school and this had a positive impact on the provision. The stamp of her leadership is felt through the high quality of organisation that is evident and the attention given to the learning environment in each classroom. This high quality is also seen in the care given to the presentation of documentation both for professional development needs and for sending home to parents..

57 The adults working in the school share a common purpose. This is due to the way that the headteacher sets standards that are achievable and supports individuals to ensure that they can reach them. This strong commitment to the present organisation, which requires adults to give much of their own time is a testament to the strength of teamwork and commitment to high quality that exists in the school. The headteacher plays a vital role in holding the team together and provides a clear educational direction for all. This strong sense of teamwork has been maintained since the previous inspection.

58 The governors are very supportive of the school in terms of recognising the hard work that

takes place. They see themselves acting as a supportive group who are 'critical friends'. However, they are not in a position to judge how well the school is performing because they do not have appropriate systems in place to check on the school's work. This is more difficult to achieve than for most governing bodies because a large proportion of the governors are parents and they normally only have small period of time in office before their child moves on to a primary school. This lack of continuity in the governing body has made it difficult for them to develop appropriate procedures and systems. They do, however, ensure that they meet all their statutory responsibilities.

59 The School Development Plan is much improved from that reported in the previous inspection. Intended new developments are clearly outlined and appropriate systems are in place for the adults who work in the school to have a say in how the developments are reached. However, the systems for checking how successful the new developments have been are still not well set out in the framework used for the plan.

60 The headteacher has recently introduced a system for checking on the quality of teaching. The procedures are appropriate although they have not yet been implemented fully. There are opportunities for adults to be involved in the criteria used when their teaching is being assessed. The proposed system is supportive in as much as constructive feedback is built into the process. The monitoring of the curriculum is not as well advanced although there are co-ordinators in charge of different areas of learning. In some cases, the co-ordinators have worked hard to develop whole-school approaches to the area of learning for which they are responsible. For instance, the mathematics co-ordinator has organised the resources very effectively allowing all adults working with children to focus on the learning outcome intended from different activities. The overall effectiveness of the impact that the learning has on standards is not yet being assessed as thoroughly as it might. The role of co-ordinators has been appropriately developed since the previous inspection.

61 The school aims are appropriate and achievable, and are being used effectively to help develop new policies. The school sets high standards for ensuring that children enjoy coming to school and that their personal and social development is being advanced. It is clear that all involved with the school is aware of the underpinning values that the school is seeking to advance.

62 There is a very strong ethos which has been maintained since the previous inspection. The sense of commitment to a common goal is high and all adults working in the school are all working towards achieving the same. Relationships between all groups associated with the school is excellent. This includes governors, parents, children and staff. There is also a commitment towards ensuring that all children make good progress.

• **Staffing, accommodation and learning resources**

63 The nursery is staffed by a hard working and committed group of adults. There are three teachers, including the headteacher, and two full-time nursery nurses. In addition, there is another part-time nursery nurse working with children who have special educational needs. There is therefore a very good match of staff to the needs of children in the school. They have appropriate expertise and experience and know how children of this age learn. The school has taken the decision to split each morning and afternoon group into five. This results in the two full-time nursery nurses having equal accountability with teachers when it comes to day-to-day responsibility for children. This system works well with each adult having input into planning and preparation.

64 The nursery nurse supporting children with special educational needs is relatively inexperienced but does have appropriate expertise which enable her to meet the needs of the children in her care.

65 The staff have limited opportunity for participating in professional development courses outside the school. There is a great deal of energy exerted in ensuring that the staff work together in developing

their expertise but there are limited opportunities for them to meet and discuss issues with staff from other local schools. The staff have not been involved in the training that teachers from primary schools have undertaken for literacy and numeracy.

66 The school has been accommodated in a delightful Victorian town house for the past fifty years. The house has been carefully adapted to meet the needs of young children. Rooms are of an appropriate size with the two large rooms being used effectively for different purposes. Each room is known by a colour and the decoration of each matches the colour. In this way the children easily identify each room. Apart from the five rooms, a library has been established at the top of the stairs, which helps to create a pleasing literary environment. The stairs pose difficulties for these young children when they start school but the staff ensure that they use the stairs positively to develop children's confidence. The system of holding the stair rail and keeping to one side is quickly established. When the weather allows, the children have the advantage of using a large garden area, which provides ample scope for outdoor education. The large playground at the front of the school is equally as useful in providing opportunities for children to develop their physical skills.

