

INSPECTION REPORT

Collyhurst Nursery School
Manchester

LEA Area: Manchester

Unique Reference Number: 105385

Inspection Number: 190330

Headteacher: Mrs J Woodward

Reporting inspector: Mrs P K Parrish
22380

Dates of inspection: 23 – 25 November 1999

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Collyhurst Nursery School - 3

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Nursery
Type of control:	Local education authority
Age range of pupils:	2 to 5
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Teignmouth Avenue Collyhurst Manchester M40 7QD
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Appropriate authority:	Manchester Local Education Authority
Name of Chair of Management Committee:	Mrs D Hamilton
Date of previous inspection:	November 1996

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Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
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Mr G B Stockley, Lay Inspector		Attendance Support, guidance and pupils' welfare Partnership with parents and the community
Mrs A S Herring, Team Inspector	Personal and social development Mathematics Knowledge and understanding of the world Equal opportunities	Attitudes, behaviour and personal development Curriculum and assessment Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

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MAIN FINDINGS

What the school does well

- The quality of teaching is good overall, and in almost a third of lessons it is very good. This enables the good, and sometimes very good, progress that is evident in every learning area.
- The quality of teaching is very good with regard to personal, social and language development and in these areas of learning the children make very good progress.
- Relationships between all in the school community are very good, providing an effective background for learning.
- The school works in close partnership with parents and carers, and this helps the children to progress well.
- The ethos of the school is very effective, and the staff expect high standards of learning and behaviour.

Where the school has weaknesses

- I. Planning for the curriculum is good overall, but links between the planning for the three nursery classes are not always sufficient to ensure that the strengths of each class are shared, to improve further on the high standards already existing in the school.
- II. Occasionally learning objectives set for teaching are not sufficiently clear to enable good progress, and are general rather than specific.
- III. The teaching staff are usually very well deployed, but occasionally the number of children in the teaching group is too large or too small to enable all children in the class to make good progress.
- IV. Although the building is kept beautifully clean inside, it is in a state of very poor repair. Proposals made by the local education authority for repairs are in urgent need of action.

The strengths of the school by far outweigh the weaknesses. However, the weaknesses identified will form the basis of the action plan to be prepared by the headteacher and staff, in co-operation with the local education authority. A copy will be sent to all parents or carers of children at the school.

How the school has improved since the last inspection

Standards were reported to be high in the last inspection, and the school responded well to issues highlighted for development. The school has made good improvements since the last inspection.

v. The school has successfully extended the support given to the development of the children's language and literacy skills, through reviewing story time procedures; assessment records; instituting a reading week each year; improving book resources; encouraging families to share books at home; and providing training for staff on developing listening skills.

vi. A new school development plan incorporating future objectives was successfully put in place, although it is now largely completed and is ready for renewal.

vii. The quality and range of resources in technology are improved, and an up to date computer is in use, in addition to an older model. A successful bid has been made to the National Grid for Learning, and two computers are planned, with the important addition of training for staff.

viii. Greater consistency is now provided in the planning and implementation of outdoor activities, although the number of staff outside at any one time is sometimes insufficient to allow teaching in addition to supervision of the children.

In addition to development in response to the issues identified, the school has made the following important improvements:

- ix. The quality of teaching has improved from sound to good overall.
- x. The progress of the children is now very good in personal, social and language development.

The school's capacity for further improvement is good due to the good skills and commitment of the staff.

Standards

There are national standards for children's attainment by five years of age. The great majority of children are on track to reach the required standards in all six areas of learning by the time they are five years old. These are personal and social development, language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development. Progress is good, overall, from a low starting point and very good with regard to the important areas of personal, social and language development.

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	Good
Creative development	Good

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

The quality of teaching is always at least satisfactory. Seventy one per cent is at least good, and 32 per cent is very good. None is unsatisfactory. Teaching is generally of high quality, and provides very well for the children's needs. Occasionally the learning objectives set lack sufficient clarity, or too many children are included in the teaching group and this reduces the generally good progress that children make.

Other aspects of the school

Aspect	Comment
Behaviour	Very good at all times.
Attendance	Satisfactory, although the early collection of children at the end of the day occasionally interrupts learning activities.
Ethos*	Very good. The school is committed to high standards in all aspects of provision. Relationships are very good between all in the school community.
Leadership and management	The leadership of the headteacher provides clear educational direction for the school, and the school is managed very well.
Curriculum	The learning activities provided are of good quality and provide appropriate balance across the curriculum required nationally for the age group.
Pupils with special educational needs	Good provision enables these children to make very good progress, particularly with regard to personal development and language skills. Children with English as an additional language are also well supported, and make very good progress.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	Provision is very good overall, and particularly effective for moral and social development.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	The staffing level is good and the team of teachers and nursery nurses work together very well for the benefit of the children. Resources are adequate in all areas of learning and sometimes good. Accommodation is suitable and kept very clean, but is in a poor state of repair.
Value for money	The school provides very good value for money.

**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

- XI. Their children like school.
- XII. The school enables the children to achieve a good standard of work.
- XIII. The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on the children.
- XIV. The children behave very well.
- XV. Parents find the staff approachable and willing to deal with questions and concerns.
- XVI. The school keeps them well informed about their children's progress.
- XVII. The school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school.

What some parents are not happy about

- XVIII. The provision for information

Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the provision the school makes for their children. The inspection indicates that the use of two computers already available is organised well and both are in daily use. When the two new computers on order arrive, each class will have up-to-date equipment available on a daily basis, which will be adequate to meet the needs of the children.

KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

In order to improve further the good standards in the school, the headteacher and staff, supported by the management committee and the local education authority, should:

a) Extend the good planning system by:

- ensuring that clear and specific learning objectives are set for every activity; *[paragraph 23]*
- providing opportunities for co-ordinators of each area of learning to monitor the teaching and learning in each nursery class to enable strengths to be shared, and good progress in each learning area to be extended to very good progress; *[paragraph 33]*
- increasing the opportunities for children to practice using numerals in mathematics. *[paragraph 31]*

a) Review the arrangements for the deployment of staff to ensure that:

- the outside learning area is always sufficiently well staffed to allow teaching opportunities in addition to safe supervision; *[paragraphs 26 and 31]*
- the teaching group is always of a suitable size to enable all children in the class to make good progress by, for example, ensuring that teaching does not focus on one child to the detriment of the successful management of the class, or include too many children in the teaching group. *[paragraph 26]*

a) Ensure that the programme for building repairs is put into action and completed, to provide a suitably maintained accommodation for the school. *[paragraph 57]*

In addition to the key issues above, the following less important weakness should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

- The setting of success criteria that are as far as possible clearly related to children's attainment, to provide an efficient and realistic framework for reviewing action within the school development plan. *[paragraph 60]*

INTRODUCTION

Characteristics of the school

1. Collyhurst Nursery School is in the city of Manchester, situated within a former infant school, in an area acknowledged by the local education authority to be of high social and economic hardship. The building dates from 1965, and provides four classrooms, a large entrance hall, or concourse, a kitchen and cloakroom facilities, with a wooded outside area and hard-standing play area, enclosed by a high security fence. The school is administered by Manchester City Local Education Authority, and has a non-statutory management committee to help manage its affairs.

