

# INSPECTION REPORT

Crigglestone Nursery School  
Crigglestone

LEA area: Wakefield

Unique Reference Number: 108137

Headteacher: Mrs. Anne Wilford

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Reporting inspector: Mrs. E. Parry  
2615

Dates of inspection: 18 - 19 October, 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 706897

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
Age range of pupils:	3 - 4/11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	High Street Crigglestone Wakefield West Yorkshire WF4 3EB
Telephone number:	01924 303290
Appropriate authority:	Wakefield MDC
Name of chair of governors:	Maureen Cummings
Date of previous inspection:	October 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

<b>Team members</b>	<b>Subject responsibilities</b>	<b>Aspect responsibilities</b>
Mrs. E. Parry	Mathematics Personal and social development Knowledge and understanding of the world	SEN Under fives  Attainment and progress  Attitudes, behaviour and social development Teaching Curriculum and assessment Leadership and management The efficiency of the school Equal opportunities Attendance Support, guidance and pupils' welfare Partnership with parents and the community Staffing, accommodation and learning resources Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
Mr. A. Rolfe		
Mrs. V. Hitchings-Davies	Language and literacy  Creative development Physical education	

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## **MAIN FINDINGS**

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

- The children achieve good standards in their work.
- Children are eager to learn and behave very well.
- Teaching is very good.
- Provision for children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.
- Leadership and management are good.
- There is a warm and welcoming ethos.
- There are many high quality resources for indoor activities.

### **Where the school has weaknesses**

The school has no significant weaknesses but the following minor areas could be further improved,

- I. Teachers' planning is not consistent about identifying teaching methods and evaluations.
- II. Outdoor play resources do not have as wide a range as those indoors.
- III. Some non-curriculum policies have yet to be revised or produced.

This is a very good school. There are many strengths and no significant weaknesses. There are a few areas where further improvement could be secured. These minor points will form the basis of an action plan which will be sent to all parents or guardians of pupils at the school.

### **How the school has improved since the last inspection**

The school had only two key issues to deal with at the last inspection and these have been very successfully addressed. Standards and teaching methods in mathematics were criticised. These have been thoroughly reviewed, teaching methods changed and as a result, standards have risen with many children now achieving well. The school was asked to establish ways in which staff could use daily assessment for future planning. Assessment practice is thorough and staff use this information to see what the children need to learn next. They are able to get a broad overview from the class records of areas which have not been covered or which need to be approached in a different way. New strategies have been introduced as a result of using assessment information.

### **Standards**

There are national standards for children to reach by the age of five which will be in their next school. Children are likely to reach all of these by this time and many will do so before they leave the nursery. The children are making good progress in all areas of learning.

- **Quality of teaching**

- **Teaching in areas of learning**

Personal and social development	Very good
Language and literacy	Very good
Mathematics	Very good
Knowledge and understanding of the world	Very good
Physical development	Good
Creative development	Good

Teaching was good or better in 88 per cent of lessons with 53 per cent being very good and occasionally excellent. There was no unsatisfactory teaching. All staff were judged to have taught some very good lessons.

*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**

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Behaviour	Very good. Children respond well to staff's consistent expectations.
Attendance	Satisfactory.
Ethos*	Very good. Children are keen to learn. Relationships are very good. Staff are committed to raising standards.
Leadership and management	Good. The headteacher provides very clear and effective leadership and she is ably supported by the staff. Governors are supportive.
Curriculum	Very good with assessment being a strength.
Children with special educational needs.	Too little evidence to judge progress but procedures are sound
Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Sufficient teaching staff. Excellent resources indoors and satisfactory provision for outdoor play. Spacious, older accommodation which is well maintained.
Value for money	Not applicable. The school does not have a delegated budget but uses its available resources very well.

*\*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**

- IV. The way their children enjoy coming to the school, grow in confidence and improve in their learning.
- V. The good values and attitudes which they share.
- VI. The warmth and welcome they feel in the school and their opportunities to be involved.

**What some parents are not happy about**

There were no criticisms at either the meeting or in the questionnaires.