67 The school is well resourced with an appropriate range of books, small apparatus and large storage units helping staff to have access to appropriate equipment to support work in each of the six areas of learning. The resources are very well organised and great care has been taken to ensure that they have been chosen with young children in mind. Computers are also well positioned so that children have free access to them.

• **The efficiency of the school**

68 The school does not have full delegated responsibility for its finances. It manages to match the amount of money allocated to it for learning resources with money it raises from a range of activities. There are satisfactory procedures in place for managing the budget with money being appropriately allocated to intended developments outlined in the school development plan. The money raised through a range of fund raising events is used appropriately to buy additional equipment, to add to the quality of the activities provided for children.

69 The arrangement of using nursery nurses as group leaders in the same way as teachers is effective in keeping group sizes down. As teaching is never less than satisfactory it clearly is not detracting from the quality of teaching. Nursery nurses have curriculum responsibility with one having an overview of music and another the co-ordination of creative development. Again, this is making effective use of all staff and ensures that specialist expertise is capitalised upon.

70 The accommodation is very well used. Every part of the building is utilised to the full. There are two large rooms used exceptionally well for different reasons. The pink room upstairs is the gathering room at the beginning of the sessions and the large room downstairs is used for a range of activities. The use of both rooms is well thought out, as is the use of the two smaller rooms. The addition of a large wooden playhouse has added greatly to the outside playground. The playhouse adds to the range of activities that children are able to undertake outside.

71 The effective use of learning resources is one of the main reasons why teaching is so good. Big books placed on appropriate stands are one example of books being used well to help children's pre-reading. The school is also aware of taking every opportunity to use outside visitors to school to help broaden children's knowledge and understanding of the world. Resources within classrooms are effectively deployed to help teachers feel satisfied that children are appropriately stimulated when not directly supervised by adults. The staff carefully think through the use of resources in these situations. The way that resources are organised also helps to ensure that they are well used by the staff. Mathematics resources in particular are very effectively organised so as to help adults to focus on the intended learning outcomes.

72 The finances that are within the school's control are effectively spent on resources so as to enable adults to set up tasks, which are aimed at children's needs. The development plan forms an important part of the consideration given to spending needs.

73 When taking account of the costs associated with the nursery and matched against the progress made by children, the school gives good value for money.

PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE

Personal and social development

74 The children's personal and social development is very good. Their behaviour is always very good and sometimes noted as excellent. Their overall development in this area of learning, is exceeding what could be expected of children of this age. They are making good progress. The high standards in the children's personal and social development noted at the time of the previous inspection of the school, have been maintained.

75 Children happily enter the nursery each morning and afternoon and most are able to locate their name badge by themselves. They confidently leave the adult who has brought them and walk calmly to the room where all the children gather. In this room, the children are able to enter quietly, sit in the large circle and listen to a teacher for an impressively long time. They take part in the whole group activity with confidence and enjoyment. Later during the session, the children demonstrate equally impressive behaviour as they concentrate on their play. They are able to persevere with tasks for periods of time beyond what would be expected of such young children. They are also extremely good at respecting the toys and materials they use and put them away carefully. 76

The level of independence that the children demonstrate is impressive. They go to the toilet unaided, pour out their own drink and put on coats and aprons with the minimum of assistance. They are able to organise some of their own activities and use the strategies that the staff provide to say when an area is full, very well. For example, in the home corner the children move a hat onto a figure if they go to play there. Other children arriving see all the hats on the figures and know that the area is full. One child on seeing this situation, just very calmly and patiently said, 'I will just wait then', and proceeded to do so! Some children are able independently to print out their own computer pictures. 77