2. The school is a 90 place nursery, with full-time places. Until September 1999, it admitted children aged two to five years, but is now designated as a school for children aged three to five years. Part-time sessions are arranged for two year old children. Of the 62 children on roll at the time of the inspection, 33 are girls and 29 are boys. Children are generally admitted each September and January. The school has a small number of children from ethnic minority family groups, and three per cent have English as an additional language. School assessments indicate that although the range of abilities on entry is wide, attainment overall is well below average expectations for this age group, particularly with regard to personal, social and language development. There are currently four children (six per cent) entered on the school's special educational needs register. None has a statement of specific need.

3. The families of the pupils live mainly in local authority houses and high-rise flats in the locality of the school, but some travel further due to the good reputation of the school. Some live in the new development of housing association property close to the school. The children transfer to a variety of local schools in the January or September preceding their fifth birthday.

4. The school aims to provide a caring, stable environment appropriate to the needs of the children, with an early childhood curriculum that values and builds on the skills, attitudes, understanding and knowledge that children bring from home. It aims to provide a smooth transition between home and nursery, and between nursery and infant school, working with parents, and within the equal opportunities policies of Manchester City Council.

5. In response to the last inspection report in November 1996, the priorities for development have been:
 - to improve the support given to the development of the children's language and literacy skills;
 - to improve the quality of teaching and learning in mathematics and the science element of knowledge and understanding of the world;
 - to improve the quality and range of resources in technology;
 - to provide greater consistency in the planning for outdoor activities and to develop the outside area of the nursery;
 - to gain 'Investors in People' status.

Key indicators

Quality of teaching

Percentage of teaching observed which is:	%
Very good or better	32
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

1. A wide range of attainment is represented as the children enter the nursery, but the majority of children have skills that are underdeveloped for their age. The personal, social and language skills of most children are well below average for their age, as is indicated in the baseline assessments made on entry. Progress is very good in personal and social, and language and literacy development, and good in all other areas of learning. The great majority of children are on course to achieve the nationally set Desirable Learning Outcomes for entry to compulsory education in all areas of learning, which is a reflection of the good standards of education in the school.
2. The school quite rightly gives the highest priority to the development of personal, social and language skills, and these develop to an average level from a low starting point on entry to school. The children have sound personal and social skills. They work and play well together, and concentrate for quite long periods of time for their age. They take turns and look after their own personal needs well. They are independent and confident in their approach to activities, and work with a sense of purpose. The staff are consistently sensitive to the needs of the age group and this helps the children to develop confidence and good self-esteem.
3. Language and literacy skills are on line to reach the expected levels by five years of age. The great majority of the children start nursery school with speaking skills that are immature for their age. By the time they are four, most speak with a suitable fluency and confidence. They are happy to talk about their work, and to ask and answer questions. The development of language skills is a strength of the school, and the teachers' good skills are well supplemented by the input of the nursery nurses. A suitably high focus is given to literacy skills and the children develop a great interest in stories, and enjoy using and taking home books. They find their own name cards, and a small number already write their names independently. Most children attempt to write using letters and shapes to form a version of early script, which they can usually 'read' to others.
4. In mathematics, attainment is on track to reach the required level for five year olds. Numeracy skills are developing well and most of the older children count at least to ten. The children use mathematical language to make comparisons and name the basic shapes; and many know the names of colours. Patterns are a focus for work at present, and children identify and make colour and shape patterns.
5. The children are developing a sound knowledge and understanding of the world, and most are on line to attain the Desirable Learning Outcomes in this area of learning. They talk about their homes and families, and events they have experienced in the past, as well as the present. They know how to nurture plants, and care for small creatures, such as worms and spiders. They have appropriate access to computers and are learning to track the cursor across the screen using a 'mouse', and to select from letters and pictures on screen.

6. Attainment in physical development is on course to meet the Desirable Learning Outcomes for five year olds. Their control of small equipment, such as pencils, crayons, scissors and paint brushes, is generally good. The children move with appropriate co-ordination and a sound awareness of space and of others. They show confidence, imagination and enjoyment during dance lessons. They move deftly on the climbing apparatus and wheeled toys outside, and are learning to control balls but progress with outdoor activities is sometimes limited by the presence of only one member of staff to a large group of children.
7. Creative development is on line to meet the national expectations for five year olds. The children respond with great interest to all activities. They very much enjoy exploring colour and different materials within art and craft work, and use the role-play areas appropriately for imaginative and creative play. They listen and respond to music through songs, dance, singing games and the use of percussion instruments.
8. Most children are making good progress overall in relation to previous learning, usually from a low starting point. Progress in personal, social and language development is very good. This is enabled by the staff's good understanding of the needs of the age group, the high priority given to these skills as a foundation for all learning, and the very suitable, activity based learning planned.
9. Children identified as having special educational needs and the children with English as an additional language are well provided for and make very good progress. The high focus on speaking skills within the school is a significant factor in these high standards.
10. Since the last inspection, high standards have been maintained, and increased significantly in the areas of personal, social and language skills, and the use of computers. This improvement has been due to a focus by staff on extending language and literacy provision, as required by the last report, and the purchase of a second computer. These standards are set to rise again with the planned arrival of two further computers, funded by the National Grid for Learning.

15. **Attitudes, behaviour and personal development**

11. The children demonstrate good attitudes to learning, which contribute well to the good progress made. Even the younger children listen very attentively for their age, sitting, for example, for almost 20 minutes listening to the story "Look Out! He's Behind You", and reacting quickly and with great enjoyment to the nursery nurse's deliberate mistakes. The variety of interesting activities available successfully encourages the children to maintain good concentration. Children in one group needed several attempts to hammer in nails to make their wooden models. In cooking activities, one group stirred the ingredients for a considerable time, despite interruptions, to achieve the correct mixture to make their buns, and another persevered very well until all the vegetables were peeled and chopped, ready for the minestrone soup. Children are successfully encouraged to complete a task before moving on and do so even when not directly supervised. For example, one child persevered on the computer to steer a course through the maze, and a milk monitor continued to try when having difficulty in attaching the elastic labels to the milk bottles. They show enthusiasm for the wide range of activities available, such as planting bulbs in the garden or observing the movements of worms in the wormery.