Inspectors' judgements support the views expressed by parents. One question was asked at the meeting about whether children are assessed as individuals or as a group. The inspection team can report that children are often assessed against the same target but the result will reflect the individual child's progress.

## · **KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION**

The school has no significant weaknesses but the headteacher, staff and governors should consider the following minor points in their action plan:-

1. Ensure consistency and usefulness of detail in teachers' planning and in the subsequent evaluation.  
*Paragraph 21*
2. Complete the process of producing and refining policies.  
*Paragraph 45*
3. As funds permit, extend the range of outdoor resources.  
*Paragraph 51, 52, 77*

### 3. INTRODUCTION

#### 3. Characteristics of the school

1. Crigglestone Nursery is a small nursery school situated at the centre of the village. Eighty one children attend the nursery; forty one on one session and forty in the other. Children stay for either the morning or the afternoon session. None receive full time education. Children are usually between the ages of three and five. Many of them will have had play group experience before they start.

2. There are lower levels of unemployment in the village than is the national average. Most children will have one and sometimes two parents working.

3. Most of the children come from homes close to the school but several come from further afield. All of the children are white. All speak English; there are no other languages spoken. The children have a wide range of skills and abilities when they start at the nursery, from the few who have special needs to the very able but in general their attainment is at least in line with what is expected for three year olds.

4. The school aims to realise the children's full potential irrespective of colour, creed, race, gender or special need.

5. The principal areas for development in the school this year are related to language and literacy, and to mathematics. The school aims to give attention to developing the role of co-ordinators for their areas of learning.

3. **6.**

3. **Attendance**

Because it offers non-statutory education, the school does not need to analyse absence formally. Overall attendance for the last year has been calculated at around 89 per cent. This is similar to that of other nurseries.

3. **Exclusions**

Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school age) during the previous year:		Number
	Fixed period	0
	Permanent	0

3. **Quality of teaching**

Percentage of teaching observed which is:		%
	Very good or better	53
	Satisfactory or better	100
	Less than satisfactory	0

### 3. PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

### 3. EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL

#### 3. Attainment and progress

7. By the time they are five in their next school, the children are likely to achieve the national targets set for them in the desirable outcomes in all six areas of learning. Many will have reached the targets before they leave the nursery. Overall, attainment is above the expectations for their age.

8. The children settle in quickly and are confident with adults and with each other. They are well behaved, eager and willing to learn both with the teachers and by themselves. They are proud when they are chosen to accept little responsibilities such as taking the register to its place.

9. In language and literacy, children are doing well and making good progress. They ask and answer questions, talk to each other in play and listen with enthusiasm to stories. The many opportunities they are given in formal situations and casual conversation ensure that they gain in confidence and make good progress. Children can all write their names and form letters accurately before they leave the nursery. They learn to appreciate that we write to convey information and write for different purposes in play and in taught activities. They handle books carefully, know that books are read from left to right and can identify letters and sounds.

10. Many children are achieving the learning targets for mathematics before they leave the nursery and before they are five. Mathematics is now taught as one of the focused group activities at the beginning and end of the sessions as well as incidentally as opportunities arise. Teaching is good and children are gaining secure knowledge in all aspects of the mathematics curriculum. They count confidently, sort and match objects, learn to read and write numbers to 10 and show understanding of simple data collection as they make graphs. Their knowledge of shapes is well promoted but is not as secure as other aspects of mathematics.

11. Children's natural curiosity is well harnessed in science work and effective teaching ensures that they are developing very good skills in predicting, investigating, observing and recording. Children control the mouse competently when they use the computer. They have sound skills in technology work where they learn to choose materials and join them to make models in different ways. There was little evidence of the geographical and historical elements during the inspection but planning, photographs and incidental discussions with children suggest that there is a good programme and that their skills are at least sound.

12. By the age of five, most children will have made good progress in their creative work and achieved the desirable learning outcomes. The programme is well planned and provides a very wide range of activities to develop all aspects. Good progress can be seen in the way the children learn to use such tools as scissors, glue, paint brushes and pencils with increasing skill. They control shape and size increasingly well and add more and more detail, for instance when drawing a person.