The behaviour of the children is very good and sometimes excellent. They share and co-operate with each other very well indeed. There are frequent examples of children giving each other toys so that everyone can join in. For example, in the sand play, the children share out the cars and made sure each child who wants to play, has one. The children are developing clear ideas of right and wrong. They listen to stories and are able to talk about the good and naughty characters. 78

The children respond well to their environment being particularly aware of the natural life around the school. In a lovely example, a child was thrilled to find a spider on a plant and lots of other children stood and looked expectantly for it to reappear. 79

The teaching of personal and social development is very good. The staff are very successful in their consistent approach to managing behaviour. They set high standards for themselves in the way in which the whole nursery environment is cared for and maintained. This has a positive effect on the children. All the adults treat each other and the children with respect. The staff talk carefully and quietly to the children to encourage and support them. Teaching staff in particular seize every opportunity to extend the children's learning. All staff create a wonderfully calm, happy environment for the young children in their care. The result of this can be clearly seen in the personal and social development of the children.

Language and Literacy

80 Children make good progress in this area of learning. They are exceeding the standards expected for children of their age and are on course to exceed the learning goals expected of 5-year-olds. This is an improvement since the last inspection when standards and progress were found to be satisfactory.

81 Children enter the nursery with a range of skills in speaking, listening, and familiarity with books and mark making. Some children have very limited experiences whilst some are very knowledgeable. At this time their attainment is broadly typical for children of this age. The experiences and teaching that the nursery provides, ensures that all children make at least satisfactory progress whilst most make good progress. 82

There are many examples of children listening carefully. During story sessions or when all the school gathers together first thing in the morning or afternoon, the children listen with enjoyment and interest. Their ability to listen and concentrate during these times is

above what is normally expected for children of this age. Progress is at its best when children respond verbally to the adult with whom they are working, for example, during story times when the children comment on the characters in the story and offer opinions. This is in contrast to some occasions when children are engaging in role-play. During these sessions a lack of adult intervention minimises opportunities for children to talk and exchange ideas. Children's progress is enhanced by the adults' readiness to take time to listen to children's responses even when some are not able to explain themselves clearly the first time.

83 During story times children learn about how books work. They watch the adult turn pages, learn about the order of the story and many begin to recognise that print carries meaning. They learn to follow a story by the pictures in the first instance and then realise that the size and the format of the print differ according to different parts in the story. They learn to recognise that each book has a title and that different people, known as authors, write them.

84 The nursery also has a very effective way of encouraging the children to recognise their own names. This is achieved by the use of the register board in the cloakroom where the children locate their name and find their name badge. Most of the children are able to do this. Evidence in the children's progress books shows that most children are able to write their names by the time they leave the nursery. The books show how the children's skills develop during their time in nursery and the progress made is impressive.

85 The children have good attitudes to their learning. They listen carefully to others and respond appropriately. They obey the conventions of polite behaviour very well. For example, they take turns to speak and use 'please' and 'thank you' when appropriate. They are also very careful with their books and toys. Their behaviour is consistently very good. 86 The quality of the teaching is good. The best teaching of language and literacy occurs during whole group sessions for story or discussion. The adults are clear about what they want the children to learn. For example, this might be the meaning of a new word or to encourage children to give opinions. This clear teaching is not usually reflected in the written plans however. The teaching that occurs as children choose their activities, is satisfactory rather than good. This is because the staff are more involved with assessing the children instead of directly teaching them and extending their skills in writing and early reading, for example. The staff provide a supportive, caring environment in which young children are able to learn and experiment as they play. The staff devote much time and thought to developing the children's listening skills and extending their ability to concentrate. There is also an emphasis on developing the children's fine motor control, for example, their ability to hold a pencil and trace and copy. The planning in the school does not yet show how this then assists the children in their future development, for example, in their ability to write recognisable letters. The writing area is under-used and tends not to have direct adult supervision. This means that opportunities are lost for the children to experiment further with their new found skills of pencil control and mark making. This was also noted in the previous inspection. The staff actively encourage children to take books home. They have a good system of cataloguing their library and talk to children about their choices of books.

87 The planning for the development of language and literacy does not reflect how the activities and what the children need to learn might be different for different groups of children or individuals. This type of specific planning only occurs for children who have special educational needs. The lack of this focussed planning and teaching for all children is preventing the children's good progress from becoming very good.