12. The children behave very well at all times and only on very few occasions are reminders needed indoors or outside. These very high standards of behaviour have a positive effect on children's progress, and indicate an improvement since the last inspection, when a small minority of children had some difficulty in maintaining the high standards of the majority. A very calm, working atmosphere is a feature of the nursery. Children help each other quite naturally, as was seen when the older children helped the younger ones when making biscuits. The children behave very well at lunchtime and engage in quiet conversation with the lunchtime assistants and other children at their table. All the children accept responsibility for tidying, treating equipment with great respect and ensuring its return to the proper place. When a child accidentally let rice spill onto the floor during a balancing activity, the other children in the group helped to resolve the situation, working with adults until the floor was clear. Children show considerable self-control in waiting their turn to choose fruit at snack time, and in playing their musical instruments only when the baton shows green.
13. Relationships between all in the nursery community are very good, and this provides a very effective atmosphere each day. All the children, of whatever background, are happy to play together. They co-operate well with each other. For example, a group of children provides the audience as others take turns to sing; two children work together to make sand dunes for their dumper trucks; and in circle time, each child in the whole group uses a brick to create a class model. The very good relationships between adults and children ensure that all children are happy to come to school, and are motivated to work hard. Parents also feel welcome in the nursery each day, as well as on coffee mornings, and this has a very positive effect on children's confidence in school. The teacher and nursery nurses in each class form a very effective team, contributing significantly to children's progress, and providing good role models of co-operation and mutual respect. Not one instance was seen of any child being unkind to another. All children help each other as a matter of course, for instance one boy helping another who is using a computer program for the first time, and all are sympathetic when a child has an accidental bump.
19. The children's personal development is good for their age. The children show initiative throughout the day in selecting activities and making choices. They settle quickly to a new activity after completing each task. All children have the confidence to join in discussions and offer opinions. They are confident enough to sing on their own, participating, for example, in the Stars in Their Eyes talent show, and singing a response to the nursery rap. Good social skills are evident at milk time when children pass round the fruit and remember to say "please" and "thank you". Similarly at lunchtime, the children use knives and forks well and politely wait as the water is poured. They show great independence in attending to their own personal needs, and the majority of four year olds take off and replace their own shoes and socks for dance. Older children develop responsibility through taking messages to other classes, and children of all ages take orders for drinks at the parents' coffee morning.

19.

Attendance

14. Overall attendance is satisfactory, as was reported at the time of the previous inspection. Registers are marked in accordance with legal requirements. The majority of children arrive in reasonable time, but a small number arrives up to 30 minutes late. Similarly in the afternoon, there is a tendency for a small number of parents to collect their children up to 40 minutes before the end of the session. In most cases, late arrival and early departure result from parents having to accompany other children in the family to and from primary school, most of which are some distance away. The school manages this requirement well, and the learning of children in the nursery is rarely disrupted.

20. **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED**

20. **Teaching**

15. The quality of teaching is good. In 71 per cent of activities, teaching is at least good. Of the teaching observed, 29 per cent was of satisfactory quality; 39 per cent was good; and 32 per cent was very good. No teaching was of unsatisfactory quality. The parents appreciate the approachability of staff, and have a high regard for their skills.
16. Teachers and nursery nurses have a good understanding of the needs of the age group and how to help young children to learn. Their knowledge of the nationally specified areas of learning for children under five is good. The staff are inspired by their very high expectations for the children, and work conscientiously to enable most children to achieve all that is expected nationally of the age group. They are particularly skilled at developing personal, social and language skills, and teaching in these areas of learning form part of every activity, enabling the very good progress achieved and providing an effective basis for further learning. These are key factors in the school's success.
17. A very good range of interesting and suitable learning opportunities is provided. Planning is rigorous, and a good balance is achieved between time allocated to focused teaching activities led by staff and opportunities for children to select their own activity, supported usually by timely teaching intervention. Staff track the children's progress with care and teaching is well focused on specific needs or stages of development. This is a significant factor in the good levels of learning achieved. However, when the learning objective is general rather than clear, or not fully observed within the teaching input, learning is less successful.
18. Teachers and nursery nurses manage the children very well. Organisation is clear and discipline is friendly, positive and unobtrusive. The well-established, orderly routines mean that children know what is expected and enjoy the security and confidence that this brings. Staff allow the children sufficient independence to develop their ability to make decisions and choices, which fosters the development of self-esteem and personal skills. With the very good relationships that exist in the nursery, these are key factors in the very well-developed personal and social skills of the children.
19. The children are arranged efficiently into different groups at various stages of the day to help teachers to meet their differing needs successfully. As well as working individually and in small groups on activities chosen by either the teacher or the child, small groups work for part of each day within a 'pastoral' group when, for the whole year, the same children are with the same member of staff for milk and snack times. This enables close relationships, and helps staff to track the development of individual children. Milk times generally include literacy or numeracy activities or a review of plants growing or the class wormery, and this successfully broadens the teaching and assessment base. At other times, the children work in age based groups, so that two year olds, three year olds and four year olds have the opportunity to work with their peer group. The children who will leave the nursery next also work together in preparation for the transfer to the Reception year. These arrangements allow a good use of time, as well as ample opportunity for teaching all the necessary skills at an appropriate level. Younger children are also enabled to learn from older ones.

20. Although time is generally used well, occasionally it is not well utilised, such as when a teacher focuses exclusively on one child without fully realising the implications; for example, when one child's work on the computer distracted a teacher from observing that a group of children engaged in imaginative role-play required supervision. This resulted in a colleague frequently leaving a focused group activity to rescue the situation, but at the same time reducing the quality of her teaching. On another occasion, two members of staff worked indoors with only three children whilst another supervised 18 children outside.
21. The very good teaching observed used skills of a high standard within very interesting activities, such as when making minestrone soup, or within a sensitive but rigorous 'circle time', painstakingly sharing dialogue with the very young children who enter the nursery from a low starting point. Very good language strategies are used, which encourage children to think carefully and take an active part. The most successful teaching includes the awareness that the children do not only need interesting and imaginative activities, but also a direct, planned teaching input which displays high expectations of the children's capabilities.
22. All staff demonstrate a very good awareness of the children with special educational needs, and make good provision to ensure their understanding. The children with English as an additional language benefit from the very good support given to all children for language development.
23. The books chosen by both the children and their parents to take home are of good quality and suitably extend what is learned in the nursery. The early morning routine of sharing books with children round the book table is appreciated by parents, who learn to extend their own skills in helping their children. One class takes Aristotle Bear home for visits and this provides a good opportunity to extend personal and social skills at home through looking after a visitor, and imagining his feelings, wants and needs.
24. The last inspection found teaching to be sound overall, and often good, with ten per cent of very good teaching. Standards are now higher, particularly with regard to the development of personal and social skills, language and literacy and the use of computers. However, although the planning is much improved for outdoor activities, staffing is still sometimes inadequate to enable the good progress characteristic of most other activities.