13. Children's physical skills are typical for their age in their responses to outdoor

provision. Very good progress is made in developing fine control with fingers, for instance when the children complete jigsaws or make collages using small items such as buttons and sequins.

14. The only pupil who has a statement for special needs was absent during the inspection and as no other pupils are on the register for special needs, no judgements can be made about their attainment and progress. Staff do, however, know their pupils well and there were many instances where questions were carefully pitched to stretch the more able children or to give those at earlier stages of learning, a chance to answer.

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

15. The children behave very well and their responses show that they enjoy their work. They can listen to the teachers well and for quite long periods for such young children. They are naturally inquisitive, investigate activities such as the science work by themselves and will ask for help and information when they need it. Mostly children settle to a task until it is completed and only a few of the younger ones flit from one activity to another. They often show consideration for each other in simple ways such as waiting for a child who has difficulty in walking quickly.

16. The children are generally confident. Those who are shy initially quickly settle in to the nursery's routines. They move from adult to adult happily and around the different indoor and outdoor areas of the nursery. Children respond equally well to activities which they are required to do and to choosing their own learning.

17. Children accept the simple responsibilities they are given well. They tidy up after themselves, take registers away and let parents in at the ends of the sessions. The staff ensure that children are surrounded by high quality resources and children treat them with care.

18. The school is an entirely white community so children have no opportunity in their daily life to work and play with those who are from different cultural backgrounds or have different beliefs. They do however, meet children with disabilities and photographs show that they play naturally together.

### **3. Attendance**

19. The overall level of attendance is satisfactory. Registration is undertaken morning and afternoon, and the majority of pupils arrive at school on time.

### **3. QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED**

#### **3. Teaching**

20. The quality of teaching varied from satisfactory to excellent and overall was very good. There was no unsatisfactory teaching. In 88 per cent of lessons teaching was good or better and very good or excellent in 53 per cent. All teaching staff taught some lessons which were judged to be very good.

21. Teachers and nursery nurses play an equal part in planning, delivering and

evaluating what has been done. They work together well and form a strong team. All have a secure knowledge of the curriculum for under fives and each has developed expertise in one of the areas of learning. Planning is generally good although there are some inconsistencies in the detail given about teaching and in the evaluations. Sometimes these two areas are very clear and sometimes the content is too vague to be informative.

22. Assessment procedures and practice are very good and have improved since the previous inspection where some weaknesses were identified. Opportunities for assessment are indicated as part of the planning. Some individual assessments are completed each day and recorded efficiently in class records. The class records give an overview of what each group has achieved and gaps are identified. These form part of the next stage of planning.

23. The children are grouped in teams, largely according to age and this gives staff extra opportunity to match the learning to the children's needs. An example of this is the increased opportunities for the oldest group to work on language and literacy skills whilst the youngest have more time on creative learning. As they ask questions, staff are careful to pitch some at a level which stretch the more able children as well as easier ones for those who are at earlier stages of learning.

24. The organisation takes advantage of the staff's particular skills so that they most often teach focused activities and support children's restricted and independent choice in the areas in which they are most confident. A strength of the teaching is in the group times at the beginnings of each session. These are consistently very good. Staff use imaginative resources such as puppets to engage the children's interest and imagination. Stories are read with good dramatic skill which children copy as they join in. Science investigations are introduced effectively and challenging questions asked which make the children think hard.

25. The only child who has a statement of special educational needs was absent during the inspection, therefore it is not possible to make judgements about teaching in this respect.

### **3. The curriculum and assessment**

26. The school provides children with a broad and balanced curriculum which meets individual needs well. All children have equal access to the activities and there was no observable difference in the way boys and girls were treated or in their choice of activity.

27. Staff have evolved an effective form of planning which ensures full coverage of the curriculum for the under fives. The desirable learning outcomes form the cornerstone of long term planning and these are arranged into units. Each of the four members of staff takes responsibility for one of the areas and plans the provision for this area. Responsibilities for personal and social development and physical development are shared. Unusually, there is no central theme but seasonal activities and celebrations are drawn in when appropriate. Short term planning is based on evaluation of what has preceded and what has yet to be covered.