88 The resources to support this area of learning are very good. The library contains sufficient books of good quality. Many of the books are new. Parents help by donating books to the school and there is a good system for the borrowing of books. There is also an attractive range of big books and puppets to support the stories. There are however, only a very few books which reflect other cultures and traditions and most reflect white European families. The staff ensure that all the teaching areas contain resources of a high standard and very good condition. Technology is used to good effect to support the children's learning. The children are learning to recognise pictures that are the same and are able to read print on a screen.

Mathematics

89 Children make good progress in mathematics and by the time they leave the nursery the majority are in line to exceed the goals expected by the time they are five. This is an improved position when compared to the previous inspection.

90 Most children are able to count up to 10 when they start the nursery. When counting, many do so with the aid of a rhythm such as clapping their hands or slapping their knees. Some children are able to count and show the correct number with their fingers as they do so. Children learn about the value of number and are able to order numbers 1 to 5 by their value. They are able to match the corresponding number of objects to the number up to five. Higher attaining children are able to add one or take away one from a given set of numbers and know the number that is then formed. These same children are able to count beyond 10 and one or two can count beyond 20. Most children know all the numerals to 10 by the time they leave the nursery at four years of age.

91 In the area of sorting and matching, children show that they are quick to match objects by colour and sometimes by shape. Approximately a half of the group is able to sort objects accurately by two attributes, usually shape and colour. Nearly all children are able to choose an object from a box and place it in a circle containing a set of objects of the same colour. Higher attaining children are able to sort out a set of animals by colour and by size, even though the difference in size is quite small. One child for whom English is an additional language, is able to do so with some confidence but does not name the objects and does not use comparative language such as smaller or bigger than. The matching and sorting is continued into their play with these skills being a main feature of setting the table during domestic play sessions.

92 Colour and shape tends to dominate the themes that the children are looking at. During the inspection week children were focussing on the shape 'oval'. All children knew what an oval shape looked like and some were able to use language such as, 'a squashed circle' in describing it. Shapes and terms such as circle, triangle, rectangle and square are familiar to all children. Some are able to recognise terms and shapes like cube and cylinder. Most are able to relate to size and shape and can respond to terms like 'bigger circle' or 'smaller triangle'. Others are able to include a colour so that they can select appropriately when given the instruction, 'a small red triangle'.

93 Most children are developing appropriate mathematical language. For instance, terms like 'more than' or 'less than' are used frequently as are terms like 'heavier than' or 'lighter than'. There are occasions when children for whom English is an additional language are able to carry out the task correctly but are not able to use the appropriate language associated with the selection. During stories such as 'Rosie's Walk', many children demonstrate that they are able to use the correct language associated with Rosie's movements. They are able to use terms, such as, 'under', 'over', 'around', 'beneath' and 'above'.

94 The overall picture is a positive one with most children being on course to exceed the mathematical learning goals anticipated for five-year-olds. A small group of children are likely to struggle to meet these goals but quite a few children are showing a growing confidence in their use of mathematical terms and operations and are very advanced in their use and understanding of mathematics.

95 Children display very good attitudes to learning when carrying out mathematical work. They show a great deal of patience and interest when the whole group is sitting together at the beginning of sessions and sometimes selecting objects from a container and placing them in the correct sets. During these sessions children are very interested in the task and put their hand up politely when responding to questions. If they have a point to make they do so at the correct time and do not shout out or interrupt others. Their concentration is very good, as is their perseverance. This is demonstrated as they work with animals of different colour and size. Some of the sizes differed very little but the children were

determined to place the animals in the correct set. They also tidy up after themselves very well. They know where objects belong and can replace items to the correct position after use. When children are working without direct adult supervision they are able to work together without creating a fuss and share equipment in a mature manner. Behaviour is very good in each session.