30. **The curriculum and assessment**

25. The planned curriculum has appropriate breadth and good balance, and the extensive range of imaginative activities is very relevant to the age group. It meets the requirements of the nationally set Desirable Learning Outcomes for entry to compulsory education, in the term after the children's fifth birthday. Suitable policy statements and schemes of work support planning and teaching in all areas of the curriculum. The children are well prepared for transfer to the Reception year. The last inspection required the nursery to maintain and extend the support given to the development of the children's language and literacy skills, and this has been achieved, although further plans are in hand to extend the children's listening skills. The school has taken note of the National Literacy Strategy operating within primary schools, and literacy has a suitably high priority. A new mathematics policy, in draft form, is being introduced to take account of the National Numeracy Strategy, although at present, activities to promote number recognition are not as effectively planned as other areas of the subject. The requirements in the last inspection report to provide greater consistency in the planning for outdoor activities has been largely achieved, although plans are still not always fully in place due to staffing arrangements. Health education is effectively included within plans for personal and social development. A range of educational visits are organised to extend the children's opportunities for learning, although the annual residential visit reported within the last inspection has not taken place over the past two years.
26. Since the last inspection, when the quality and range of technology resources was identified as an area for development in order to extend the programme of learning available for the children's knowledge and understanding of the world, the school has taken measures to improve provision. A good range of construction toys has been purchased and now contributes well to children's progress. In addition, the school has recently acquired a new CD-ROM computer in addition to its older computer, and both are efficiently timetabled for use in all three classes and are in constant use to support children's learning. The school has been successful in its bid to the National Grid for Learning for another two new computers and funding for appropriate staff training in the coming year.
27. Activities relating to all the areas of learning are well planned in advance by the teacher and nursery nurses in each class. Full account is taken of the different age groups, and the differing needs of the children, enabling good progress to be made. Provision is monitored by the headteacher to ensure adequate coverage of the curriculum and continuous progress in all areas of learning. However, each class team works independently and there is insufficient joint planning between the teams to share best practice, and ensure the curriculum is of the highest quality throughout the school.
28. Good provision is made for children identified as having special educational needs. The school's policy is in accordance with the national Code of Practice, and such pupils are suitably supported by individual education plans, setting clear targets for teaching and learning. Advice is sought as required from outside agencies, such as the paediatric and educational psychology services.

29. The previous inspection report indicated that the school had good procedures for assessing children's progress, and these have been maintained. In addition to the local education authority's baseline tests, which are used as the children enter and leave the nursery, staff observe the children closely and take note of any significant achievement or difficulty for each child. The information gathered is regularly collated, and provides useful and comprehensive individual records. The only omission within the system is assessment related to work undertaken in the concourse area. Information on individual children is shared at the regular team meetings for each class, and is used to plan appropriate group or individual activities to take children to the next stage of learning. This practice is a significant factor in the very good progress made by the children.

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

30. The provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development is very good overall. For moral and social development, provision is very good and is a strength of the nursery, improving through good teaching on the high standards identified in the last inspection. For spiritual and cultural development, provision is good.

31. The school provides good opportunities to promote the children's spiritual awareness through specific activities and by the staff taking advantage of all incidental opportunities. For instance, when a spider is found in the milk crate the teacher immediately places it in a specimen jar and the children discuss how it must feel. Having agreed that in similar circumstances they would like to be free, the children release the spider into the playground. In saying a prayer before lunch, children are encouraged to remember people who will go without food that day. A sense of awe and wonder is engendered as children place an ice cube in their hand and watch in amazement as the melting ice reveals a care bear frozen in the centre; they show obvious delight as the air makes their newly made wind bracelets flutter as they wave their arms; and they are fascinated as the appearance of vegetables change as they are prepared for minestrone soup. Children are encouraged to talk about their feelings and to discuss what makes them happy or sad. They consider the views of others through stories, celebrating Divali, and through adults sharing their own beliefs.

32. The school promotes the children's moral development very well. Children are taught right from wrong through the personal and social curriculum, and the firm discipline policy successfully encourages consideration for others and respect for living things. Good use is made of stories and simple parables, like the Good Samaritan or Stranger, to develop moral understanding. Teachers have high expectations of the children and talk through the consequences of thoughtless behaviour. Good use is made of praise to reinforce good conduct.

33. The provision for the development of social skills is very good and an integral part of nursery life. Children are encouraged to share and make friends, and the staff provide good role models by fostering an attitude of mutual respect between all in the school community. Snack time each day provides a good opportunity to develop social skills, such as passing round the fruit and saying "please" and "thank you", and there is usually an interesting activity, such as looking at a wormery or guessing which fruit is hidden in the bag, to encourage discussion. Lunchtime is an impressive occasion, as even the youngest children are successfully taught to use a knife and fork, and the lunchtime organisers engage in polite conversation with their group at their table. Routines are well established and all children are encouraged to take turns and to help each other, for example older children help younger ones to put their paintings on the drying rack. Monitors are appointed each week to help with putting name labels on the milk bottles, and older children take messages to other classes. All the children are encouraged to take responsibility for tidying up and returning equipment to its proper place. The school helps others in the community by collecting foil and stamps for Guide Dogs for the Blind.

34. Provision for cultural development is good. Many opportunities are provided to raise the children's awareness of their own and other cultures. For instance in cooking activities, the children make buns, minestrone soup and curries. There is a wide range of stories, books, musical instruments, dolls and dressing up clothes, reflecting and celebrating society's cultural diversity. Major festivals of world religions are celebrated, including Christmas, Eid and Divali. Another activity to celebrate the children's varied cultural backgrounds is demonstrated as the teacher takes three bags into school assembly. Each bag contains children's toys common to all, for example crayons and a ball, but also possessions common to only a minority of pupils. The children show great pride as their own particular possessions are drawn from the bag, such as a skull cap, chopsticks or a skipping rope, and others guess who the owner might be. Opportunities are given for the children to appreciate the natural world through visits to parks, and observational paintings and drawings of snails, shells and lobsters. They also plant flowers and bulbs in the garden, relating the resulting flowers to Van Gogh's paintings of sunflowers.

40. **Support, guidance and children's welfare**

35. The school makes very good provision for the support, guidance and welfare of the children, maintaining the highly effective provision reported at the time of the previous inspection and underpinning teaching and learning most effectively. The welcoming and caring atmosphere in school helps the children to feel happy and secure. The teachers and nursery nurses know the children very well and are very caring, accessible and responsive to their needs. This makes a significant contribution to the very good progress that the children make. The evidence of the inspection confirms parents' views that the school is very approachable and that any concerns are dealt with promptly and successfully.

36. The school provides very effective support for the children through successful procedures for monitoring the children's progress and personal development. Records are kept conscientiously from the earliest stages, and provision is carefully matched to the children's personal, social and intellectual needs. Areas highlighted for development are carefully targeted within future activities. For those children identified as having special educational needs, careful records are kept, and teaching is carefully matched to the individual education plans devised.

37. Procedures for promoting good behaviour are very effective. The school provides a calm, ordered and friendly atmosphere, in which a sense of responsibility and respect for people and the environment is valued. Good behaviour and other achievements indicating children's good effort are entered in the "We have tried hard" book and are celebrated by the award of stickers in the Friday assembly, where some children show examples of their work. This helps to promote positive attitudes amongst the children and raise their self-esteem.