28. At the previous inspection, an issue was to ensure that each child experienced the

full range of learning. This has been achieved successfully by changes and developments in the teaching and organisation. Mathematics which was previously taught within other areas is now one of the focused group learning activities. Children begin each day with a different area of learning and move from focused group teaching to restricted choice within that area of learning to free choice of all that is on offer. This ensures that all children will experience the full curriculum and that they all have opportunity to work with a teacher and for purposeful and independent play.

29. Assessment is very good. There are comprehensive procedures and effective practices. Staff continuously assess what children have learned and class records give a simple but immediate overview of areas which are weaknesses or have not yet been covered. Parents felt that they were able to ask staff for information whenever they needed and they have access to the children's records whenever they ask.

30. The planned programme for the one pupil with a statement of educational needs takes good account of her identified needs. As far as is possible she is given access to the same activities as the other children. Procedures, including phase transition reviews, have been completed in line with the Code of Practice.

### **3. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

31. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. Parents feel, and the inspection team agrees, that the nursery provides a good environment with plenty of opportunity for the children to learn through play and for them to make choices. The head teacher and staff have clear aims and values which are apparent in their planning and in the general ethos of the school.

32. Spiritual awareness is promoted well as the children are given insights into the values and beliefs of a range of faiths, including Christianity. Activities are planned which encourage the children to reflect on feelings such as when a new baby is born, or when pets die. Stories are read expressively, and the children are encouraged to identify with the characters particularly when puppets are used. Activities are organised which concentrate on the development of awe and wonder, for instance when testing whether objects float or sink in water. Children are taken on visits to the local church and welcome visitors such as the Vicar or the Mayor.

33. Opportunities for moral development are very good. Throughout the day, positive management techniques are used and the children are asked to reflect on their behaviour as it affects others. Good manners are modelled and encouraged, for instance during snack times when the children are encouraged to say 'thank you' and to pass to each other. This also helps to develop social skills as does the organisation of the nursery which emphasises sharing and turn-taking. Great care is taken to ensure that children with special educational and physical needs are fully integrated with specific attention and equipment for them. There are no children registered who speak English as an additional language but the nursery is well equipped with books and materials to reflect other languages and cultures. There are planned circle times at the beginning of each session where social skills are taught, for instance, listening to each other and taking turns. The children are taken out on visits to the local environment and shown how to behave appropriately. Various people visit the nursery and such contacts as these help the children to develop confidence, respect and politeness.

34. The provision for cultural development has improved since the last inspection and is now very good. Staff have attended training courses for this aspect and planning and resources have been improved. There are many new activities, artefacts, materials and pictures which reflect cultural diversity, for instance, some of the books include stories from different countries as well as Great Britain. Equipment is multi-cultural especially in the music and role-play corners where there are tapes, instruments, clothes, and utensils from other parts of the world. The children have participated in Indian dances, listened to Chinese myths and eaten food with chop-sticks. They are encouraged to value themselves and each other in all their activities. All the staff present very good role models with a caring, warm approach.

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

35. Pupils' pastoral support is well provided for. The school provides a caring and secure environment in which pupils are happy and content. Staff and pupils are well known to each other and interact well together. There are very good arrangements for transition from home to nursery, including a preliminary visit to the school, which assists pupils to settle quickly into the school routines. Parents have expressed their appreciation of the preliminary visits which they found friendly and informative.

36. The school's procedures for monitoring pupils' academic progress, emotional and physical development are excellent. Pupils are assessed on a daily basis to ensure individual learning needs are identified and used to inform planning for future learning. There are satisfactory procedures for monitoring and promoting regular and punctual attendance. The school's procedures for promoting good behaviour are very good. The behaviour policy defines a small number of clear and concise rules which pupils can understand and relate to; staff apply these rules in a firm but friendly manner.

37. The school has good child protection procedures, based on the Area Child Protection Procedures. The designated teacher has received appropriate training and all staff have been given basic guidance on these procedures. Parents have been advised of the school's child protection policy.