96 The teaching is good although there are minor weaknesses. This is a position that has been maintained since the previous inspection. One of the most positive features of mathematical teaching is the way that resources and equipment have been organised to allow maximum access for the staff and children. For instance, there are trays set out which include clear instructions to the adult about the mathematical task and what the learning intention is. In this way any adult working with or supervising children is clear about what learning is expected. The adult working with children is focussed on the assessment opportunities provided by the task and uses the school's 'skill cards' effectively to record progress. Good questioning enables children to consolidate what they have learned. Good use is made of books and stories to develop mathematical thinking or mathematical language. However, there are occasions when the interaction between the child and the adult does not provide appropriate challenge for the individual. For instance, although the questioning is generally at an appropriate level, opportunities are sometimes missed to deepen children's understanding of mathematical knowledge by asking searching questions which would further develop their knowledge. Adults pay appropriate attention to the language that they use. There is a clear focus on the mathematical language to be introduced in any session and checks are made to ensure that the children have understood any new term introduced. However, there is some inconsistency when it comes to working with children for whom English is an additional language. In one example, the child clearly understood the mathematical operation but was not helped to develop the appropriate language associated with task, for example, 'this is bigger than that one'.

97 The staff have developed a range of mathematical activities that are appropriate for the needs of the children and form the basis of ensuring that there is progression in children's learning. The resources have been exceptionally well organised to support these activities. A series of 'skill cards' have been developed to help staff focus on assessment opportunities and these are helpful in keeping check on children's progress. The co-ordinator is able to up-date the activities as necessary and staff talk regularly about the developments that individual children make. Resources are good with many items available to support learning when an adult is working directly with a group of children or when children are working independently at the sand tray or domestic play area. The themes chosen gives appropriate emphasis to developing mathematical understanding and knowledge.

Knowledge and Understanding of the World

98 The children make good progress in almost all areas of their knowledge and understanding of the world. They are exceeding the learning goals anticipated for children of this age.⁹⁹ The children gain good scientific knowledge. They are familiar with terms such as 'experiments' and are encouraged to observe and ask questions. They understand that living things need certain conditions in order to grow. Children planting bulbs in the outside playground area, understand that it will take some time before they grow and that when they do they are likely to produce flowers.

100 The children make good use of the computers in the nursery. Most can use a variety of controls to move the cursor around the screen. They are able to use a keyboard, a large roller-ball and a mouse successfully. When dressing the bear, they are able to choose the colours they want and confidently select different colours for particular clothing. They are able to complete programmes and print their work, sometimes without adult support. When playing with the construction toys, the children carefully complete a model, although they do not yet have the opportunity to plan first. However, the children do respond well to any problems set for them. For example, one child had made a roadway by piling bricks on top of each other. When asked how cars would get up to it, he thought carefully and then said he

would make some steps. The children are happy to talk about their families and events like holidays. They are less confident talking about the area around school and where they live. This finding matches the findings from the previous inspection.

101 Children's attitudes to learning in this area are very good. They are thoughtful and reflect carefully on what is happening and what is said. They take care of the resources they use and of their nursery environment. They are very prepared to share equipment and to work together if necessary. Their behaviour is very good.102 The quality of teaching is good. The teaching aimed at extending the children's scientific knowledge is particularly good. The co-ordinator positively encourages and plans activities that are exciting to young children. She is keen to generate a feeling of awe and wonder as she teaches children about the natural world. The planning in this area is comprehensive. However, it is not as effective and helpful as it might be to all the staff because it does not highlight a clear progression of skills, knowledge and understanding. This is the same for all of the elements of helping children make sense of the world. This was also a finding from the previous inspection.

103 The staff organise their planning around themes, each with a different main focus. Although the children were not involved with many activities requiring them to think about past events, planning shows that later in the year they will be involved in such a topic, related to teddy bears. Evidence in the school's photograph album shows that the staff make good use of visitors and resources to introduce children to things that are old. This enables the children to develop a sense of history. As found in the previous inspection, staff pay insufficient attention to the immediate environment and children find it difficult to talk about their surroundings.

Physical Development

104 In physical development the majority of children are on course to exceed the anticipated learning outcome for this area by the time they are five. This is a slightly improved picture compared to the one reported during the previous inspection.