38. Lunchtime organisers are well briefed on their responsibilities and this ensures that standards of care remain high throughout the school day. Lunches eaten in the classrooms, with the children sitting six or seven to a table with an adult serving the food, helps the children to develop appropriate social skills and polite table manners. Effective child protection procedures are in place and staff understand the action required.

39. Procedures for monitoring and promoting children's attendance are good. Class teachers monitor attendance and punctuality and the headteacher follows up any absences of more than three days without an explanation.

40. The school pays good attention to health and safety. There is an appropriate health and safety policy and regular safety checks are carried out. Accidents to children are recorded and parents informed as necessary. The school has appropriate first aid facilities and a suitable number of staff trained in first aid. Part of the outdoor play area is in need of attention and plans are in place for the necessary repairs. No other health and safety concerns were noted during the inspection.

46. **Partnership with parents and the community**

41. The school's partnership with parents and the community is good and significantly enriches the educational process. The partnership with parents begins when parents bring their children to 'toddler group' each week before starting school. The school gets to know new entrants in the company of their parents. Thereafter, good information is provided for parents on events in school and the activities that their children will be undertaking, by means of regular letters and displays on classroom walls. A written report on each child's progress is produced each term and parents are able to view this in school. The school also maintains a "profile book" containing examples of the children's work and parents can see from this what the child has achieved. The school provides a formal opportunity each year for parents to discuss their child's work and progress with the teacher and these events are well attended. In addition to this formal occasion, staff are always willing to discuss matters relating to a child's education at a parent's request. Parents are suitably involved in plans and decisions made for the children who are identified as having special educational needs.

42. The involvement of parents in their children's learning is very good and is a strength of the school. The school's policy aims to encourage parents to become fully involved with their children's learning through a range of initiatives. Parents are encouraged to help on school visits. Parents are helped to enhance the quality of their children's education by helping them at home. Guidance is provided for parents on reading with their children, and for other educational activities. There are plans to issue further guidance related to encouraging children's writing. The Adult Education Service provides ten-week courses for parents in the school, and a crèche is available to enable attendance. Workshops for parents are arranged, covering topics such as making books to take home and use with their children. A "reading week" was judged by parents to be a great success. This included a visit from a children's librarian and the making of a video to show parents how to use a library and how to share a book with their child.

43. The school has satisfactory links with the local community. The police and fire service visit to give talks to children, and the school provides work experience opportunities for students from local colleges. The school benefits from this support, and also makes a contribution to the life of the community on occasions such as harvest when gifts are donated to elderly people in the community and Christmas, when parents, grandparents and friends are invited annually to a concert. Links with the local primary schools to which the children transfer are very good and include the opportunity for nursery children to visit on a number of occasions prior to transfer. Links with the local business community are limited but the local area is well used by the school as an educational resource. At the time of the previous inspection, links with the community were reported to be good. However, at that time an annual residential visit was made by the older children to the Peak District, supported by local businesses, which made a significant contribution to the children's personal and social development, and highlighted their awareness of their local community through visiting a contrasting location. These visits have not taken place during the past two years.

49. **THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL**

49. **Leadership and management**

44. The leadership and management of the school is very good, overall. The very experienced headteacher demonstrates a strong commitment to the children and their families, and strives to provide an education of high quality within the school. With firm and clear direction for its work, she leads a very effective school, where only the best is good enough. The very good relationships that exist among all in the school community provide a successful foundation for the development of an effective team approach to high standards. The ethos of the school is friendly, but purposeful and efficient. The school's aims, values and policies are clearly reflected through its work, and statutory duties are fully met. The parents hold the school in high regard.

45. The school is supported by a non-statutory management committee, which provides a forum for discussion on school matters between parent representatives, members of the local community and members of staff. The committee has little involvement in managing the school, such as through contributions to devising or reviewing the school development plan, or the setting of the portion of the budget that is delegated to the school. Management is through the headteacher, in consultation with the local education authority.

46. A successful management team is established, with individual teachers holding responsibility for co-ordinating different areas of learning or other aspects of the children's education. For example, the newly appointed deputy headteacher holds responsibility for children with special educational needs, and the development of speaking and listening skills and mathematics. Co-ordinators manage their subject areas well and are fully informed on teaching plans and procedures. However, there is no system in place for them to monitor and review the teaching in the separate classrooms, and this limits their capacity to improve standards further by sharing the best practice in school. The staff in all three classes work very well as individual teams, but do not always share ideas for activities and each class develops its own strengths. For example, creative development is particularly successful in the class where the teacher is skilled in this area of learning. However, the headteacher successfully monitors teaching across the school, through the selection of a focus for each half term. The most recent have been milk times, and daily provision for library time. Both have resulted in improvements in practice.

47. The school development plan is generally a useful document that effectively guides future action. It is now ready for renewal, and this is planned to coincide with the action plan following the inspection. The format identifies relevant priorities, and includes a clear plan of action. Success criteria are stated, but do not always relate clearly to specific gains in children's attainment and so do not consistently provide realistic and pertinent criteria for review purposes.

48. The last inspection report indicated that the leadership and management of the school was 'of a high order', and standards have been maintained. The key issues identified have been effectively put into place, although the staffing of the outdoor area remains inconsistent. The school's capacity for further improvement is good. The headteacher and other members of staff are very experienced, able and committed to high standards.

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

49. The last inspection judged staffing and accommodation to be good, and learning resources to be satisfactory. Evidence of this inspection indicates that staffing is now very good due to the same number of staff teaching a smaller number of children, and accommodation and learning resources are satisfactory overall.
50. Staff are well qualified, very experienced and generous in number to meet the demands of the nursery curriculum. The headteacher does not have a specified teaching role, and this allows her the time to manage the nursery very well, with a positive effect on the children's progress. The many skills of the nursery nurses contribute greatly to the good progress made by the children. Children identified as having special educational needs are supported well by the staff team. The lunchtime organisers have all received training from the school and their work with the children has a positive effect on the standards achieved in personal and social development. All staff, including administrative and caretaking staff, take a pride in the school and contribute to its positive ethos. All teachers have responsibility for co-ordinating at least one area of the curriculum, and there is a designated special educational needs co-ordinator. Procedures for staff appraisal are well established and there are effective, although informal arrangements for the induction of new staff. The school's strong commitment to staff development is demonstrated by its successful completion of training for the prestigious Investors in People award. Staff training is appropriately linked to the school development plan, and individual needs identified through appraisal procedures. Since the last inspection, staff have also undertaken an extended programme of training enabling the school to improve its planning and organisation of outdoor activities.
51. The school's accommodation is spacious and the interior is exceptionally clean and well cared for, allowing the curriculum to be taught effectively. The bright displays of children's work are of good quality, celebrate achievements and enhance the learning environment. The exterior of the building, however, is in a very poor state of repair and is in urgent need of attention. Funding has now been made available by the local education authority for maintenance work, and already the erection of fencing has enabled the establishment of attractive planted areas. The playground surface has deteriorated, and there is some flooding in wet weather, which restricts its use.
52. Learning resources are sufficient to enable all areas of the curriculum to be taught effectively. Books and other equipment are attractively stored and displayed, and there is a good range of musical instruments. The resources have been well chosen and are in regular use. Consequently some now need replacing, such as the water tray in the concourse area. Whilst the veranda is in need of repair, there is nowhere to protect outdoor equipment from showers during the day, which is causing some deterioration of wooden and wheeled equipment. The last inspection report identified technology resources as in need of improvement. Subsequently the school has purchased a good variety of construction toys and a second computer, and these are now having a positive effect on children's progress. The school has made a successful bid to the National Grid for Learning and will receive another two new computers and funding for appropriate staff training during the coming year.