38. The school is committed to providing a safe and secure working environment for pupils and staff. The school's health and safety policy provides good quality guidance in relation to risk assessment prior to school trips, and safety procedures in the outside play area. The school's first aid arrangements meet statutory requirements.

3.

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

39. The school has established a good partnership with parents. Staff recognise the important role that parents play in the education of their children, and encourage them to play an active part in the life of the school.

40. The school receives the enthusiastic support of a relatively small but significant number of parents and adult helpers, who help in classrooms, working with groups of pupils on a range of activities, assist in making learning resources, and accompany pupils on school trips. A significant number of parents, who are unable to come into the school during the day, are involved in making learning resources at home.

41. Parents are provided with good quality information about the school and its activities. The brochure informs them about the school's aims and objectives, the curriculum, and opportunities to assist in school. Parents receive further information through periodic newsletters and information on the parents' notice board. They felt that they were kept well informed.

42. Parents have access to their children's individual record book throughout the year. They are invited to take the records home and to discuss their children's progress with teaching staff.

43. The school has developed some beneficial links within the community, including the local Parish Council, who have provided the school with effective learning resources including television and video camera, and a local business provides the school with good quality paper resources. The school uses the local environment as a learning resource and have developed links with the local Fire Brigade, all of which have a positive impact on the

learning process.

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

#### **3. Leadership and management**

44. Management of the school is good. The headteacher provides a very good model of commitment to raising the standards and quality of work in the school and she is ably supported by the staff. Governors play a traditionally supportive role and are keen to improve their practice.

45. Teaching and curriculum development are being monitored by the staff. Mostly the monitoring of teaching is done informally because staff are almost always working in the same room. Planning and assessment are reviewed through discussion. In the near future, the staff intend to begin a programme of more formal monitoring by observing each other. Policies are being reviewed continuously and the school intends to add to this in order to mirror good practice in primary schools.

46. School development planning is good. The process involves all the staff with governors giving support and approval when plans are in their draft form. Achievement of plans is recorded by the simple means of highlighting. Most are on target to be completed by the planned time. The staff have worked effectively to resolve the two key issues they were given at the last inspection and are well placed to move the school forward in the future.

47. The school traditionally has few pupils with special needs but procedures for supporting children meet statutory requirements.

48. The school has a very warm and welcoming atmosphere. Although there is no equal opportunities policy, there is a statement covering equality in the school's aims. In practice all children have equal access and there is no difference in the way boys and girls choose activities. There are no children from other ethnic groups but resources have been improved so that positive images of differences can be seen in books, posters, materials and artefacts.

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

49. There are sufficient numbers of teaching and educational support staff to meet the needs of the curriculum. They are appropriately qualified and experienced, and there is a reasonable match between qualifications and curriculum responsibilities. Educational support staff are fully involved in the planning of the curriculum and monitoring of pupils' progress along with teaching staff. The temporary school secretary provides sound clerical, administrative and general support which allows teaching staff to concentrate on their teaching and co-ordinating roles.

50. The school's arrangements for staff development training are good. The school has developed procedures which seek to identify a programme of staff training which matches the individual and corporate training needs of the school to the training available. Arrangements for teacher appraisal meet statutory requirements.

51. Overall, the accommodation is adequate for the number and age range of pupils on role. There is good internal provision, with a large, shared teaching space and smaller groups areas. These are used well. Because of supervision and safety considerations, all of the children and staff have outdoor play together which makes the external hard play area limited for the number of pupils, but activities are well organised to make best use of the space. The small grassed area often cannot be used because it is too wet.

52. Overall learning resources are very good although those for outdoor play are less varied and extensive. Resources are very well organised and used.

### 3. **The efficiency of the school**

53. The school's whole budget is managed centrally by the Local Education Authority with the school having responsibility only for capitation. This is enhanced by various fund raising events. The school manages its available funds well. Most areas of the curriculum are very well resourced although those for outdoor play are less well developed.

54. School development planning is good. Priorities often cost time and effort rather than money but are supported through capitation where appropriate and through the staff development programme. The headteacher, supported by the staff, monitors the plan carefully on a regular basis. The school's governing body keeps well informed through the regular contact they have with the staff as well as through their termly meetings.

