

INSPECTION REPORT

MIDLAND ROAD NURSERY SCHOOL

Bradford

LEA area: Bradford

Unique reference number: 107189

Headteacher: Mrs J M Dix

Reporting inspector: Dr J N Thorp
6327

Dates of inspection: 13th – 15th February 2001

Inspection number: 191866

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Nursery
School category:	Community
Age range of children:	3 to 4 years
Gender of children:	Mixed
School address:	Bateman Street Bradford
Postcode:	BD8 7DJ
Telephone number:	01274 546 492
Appropriate authority:	Bradford
Name of convenor of management body:	C R Naylor
Date of previous inspection:	November 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Area of learning responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Dr J N Thorp	Registered inspector	Personal, social and emotional development Communication, language and literacy	How high are standards? How well are children taught? What should the school do to improve further?
G Marsland	Lay inspector		Children's attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its children? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
R W Hardaker	Team inspector	Mathematical development Physical development Special educational needs Equality of opportunity	How well is the school led and managed?
M J Newman	Team inspector	Knowledge and understanding of the world Creative development English as an additional language	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to children?

The inspection contractor was:

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Midland Road Nursery School is a nursery with 72 places for children aged three and four, located near to the centre of Bradford, very close to Valley Parade football ground. Principally it serves the local communities nearby, although its high reputation draws a number of children from some distance away. The nursery is housed in a former infant school, built in the early part of the last century. It provides two main rooms for children's activities and an additional smaller room used for dining and for English language courses. The spacious grounds provide good opportunities for a variety of outdoor play activities. Children are admitted twice a year in line with the local education authority's admissions policy. There are places for both full- and part-time attendance. School assessments indicate that overall attainment on entry varies widely; there is a very high proportion of children for whom English is not their first language, many of these at an early stage of English language acquisition. There are currently ten children on the special educational needs register. The inspection of this school included a detailed inspection of its provision for children with special educational needs.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Midland Road Nursery School is a very effective school, providing high quality nursery education for its children. The leadership and management of the school are very good, creating a caring and safe yet stimulating environment in which children are fully supported and enabled to learn. The headteacher provides a vision and purpose for the nursery, clearly and effectively communicating her high expectations of teaching and learning. The quality of teaching is consistently high and there is most effective teamwork amongst all the staff. The nursery's considerable strengths far outweigh any weaknesses identified. It serves its children and the community very well indeed and provides very good value for money.

What the school does well

- The quality of teaching is consistently high.
- Teachers provide a rich variety of learning opportunities.
- The headteacher provides most effective leadership and clear direction for the nursery.
- Staff work together very well indeed, they are a strong team.
- The provision the nursery makes for children's personal development is very good.
- The partnership with parents is very good.
- Children's attitudes to learning are very good; they make good progress across all the areas of learning.

What could be improved

- The opportunities children have to develop their skills in information and communication technology.
- The organisation of whole-group activities at the ends of sessions.

The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made good improvement since the last inspection. The headteacher and staff have resolutely tackled the key issues for action from the last inspection. A system of curriculum leadership has been successfully introduced. Staff with curriculum responsibilities

effectively assist the headteacher with the development of each of the areas of learning. Plans for development are identified in the school improvement plan which now covers a three year period. The plan incorporates a good programme of review. Curriculum planning and other policy documents focus appropriately on the needs of children at the Foundation Stage. The school has reviewed its policy for the assessment and reporting of safety risks. Very good procedures are now in place. One reason for the good improvement made is the commitment the school gives to monitoring and evaluating its effectiveness.

STANDARDS

The table summarises inspectors' judgements about the achievements of children in relation to the national Early Learning Goals set for this age group by the time they leave the school.

Performance in:		Key well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
language and literacy	B	
mathematics	B	
personal and social development	B	
other areas of the curriculum	B	

Children enter the school with a wide range of experiences and abilities. While some children have well-developed language and communication skills, others are much less able to speak clearly and communicate confidently in English. A high proportion of children have English as an additional language, although they are able to communicate confidently and competently in their home language. Children enter the school with a similar wide range of learning and social skills. Overall, however, attainment is in line with that which could be expected.

Most children in the school are on course to meet the Early Learning Goals set for children their age, in each of the six areas of learning. There is, however, a significant minority who may not achieve the higher level competencies prescribed in communication, language and literacy. Nevertheless, most children make good progress throughout the nursery, their learning is good and they acquire good habits right from the start. Attainment among those children who will soon be moving onto primary school for the start of Key Stage 1 is in line with what is expected of children their age.