58. **The efficiency of the school**

53. The school does not have a fully delegated budget but receives funding from the local education authority for consumable resources and educational equipment. Funds are appropriately allocated, including specific funds for staff training. Funding has also recently been granted for the purchase of computer equipment and staff training in response to an application to the National Grid for Learning. The budget is managed well by the headteacher, with due reference to the school development plan. No carry forward is allowed, so longer term planning is restricted. There is a school fund, based on the voluntary contributions made by parents towards funding the daily snack times and school visits, and supplemented by fundraising activities such as raffles.
54. Although the school development plan is generally a comprehensive document, providing a suitable lead for expenditure and staff training, the success criteria stated are not always sufficiently linked to the attainment of the children to allow for a fully effective review of spending. The action plan organised in response to the last inspection was detailed well, and has been efficiently reviewed. School improvement has been good, overall.
55. Staff are very well deployed on a daily basis, constantly working with the children in well defined groups. Arrangements are effective in promoting the high standards observed. However, the staffing arrangements for the outside area are sometimes less successful, when although a careful rota system is organised, it does not always work out in practice.
56. Very good use is made of the appropriately wide range of learning resources and of the available accommodation, both indoors and outside. The very clean, well-maintained indoor environment, complete with good quality displays of children's work, provides a pleasant welcome to all members of the school community each day and a stimulating working environment for teaching staff and children.
57. The day-to-day office procedures run smoothly and school administration is good. Most of the points raised in a recent local education authority audit report have been addressed. Efficient financial systems are in place. The school fund account is audited annually.
58. In view of the good quality of education provided and the very good progress made by the children with regard to the important areas of personal, social and language development, usually from a well below average starting point, the school gives very good value for money. This indicates an improvement since the last inspection when the school was reported to be providing good value.

64. **PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS**

64. **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE**

59. All the children in the nursery are under five years old. The policy on admission to nursery schools has recently changed within the local education authority. From this term, children's attendance at the nursery is part-time from their second birthday until they are three, when full-time attendance begins. Previously, full-time attendance was available to all children, and most children on roll at present have attended full-time since they were two years old. The children transfer to primary education in the September or January following their fourth birthday. The oldest children in the school at present are due to transfer to the Reception year in other schools in January. These children have two further terms to meet the nationally set Desirable Learning Outcomes for entry to compulsory education. The youngest children have almost another two years before they transfer to the Reception class of a primary school. This outstanding time within under-fives education was taken into consideration when making judgements on attainment and progress.

65. **Personal and social development**

60. The personal and social development of most children is on target to achieve the expected level agreed nationally by the time they reach five, and most children make very good progress from their earliest days in the nursery. By the time they leave the nursery to transfer to primary school, the children display a suitable level of maturity and independence for their age and have a good attitude to their work and high standards of behaviour. Most children confidently take part in a range of activities and relate effectively to adults and each other. They concentrate well, persevere until a task is completed and can see to their own personal needs.

61. The children's behaviour is very good and they are happy to follow the nursery routines. As soon as they arrive in the morning the children choose from the range of activities on offer and are quickly involved. They share equipment, take turns and listen politely and with interest to staff and to each other. They are very good at putting away equipment they have used and all take responsibility for tidying the nursery at the end of a session. Children are sometimes given the responsibility of being a milk monitor and labelling the milk bottles for their pastoral group.

62. The children are polite to staff, visitors and to each other. Snack times and lunchtimes are very orderly affairs. The children listen respectfully as others contribute their thoughts and ideas in discussion times, and they develop an understanding of being fair as they await their turn to be the 'bear' or the 'robber' in their musical activity.

63. The quality of teaching is very good overall and reflects the very high priority that the school gives to children's personal and social development. This is evident not only in specific lessons such as snack time and circle time, but within all activities. Staff take the time to give clear reasons for particular rules and these are applied consistently and fairly. There is a good balance between allowing children to help themselves and providing support. High standards are set and children live up to these expectations. Staff set a good example by working well as a team and valuing the contributions of all adults and children within the school community.

64. The high standards identified in the last inspection have been maintained and improved upon with a lower child to adult ratio. The school demonstrates the high priority it continues to place on this area of learning through the training it offers the lunchtime organisers, and through the headteacher monitoring snack times, resulting in improved learning opportunities.

70. **Language and literacy**

65. In speaking and listening, reading and writing, the majority of children are on course to achieve the Desirable Learning Outcomes set nationally for five year olds, and progress is very good in speaking and listening and good in early reading and writing for most children in relation to prior attainment.
66. Speaking and listening skills are given very high priority. Individually, and in small and large groups, the children listen attentively and are soon sufficiently confident to talk about their experiences. They happily join in discussions within teaching activities, the pastoral group milk times, and the daily story times. A high proportion of the younger children experience pronunciation and fluency difficulties, but the older children use an increasing vocabulary with confidence. The children ask questions frequently and answer questions thoughtfully. Children were observed providing dialogue for their own imaginative play, such as in the 'pizza hut', within 'small world' activities and when using puppets. They know and enjoy a variety of songs and rhymes.
67. Early literacy skills are well established. The children really enjoy stories, and like borrowing storybooks from the nursery to share with their families. Older children can tell a story from the pictures in books and all are aware that print carries meaning. Name cards are readily available and used daily, at such times as milk time, and this provides regular practice in early reading. The children read their own names and some recognise other names in their group. Most try to write their own name, and by the time they leave nursery, most manage to write them correctly. The teachers label pictures on display in the classes with captions, sometimes composed by the children, and most have a good idea of the message. Most children are aware of the conventions of print and are increasingly using written marks, letters and some copied words to carry meaning. Some children are beginning to associate sounds with letter shapes. The children have regular experience of writing cards, orders in 'cafes', and making books based on stories read, such as 'Peepo' or 'Mrs Wishy-Washy', or visits such as that to Heaton Park. By the time they leave the nursery, most children are at least 'writing' using shapes or letters in lines, sometimes with spaces between 'words', and higher attaining children produce correctly written sentences, with support.
68. Progress is very good for most children with regard to language skills and good with regard to literacy skills. Children identified as having special educational needs, often due to a language delay, make very good progress. There is an impressive difference between the youngest two year olds in the nursery and the oldest four year olds. The children with English as an additional language make excellent progress with speaking skills. Most children are on course to reach the expected level for five year olds, progressing from a low starting point. The abundance of opportunities for discussion individually and in small groups with adults is a significant factor in the very good progress made. Many examples are heard daily of high quality interaction between staff and individual children, very effectively building on speaking and listening skills. These fast developing language skills provide a very good foundation for the development of literacy skills, and indeed all other areas of learning in the nursery.
69. The children enjoy the wide range of activities provided, and generally take part with great enthusiasm. Stories are frequently supported by visual aids that increase the children's interest and enjoyment to very high levels, such as puppets, the witch's oven and the house made of sweets that were used to illustrate the story of Hansel and Gretel; and the egg, banana and apple used to illustrate 'The Shopping Basket'.