55. The school's resources and accommodation are used well. Staff are effectively deployed and work very well as a team. There is only one child with a statement of special educational needs. Due to her absence, it is not possible to make judgements about the effectiveness of her support.

56. Routine organisation and administration are sound. The temporary secretary ensures that day to day tasks are completed efficiently and she supports the teaching staff by giving practical help in tidying up. Financial controls are sound although the school fund is audited by a member of staff rather than by someone who is not employed at the school. There has been no external audit of financial systems and therefore no recommendations to be followed.

### 3. PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS

#### 3. AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE

3.

##### *Personal and social development*

57. Provision for children's personal and social development is good. Parents at the meeting felt that their children settle in well and grow in confidence. Inspection evidence confirms their views. All staff take responsibility equally for this area of learning. Planning shows specific aspects to be covered but much is done incidentally and naturally. Children are consistently encouraged to be independent in personal tasks such as toileting and dressing but are given help if it is needed. There are simple tasks like putting registers away and letting parents know at the ends of sessions when a group is finished which children enjoy doing and which develop in them a sense of importance and responsibility.

58. Children's behaviour is consistently good. They learn with adults, by themselves and play with others equally well. Staff model politeness, expect it in return and give praise when it happens without prompting, as when children said thank you as they were sampling fruit in the mathematics lesson.

59. The staff have developed well the aspect of the curriculum related to learning about other beliefs and customs. Although not specifically seen during the inspection, there are photographs of children in ethnic dress, eating different foods and celebrating different festivals. They dance to the stimulus of Indian music and have musical instruments from other countries to play on. Books and posters give positive images of people who are different.

##### *Language and literacy*

60. The provision for language and literacy is good and the children make good progress. Attainment on entry is varied but on the whole is at or above average. Because of the quality of the programme, many children are on course to achieve the desirable learning outcomes by the age of five, and many are likely to achieve beyond that level.

61. Many activities are planned to help the children learn how to listen attentively. Stories are read and discussed during circle time and a cassette player and tapes are always available. The children are encouraged to record themselves and each other and listen carefully to the results. Throughout the day, good use is made of questioning to encourage the children to talk about their own experiences, for instance, during a session on floating and sinking, the children discussed the use of arm bands when swimming. Staff help the children to extend their vocabulary and explore meanings, for example, when discussing items beginning with the letter 'f'. They help them to express their thoughts, for instance when engaged in a creative activity such as collage, when the children are encouraged to give reasons for their decisions and choices.

62. The children are divided into four age groups. Three of the groups receive one focused, assessed session each week on language and literacy, and the oldest four-year-olds have two. During this time, a book is read and then used as a focus for teaching that pictures and words have meaning, that pages turn and that text reads from left to right.

Children quickly learn about books and on several occasions chose to look at them independently. One little girl acquired her own 'class' of three children whom she proceeded to teach copying the teacher beautifully! The children can recognise the sounds and names of letters which they are taught using such resources as their own and each other's names, letter bags with collections of items beginning with the same letter, and published materials linked to characters. After the teacher-directed activity, the children are free to choose any of the toys, activities and materials on display, but the children are monitored to ensure that they all return to the language and literacy area at some time during every session, to further develop their knowledge and understanding. Attractive books are always available in corners inside the main room or outside in the corridor, and staff frequently read to small groups either during the focused sessions or during child-initiated time.

63. Throughout the day, all staff encourage the children to write or record for different purposes whether it is in response to a science experiment on floating and sinking, or in the 'office'. Many different papers, materials and tools are freely accessible for mark-making including paints and brushes, crayons, chalk, fat pencils, and card. By the time they leave the nursery the children will be able to write their names correctly and form many of the letters accurately. They will understand that writing has meaning and will have written in different ways and for different purposes.

64. The nursery has collected a range of quality resources to reinforce language and literacy learning; especially impressive are some items made by parents. Apart from the letter bags, there are book bags with toys to support the story, and knitted toys of well-known characters from fairy stories and nursery rhymes. Learning is enhanced by the use of these resources which the children enjoy, and they join in enthusiastically when it is their turn in the literacy and language area. The children have very good attitudes to language and literacy activities and they participate enthusiastically in all activities. The sessions are very well planned to account for the needs of the children, with differentiated teaching based on continuous assessment.