105 Some children show quite advanced physical skills when they are riding tricycles and can manoeuvre them across the playground with great skill. These children are able to ride a number of different vehicles with equal skill and are very much in control as they manoeuvre their way between various obstacles on the playground. Children are able to move with confidence and are aware of the space around them. Similarly, a significant minority of children show good accuracy when kicking a ball. They can direct their kicks towards a small goal area and many are able to 'score' a goal from a distance of about five metres. Others are able to kick a ball towards a target with some accuracy but lack power in their kicking. Some are able to tackle each other and show very good physical agility when kicking or chasing after a ball. Only a very small number are not able to kick a ball with some degree of accuracy.

106 Most children are confident when using the climbing frames and show that they can jump from a relatively high position and land safely. They are able to show different balances on the apparatus and are able to use different points of contact when hanging from the frame. They move across the netted area of the climbing frames safely and are confident when moving from one position to another.

107 Children are able to use pencils and other drawing implements with increasing confidence. They can trace their names and follow a variety of shapes that have been drawn for them. They also handle a range of malleable materials with increasing confidence. They complete jigsaws accurately and have good hand to eye co-ordination.

108 Children have very positive attitudes to learning and on the whole are willing to share apparatus and equipment. Only on rare occasions are there examples of children not sharing appropriately or letting others have a turn. They use equipment with increasing confidence and enjoy physical activities. They are particularly confident when using the grassed area that is in use during the summer months

(noted during the pre-inspection visit). It is noticeable however, how much more confident boys are than girls. Children use the outside play-house effectively and begin to show good levels of co-operation when making decisions about who takes on which role. Behaviour is very good during outdoor play sessions.

109 The satisfactory teaching seen in this area during the previous inspection has been maintained. Staff are good at setting out a range of equipment for children to use which challenges their physical ability and they are aware of the need to alter the way the equipment is organised to make the tasks different and more interesting. Different challenges are presented to the children regularly and most enjoy the new challenges provided for them. However, there are times when teachers do not use the opportunity to intervene so as to direct children to more challenging activities. Adults are aware of the need to assess children's progress and keep notes on how they respond to different situations. However, there is a tendency to put too much effort into this aspect of their teaching at the expense of actual teaching. The adults are very well organised and are fully aware of issues related to health and safety. Equipment on the hard-play and grassed areas is very well set out with good access being available to all children.

110 Outdoor education is carefully thought about and there is appropriate guidance available to all staff. The nursery is very fortunate in having two different but equally stimulating areas for children to be able to experience outdoor play. Each of these areas is very well resourced and the level of staff supervision is very good. Staff set out activities and equipment with due regard for health and safety issues.

Creative Development

111 Children make good progress in their creative development and are on course to achieve beyond the learning outcome anticipated of them by the time they are 5 years old. This shows improvement since the previous inspection.

112 The children are able to print using paint and sliced potatoes. The images they create are sharp and they form interesting patterns. They are able to use colour appropriately and create pleasing results. Children recognise that mixing two different colours will produce a third colour. For instance, they observe red and white being mixed to make pink. Few children knew what colour was going to be produced by mixing the two colours but they did appreciate that a change would occur. Children experience working in many different media and have experience of using different textures. They are able to comment on the differences of the textures and decide which is the most appropriate to use for their work.

113 During music lessons, children show that they are able to hold a triangle correctly and use a beater appropriately so as to make music that shows they have some understanding of rhythm and tempo. They show that they are consolidating learning from previous lessons and are able to create music that is pleasant and has an appropriate beat. Some children are able to play bells and join in with a piece of music that is played on a tape. When they do so they shake the bells in such a way that compliments the music that is being played. Children are quick to join in with singing and learn an appropriate range of familiar tunes and songs. They have already established which are their favourites and make requests. Many children recognise that there are parts in the song that are repeated and usually give a knowing look when they arrive at this part of the song.

114 Children are able to move effectively into the imagined world when using the domestic play area and use their own experiences appropriately when doing so. In the domestic play area children are able to play different roles indicating the most prominent features associated with the character that they are playing, for example, younger siblings requiring much help with feeding. When playing in the sand tray, a group of children planning a roadway use good imagination to create a series of steps when they recognised that their roadway was too high. Others building sand castles learn that their buckets need to

be full before turning it over to create a castle. They already recognise that the different vehicles that they use have specific tasks. For instance, a skip lorry is used for collecting rubbish and disposing of it.