70. The quality of teaching is at least good overall, and often very good. The language opportunities provided for the children within every adult led activity are of high quality. Staff provide good role models for speaking and listening, and focus well on extending the children's vocabulary and language skills. Many examples were heard of children modelling their conversation on the example of teachers, and incorporating teachers' vocabulary into their own sentences. Teachers are adept at using the children's contributions sensitively to take their learning forward. This good language input is combined with a very good understanding of the needs of the age group to promote the very good progress achieved. The quality of teaching is very good when the skills of the teacher operate at a high level, and no opportunities are missed to sensitively encourage a response from the children, sometimes including for the youngest children a gentle hand against their face to encourage eye contact and concentration. Most activities are imaginative and very well thought out, providing well for the differing needs of the children. The interest raised and the careful structure of demands made on the children enables very good progress. The high staffing levels in the nursery allow staff time for high quality interaction with individuals and small groups of children. The teachers have a clear understanding of the development of early reading and writing skills.
71. All three class teachers take responsibility for a different aspect of language and literacy, and this ensures its high priority within the nursery. Records are carefully accumulated of each child's progress in speaking and listening, reading and writing. Regular team meetings between staff in each class ensure that this information is shared, and specific skills are targeted each week. Children are grouped according to age frequently to enable appropriate provision, but there is also a balance of mixed age activities to allow the younger and older children to learn from each other. Resources are carefully chosen, well used and maintained in good condition. The children have the opportunity to take home a good quality book each week, and parents and carers have the opportunity to hear staff sharing books with children each morning to advance their skills.
72. The sound standards in teaching and learning reported within the last inspection are now improved to a high quality. The requirement to maintain and extend the effective support given to the development of the children's language and literacy skills has been fulfilled. The school's provision for developing language skills is a significant strength of the nursery, and provides the means for development in all other areas of the curriculum.

Mathematics

73. The attainment of most children is in line with national expectations for their age by the time they transfer to Reception classes. Progress is good for the majority of children during their time in the nursery, including those with special educational needs and children with English as an additional language. Most children count at least to five, and older children can count the eight pieces of fruit needed to give everyone in the group a slice of apple, and they regularly sing a good range of number rhymes. However, their ability to recognise and write numerals is less well developed. The majority of children know the names of the basic shapes, can describe a triangle as having three corners, and are able to continue a pattern of squares and circles, or lines and dots. They develop good mathematical understanding in regular baking sessions, counting out the ingredients and comparing the size and shape of utensils, and other equipment in a good range of practical activities.

74. The children develop their mathematical skills in all areas of the curriculum, conducting surveys to discover how many children fasten their shoes with laces, buckles or adhesive fabric, and colouring in their findings on a chart. They use money when playing in the shop, sort vegetables into groups in baking activities and on the computer, and enjoy filling and emptying containers in the water and the sand.
75. Children have a good attitude to their work in mathematics and are eager to succeed. They join in well with counting the pieces as the teacher cuts their fruit, first into halves and then quarters, and persevere to complete a task, for instance sorting strips of paper into lengths or threading a necklace with different shaped beads. They co-operate well in matching and counting games, and wait their turn for the interactive computer game, 'Caught a Fish Alive'.
76. The quality of teaching is good. This is an improvement since the last inspection and is due in part to the recent training undertaken. Teachers plan a good range of interesting activities to motivate children and develop understanding. All opportunities are taken to count, match and compare, and tasks are varied, showing a good understanding of the age group. Teachers use questions skilfully to challenge children to think. They observe children well whilst they are working to assess their progress, and activities are planned specifically for the different age groups, taking full account of the stage of development of individuals.
77. The co-ordinator for mathematics is new to the school. She is currently monitoring the new draft scheme of work that takes account of the National Numeracy Strategy. This generally covers all areas of mathematics, although she is aware that there is a need for further planned activities to promote number recognition. Resources are sufficient to enable the curriculum to be taught effectively and the computer is used well to support learning in mathematics.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

78. Attainment is on course to meet the national Desirable Learning Outcomes set for entry to compulsory education and most children make good progress, as was reported in the last inspection.
79. The children develop a sound understanding of the natural world. They have the opportunity to gain first hand experiences through handling lobsters, herrings and other living things, through observing worms in the wormery and through planting seeds and watching flowers and beans grow. They are encouraged to talk about feelings through role-play, saying for example that Adam's bear is happy because Goldilocks has gone home. They reflect on how they have grown when new-born babies are brought to visit the nursery. The children develop their scientific skills in tasting a variety of foods and classifying them as sweet or sour. They can distinguish between sand, soil and compost in the wormery, and develop an understanding of the effect of heat on ice as the ice cubes melt in their hands. Their skills of cutting, sticking and folding develop as they make woodwork models and fold paper to make hats. Learning is enhanced by visits to places of interest such as Manchester Airport, Heaton Park and the Air and Space Museum. There are plenty of opportunities for children to develop their technology skills through using a good range of construction toys, and by learning to control the 'mouse' on the computer to build a bug or steer a course around the maze. Most children know how to print their work.
80. The children's attitude to learning in this area is good. They use equipment sensibly even when not directly supervised and take care to pick up all the pieces after use. They persevere when mixing their buns to achieve the right consistency and are careful to observe rules of hygiene. They ask sensible questions and are keen to find out how to make the lights in the doll's house work, using a simple circuit.

81. The quality of teaching in this area of learning is good, which is an improvement in standards since the last inspection, when it was found to be sound overall. Activities are varied and imaginative, and are appropriately practical, showing a good understanding of the age group. There is a good balance between direct teaching of skills and the opportunity to investigate and learn through play. The teacher and nursery nurses work well together in each class and observe children closely to assess their progress. Work is well planned in advance and takes full account of the needs of the different age groups and individuals.
82. There are two co-ordinators, each looking at different aspects of knowledge and understanding of the world. There is a policy and scheme of work in place, although the science element is currently in draft form. Planning is monitored but there has not yet been the opportunity for the co-ordinators to monitor teaching and learning in classes. The children's progress is assessed regularly through observation, and good records are kept.
83. The previous inspection report identified the need to improve technology resources. A good variety of construction equipment is now available and a further computer has been purchased. Improvements in planning documents, resources and a lower child/adult ratio explain the rise in standards in teaching.