### *Mathematics*

65. Provision for mathematics is very good and many children are achieving the learning targets before they leave the nursery and before they are five. The staff have made significant and successful changes to the way they organise and teach mathematics following the recommendations from the previous report. Whereas previously, it was taught through other activities, mathematics is now taught as one of the focused group activities at the beginning and end of the sessions and continues to be taught incidentally as opportunities arise.

66. Teaching in the group sessions is very good. Strategies for introducing the topics are often imaginative, for example, puppets 'teach' the children to recognise the numbers. The children watch and listen with great interest and respond to the characterisation. They answer Felix the fox normally, whisper when shy Louise the lamb talks to them and shout back to the noisy crocodile. As a result, they learn without effort, make good progress and are developing a good knowledge of numbers. The oldest group recognise the numbers to 10, count objects securely and many can write the numbers.

67. Within the group sessions, children are also introduced to simple data handling and to addition and subtraction concepts. They learn to represent their favourite fruits on a graph and, as the teacher cuts the fruit into pieces, to say whether they have enough or

need more.

68. The children have equally positive attitudes to working with an adult as they do to learning by themselves. During activities which they can choose to do, the children use spinners, rulers and calculators to practise writing numbers, sort, match and order by shape, colour and size and sequence objects such as teddy bears on simple matching sheets. Most of them persist at the task they have chosen until it is completed and only occasionally were children seen to give up and move to something else. Children's knowledge of shape is not as advanced as their knowledge of numbers. They are less secure in their naming of two dimensional shapes although they can match shapes by their properties.

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

69. There was a strong focus during the inspection on the scientific aspects of knowledge and understanding of the world. The teaching was very good and enabled the children to achieve high standards and make very good progress in their scientific knowledge. In the focused session, children are introduced to magnetism and to floating and sinking. They are asked to predict what will happen, to observe and to record their findings on simple charts. In the time when they can choose their activities, they investigate by themselves and show that they can predict, observe and record their findings. The teacher consistently asks the children challenging questions but is also aware of individual differences and needs.

70. Children are developing good skills in controlling the mouse on the computer to colour in sections of pictures, make their own houses by selecting and placing furniture and counting objects on the screen. Mostly, they do this by themselves but occasionally they need help from the teacher to begin with. In other areas of learning, such as in the creative corner of the classroom, they have access to tape recorders and quite happily set them going to play music. Other provision such as calculators in the mathematics area and telephones in their office ensure a wide experience of modern technology.

71. Children happily chose to work in the model making area where they showed satisfactory skills in selecting materials, cutting with scissors and joining parts using glue or cellotape. They are similarly competent in using construction kits which develop their capacity to build by pushing, screwing, pulling or clicking parts together.

72. There was less evidence of geographical and historical aspects of knowledge and understanding of the world during the inspection. The children played with road mats and different traffic toys. Their family experiences of holidays in this country and abroad show as you talk to them and some try to show you which country they have visited by finding it on a globe. Photographs and samples of work show that children have appropriate experiences such as learning about the different kinds of jobs adults do, learning about their local environment and of making simple maps.

#### *Creative development*

73. By the age of five, most children will have made good progress and achieved the desirable learning outcomes in this area. The programme is well planned and provides a very wide range of activities to develop all aspects. There are many opportunities indoors for the children to express themselves with such activities as painting, modelling with

malleable materials, construction, collage work and making music using percussion instruments. Good progress can be seen in the way the children learn to use such tools as scissors, glue, paint brushes and pencils with increasing skill. Planning, photographs and records show that the children are encouraged to add more and more detail, for instance when drawing a person, or to make careful decisions about materials when completing a collage.