115 There are many occasions when children are engaged in creative activities outside the direct supervision of an adult. During these times they show very good responsible attitudes. They play together appropriately and share equipment. Their behaviour is also very good. This is a prominent feature as they play creatively. There is very little disruption evident when children are working independently. On the rare occasion when someone is not acting maturely, others are quick to try and help and involve him or her in some way.

116 Teaching is good in this area of learning. One of the most prominent features is the care that has been taken to ensure that tasks are challenging and interesting. For instance, the domestic play area has at one time been a three bears cottage. During this time children play different roles as well as recreate the well-known story in their own way. Teachers' planning is carefully considered so that a good range of activities is available to children. These activities are also appropriately resourced. The sand tray, for example, is set up to provide appropriate challenge. This challenge is linked to the theme where possible so that oval shapes are drawn into the sand. The organisation is very effective. This allows the adults to keep a careful eye on which children move to the different areas and how well they handle the tasks presented to them.

117 The staff give much time to considering how best to present creative activities to children. Within each of the themes covered in the year there is much thought given to the different activities which can be presented within the area of creative development. The plans are organised in such a way that ensures there is progression in children's learning. This, together with the careful thought given to assessment arrangements through the 'skill card' system helps adults to know how well children are performing in this area. Resources are good and well organised. They are accessible to children and to adults.

· **PART C: INSPECTION DATA**

· **SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

118 The inspection was carried out by three inspectors, one of whom was a lay inspector. During the inspection week, they spent a total of five days in the school. Approximately 30 hours were spent observing in classrooms. Another 20 hours were spent scrutinising pupils' work and talking to staff.

119 Thirty-one lessons or parts of lessons were inspected, with a priority given to personal and social development, literacy and numeracy. Where only a limited number of direct observations were possible, judgements are firmly based on discussions with pupils, scrutiny of their work and teachers' planning and records.

120 A representative sample of pupils' work from both classes was formally inspected to ascertain their levels of attainment and progress. Registration periods break times and lunchtime arrangements were observed and attendance registers inspected.

121 A large amount of documentation was inspected and used to help prepare inspectors. These included the School Development Plan, policies and schemes of work. The previous inspection report, its summary and the action plan produced by the school were also used to form part of the inspection process.

122 All teachers' planning files and samples of pupils' progress and records files, as well as annual reports were scrutinised. Interviews were conducted with the headteacher, all adults with management responsibility, support staff and several members of the governors. Matters discussed included their roles and responsibilities in the school and the contribution they made to pupils' attainment and progress. In addition, a discussion took place to ascertain the suitability of arrangements for preparing pupils for the next stage of their education.

123 Responses made by parents to the questionnaires and issues raised at the parents' meeting were received, analysed, considered, and checked out in school. Further discussions took place with parents as they brought their children to school, or were helping in the school during the inspection.

• **124**
INDICATORS

DATA AND

• **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	42	0	3	n/a

• **Teachers and classes**

• **Qualified teachers (Nursery school, classes or unit)**

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

3

Number of pupils per qualified teacher:

16

[Where applicable]

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

Total number of education support staff:

3

Total aggregate hours worked each week:

81

Average class size:

10

• **Financial data**

Financial year:

1998/9

	£
Total Income	14,125
Total Expenditure	11,824
Expenditure per pupil	140
Balance brought forward from previous year	nil
Balance carried forward to next year	2,301

PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out:	84
Number of questionnaires returned:	79

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	51.3	41.0	7.7		
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	78.5	20.3	1.3		
The school handles complaints from parents well	52.0	42.7	5.3		
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	74.4	24.4	1.3		
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	75.9	22.8	1.3		
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	74.7	25.3			
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	70.9	22.8	5.1		1.3
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	63.5	32.4	4.1		
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	74.7	24.1	1.3		
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	82.3	17.7			
My child(ren) like(s) school	96.2	3.8			