Physical development

84. For most children, attainment is on course to meet the Desirable Learning Outcomes set nationally for five year olds, and progress is good.
85. The children use appropriate control, co-ordination and spatial awareness within all learning activities. They have an awareness of other children and furniture and as they move around the nursery. They use the climbing apparatus available outside with enjoyment and satisfactory control. The appropriate variety of wheeled toys available outside is used with at least sound, and sometimes good, control and children develop imaginative themes in their play when encouraged to do so, calling at the 'garage' and observing the 'road crossing patrol'. Children are learning to throw, catch and kick balls to targets. Indoors, the children demonstrate the increasing control they have over their finer muscles through their careful use of pencils, crayons, felt-pens, scissors, paint brushes, construction and malleable toys. They control drawing implements well, achieving carefully drawn and painted pictures, and sometimes well-formed letters.
86. Progress is good for most children, including those with special educational needs. The good range of activities available each day for the children to use their physical skills enables continuous practice. The children approach each activity with interest and always try to do their best.
87. The quality of teaching is good overall. Teaching intervention is generally appropriate. Many opportunities are utilised to help children on an individual basis with the control of smaller implements, and this considerably aids progress. The high staff ratio to children usually enables frequent adult support and encouragement. However, although the facilities outside are suitably available for most of each day, there is often only one member of staff outside, sometimes with 18 children, and this reduces their input to a supervisory rather than a teaching role. In dance activities, there are sometimes too many children using the space available, and this limits opportunities for progress.

88. There is no specified co-ordinator for this area of learning, although all staff have worked together to extend the planning for the outside area, as was required by the last inspection. The staffing rota, however, is not always sufficiently efficient to allow these plans to be put fully into practice. A suitable variety of larger equipment is available for use outside, which presents the children with sufficient challenge and plenty of opportunity for enjoyment of exercise. However, in wet weather, there is no temporary shelter for toys to shield them from rain damage, and this is reducing the quality of equipment. Plans are in hand to repair the veranda, and the school expects this to solve the problem.

Creative development

89. Attainment is on line to meet the Desirable Learning Outcomes set nationally for entry to compulsory education at five years of age, and progress is good.
90. The children produce a good range of creative work, much of which is on display in the nursery, effectively adding a sense of achievement when tasks are complete. Colour, texture, shape and form are explored through art work and the children produce careful observational work of living things, such as snails, lobsters, shells and trees. Interesting collages are made, using a good variety of suitable materials. In one activity, three-dimensional animal pictures were added to a background similar to the animals' markings. Felt-tip, pastel and wax crayon lines are sometimes added to paint work to add detail. Occasionally, the work of other artists is used, such as sunflowers which were observed, and painted in the style of Van Gogh.
91. Sound is explored through singing rhymes and songs, the use of percussion instruments, including the body, and through expressive dance and singing games. The good variety of instruments extends the children's experience and provides good opportunities for progress. Musical instruments are available on a daily basis in each nursery for exploratory work. Through dance activities the children learn to move in time with rhythm and develop an understanding of the mood of the music, recognising, for example, music that depicts small or large animals.
92. The imaginative aspect of play is developed through varied opportunities for role-play, such as the 'pizza hut', in addition to the house play area in the concourse. The children also use puppets to devise their own stories, and the addition of 'props' to story times awakens their imagination. Dressing-up clothes are enjoyed, and supplemented with hats and other additions such as 'wind bracelets' made by the children.
93. Progress is good for all children, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language. The children develop good self-esteem and confidence through learning to use and respond to a wide range of materials creatively.
94. The children enjoy all opportunities provided for creative development, and thoroughly enjoy painting, collage work and modelling with malleable materials. They soon become immersed in opportunities for imaginary play. Most enjoy singing and are sufficiently confident to sing for an audience, such as when taking part in a talent show, complete with microphone. They love using percussion instruments, particularly the 'rain sticks'.

95. The quality of teaching is good, overall, sometimes very good. Expectations are high and a good level of independence is allowed to the children as they take advantage of the wide variety of activities made available. The teaching is never too prescriptive, and opportunities are always available for the children to make creative decisions and choices. Good dialogue between the teacher and the children enriches learning, and observations and ideas are exchanged as the activity proceeds. There are occasional situations where the teaching is less successful due to the large size of the group, such as when 20 children were moving to music and tended to lose individual ideas for creativity and to 'follow the crowd' circling the available space.
96. There is no specific co-ordinator appointed to oversee the quality of teaching and learning within creative development, although some members of staff have specific skills and interests. This is sometimes reducing opportunities for progress. For example, children in one class have more opportunities to develop observational drawings and to experiment with mixed media artwork.
97. Since the last inspection, the sound standards in teaching and learning have been improved and are now good. This is due to general improvement in the teaching as a result of an increased focus on the development of language and personal and social skills. The child/adult ratio is also now improved which increases opportunities for progress.

103. **PART C: INSPECTION DATA**

103. **SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

98. The inspection of Collyhurst Nursery School was completed by a team of three inspectors who, over a period of three days, spent a total of seven inspector days in school.

During the inspection:

- the team observed 34 teaching activities in whole or in part;
- samples of children's work were reviewed;
- documentation for all children on the school's register of special educational needs were inspected;
- the children were observed working indoors and outside;
- discussions were held with children, members of staff, and parents;
- a parents' meeting was held on 2.11.99 and attended by eight parents;
- 46 parents responded to a questionnaire summarising their views about the school;
- the school development plan, school policies and other documents were examined, including teachers' planning and assessment, recording and reporting procedures;
- the school's registers were checked.

· **DATA AND INDICATORS**

· **Pupil data**

	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with Statements of SEN	Number of pupils on school's register of SEN	Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals
Nursery	62	0	4	54

· **Teachers and classes**

· **Qualified teachers**

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):	4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher:	15.5

· **Education support staff**

Total number of education support staff:	7
Total aggregate hours worked each week:	228

Average class size

Average class size:	21
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· **Financial data**

Financial year: 1998 - 1999

	£
Total income	9,300
Total expenditure	9,300
Expenditure per pupil	103.33
Balance brought forward from previous year	nil
Balance carried forward to next year	nil

PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out: 62

Number of questionnaires returned: 46

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	63	33	4	0	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	65	35	0	0	0
The school handles complaints from parents well	58	35	7	0	0
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	57	43	0	0	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	67	33	0	0	0
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	76	24	0	0	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	71	27	2	0	0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	58	42	0	0	0
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	72	28	0	0	0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	72	26	0	2	0
My child(ren) like(s) school	83	17	0	0	0