74. The children are able to explore sound in the music corner using tuned and untuned percussion instruments, a tape recorder, microphone and tapes. Such resources as sand, water, paint and textiles are used to help the children explore colour, texture, shape, space and form in two and three dimensions. Staff encourage the children to respond with their senses to such activities as collage work or when tasting unusual fruits at snack time. There are role play corners set up with different themes such as a shop or Indian kitchen to help the children develop their imagination and extend their vocabulary. Art, music, dance and stories are also included in the programme and are particularly effective especially when there are multi-cultural themes.

75. The children's attitudes are good with enthusiastic responses. The quality of teaching is never less than good and sometimes very good and this can be observed in the results displayed on the walls and in photograph albums. Staff encourage children's imagination very effectively for example when puppets are used to illustrate songs and rhymes. Children are given clear guidance on routines for mixing paint and their independence is developed through high expectations about their capacity to select their own resources and to clean up afterwards.

#### *Physical development*

76. By the age of five, most children will have achieved the desirable learning outcomes in this area. The indoor area is very well planned and equipped to provide a wide range of imaginative activities to stimulate the children's interest. It encourages them to use tools, equipment and materials such as scissors, glue sticks, paint brushes, malleable materials and construction toys and to develop confidence, dexterity and control. The children are enthusiastic and move about the room with a good attitude to their tasks, producing quality pictures and models with increasing initiative and concentration. They are similarly enthusiastic when they play outside.

77. The nursery have made a decision to use the outdoor area solely for specific physical play as continuous access is limited. Resources are satisfactory. There is a tarmac playground and a grass area available and the children are taken out once in each session. Outside, the area is divided into four with different types of activities in each one; each member of staff takes one of the four groups outside to a different area each day for focused teaching. The equipment which is set out changes each week but may include such items as climbing and balancing resources, a tent and a selection of vehicles, tricycles, large building blocks, hoops and balls. The children have skills which are typical for their age as they ride bikes, climb the climbing frame or run, jump and skip. They can throw large balls and some are quite skilful in dribbling and kicking.

78. The quality of teaching is good and sometimes very good. All tasks are differentiated according to ability and specified learning objectives ensure that staff teach and demonstrate effectively. In all the outdoor activities, staff encourage the children to try when they are finding things difficult and are careful to praise them for their persistence and effort. Very good progress is made in developing fine control with fingers, for instance when

the children are making collages and developing their skills with scissors, glue and small items such as buttons and sequins. The children are encouraged to be as independent as possible and make their own choices within set limits, for instance when presented with large building blocks.

### **3. PART C: INSPECTION DATA**

#### **3. Summary of inspection evidence**

79. The inspection was undertaken by a team of three inspectors who spent a combined total of four days over a two day period gathering first-hand evidence about the school. Seventeen teaching activities were observed for a time amounting to around eleven hours. Additional time was given to watching children choose their own learning and work without direct supervision and to looking at evidence of their work in photograph albums and on the displays.

80. Interviews were held with the headteacher and teaching staff. Members of the governing body were interviewed before the inspection.

81. Pupils' records and teachers' class records were looked at. A wide range of documentation and information provided by the school was analysed by the team.

82. Thirty five replies to questionnaires issued to all parents were analysed. These, and the views of parents who attended a meeting before the inspection were taken into account

3.

3. **DATA AND INDICATORS**

3. **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	40	1	1	0

3. **Teachers and classes**

3. **Qualified teachers (Nursery school)**

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):	2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher:	20

3. **Education support staff (Nursery school.)**

Total number of education support staff:	3
Total aggregate hours worked each week:	78
Average class size:	20

3. **Financial data**

Financial year:	1999
	£
Total Income	3713
Total Expenditure	3713
Expenditure per pupil	107.50
Balance brought forward from previous year	0
Balance carried forward to next year	0

### 3. PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out:	81
Number of questionnaires returned:	35
Percentage Return Rate:	43.2

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	49	49	0	0	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	74	26	0	0	0
The school handles complaints from parents well	14	40	11	0	0
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	40	57	3	0	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	34	43	11	0	0
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	34	43	9	0	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	40	43	6	0	0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	14	29	26	0	0
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	40	40	9	0	0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	57	31	3	0	0
My child(ren) like(s) school	77	20	0	0	0

3. No other issues were raised by parents