CHILDREN'S ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	The children's attitudes to school are very good. They enjoy coming to the nursery and are learning how to share, socialise and develop relationships. Children respond well to their teachers; they settle quickly to tasks, concentrate for long periods of time and are eager to be fully involved. Their good attitudes to school contribute to successful learning.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour in and around the school is very good. Children learn good manners and develop a keen awareness of right and wrong. They show respect and tolerance and appreciate the effect their actions could have on others. Children play together well regardless of gender or race.
Personal development and relationships	The personal development of children is very good. There are now more opportunities for the children to show initiative, take responsibility and act independently, which they do very effectively. Children work well together in pairs or groups and they co-operate and share resources appropriately. Very good relationships are a feature of the caring atmosphere in the school.
Attendance	Attendance is satisfactory and most of the children arrive on time, which fosters good habits of punctuality for the future. The majority of absences are attributable to illness and extended visits to family abroad. The school maintains formal records of attendance but also involves the children who, on arriving at school, bring into the classroom their own photo card.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of children:	Under 5
Lessons seen overall	Very good

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

The quality of teaching throughout the school is consistently high. In every activity observed, teaching was satisfactory or better; a high proportion of the teaching seen, in around four out of five activities was good, very good or excellent. Teachers and nursery nurses work very closely together. The consistency of their approach, which enables them to provide such high quality teaching, is having a clear impact on the progress these children make and on their achievement.

Teachers and nursery nurses have a good knowledge and understanding of the new national requirements. Consequently, their teaching is underpinned by detailed planning and assessment, enabling them to meet the needs of all the children successfully, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language. Teachers

successfully provide a wide range of imaginative and well-organised activities. They have created a very interesting and stimulating learning environment and they are able to exploit the opportunities that arise to extend children's learning in the full range of their self-selected activities. The effectiveness of their organisation enables teachers and other staff to prepare, service and change activities smoothly, so children attending both sessions continue to have a good variety of activities from which to choose. Teaching of children with English as an additional language is very good, effectively increasing self-esteem and successfully promoting their involvement in activities.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The quality and range of learning opportunities are very good. Planning ensures a coherent and imaginative curriculum, based around stories, within which all aspects of the Early Learning Goals are addressed. All children have full access to the curriculum. Boys and girls participate equally in all activities.
Provision for children with special educational needs	Provision for children with special educational needs is very good. Children are fully integrated into the nursery for all aspects of the curriculum. They receive very good support from teachers and all other staff.
Provision for children with English as an additional language	Provision for the large proportion of children with English as an additional language is very good. Specific funding enables the school to provide most valuable additional support. Teachers and support staff thoroughly understand children's needs and make good provision for the development of English language skills. This increases their self-esteem and their involvement in activities.
Provision for children' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Personal and social development is given a high priority; the development of independence is a real strength of the school. Provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. Children develop a sense of wonder because of the interesting and challenging activities set up for them. Teachers and support staff provide clear guidance on what is right and wrong and act as very good role models.
How well the school cares for its children	The school cares for its children very well. The staff value and know the children well; children of all abilities, cultures and religions are treated equally and with respect. Procedures for child protection and for ensuring the children's welfare are very good. Children are well supervised at all times. Procedures for monitoring and supporting the children's personal development are very good. Consequently, children feel happy and secure.

The school maintains very good links with parents and carers. Bilingual signs assist parents and make them feel welcome. Parental involvement has a positive effect on the life of the school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides very good leadership. She has a very clear vision for the school firmly based on her understanding of the ways in which young children learn. She also gives high priority to the role parents play in this early learning, ensuring that the school works fully in partnership with them. The staff fully share her ideas and all work well together as a team to ensure that high quality provision is maintained. All the staff share a firm commitment to improvement and have the capacity to succeed. The nursery provides very effective learning in a calm but often exciting and well-organised environment, which fully reflects its aims and values.
The school's evaluation of its performance	There is a constant questioning and reflection on practice in the nursery. The strategy for teacher appraisal and performance management is very good. The identification of further professional development needs is good.
The strategic use of resources	The school does not have a fully delegated budget. The decisions the school is able to make on spending relate clearly to priorities for improvement. The school works effectively in partnership with the local authority Early Years Education Officer and its system for financial planning is good with available resources being managed well. In its management of financial resources, the school gives appropriate consideration to principles of best value.

The school is very well staffed to meet the demands of the curriculum. Co-operation amongst staff is of a high order and this makes a major contribution to the high quality of learning. Resources for teaching and learning are very good in all areas of the curriculum. The outdoor environment is very well developed.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children settle in quickly and well, they are happy. • The wide range of activities provided. • The progress children make. • The range of talents staff bring into the nursery. • Children develop confidence and as individuals. • Children's language needs are well catered for. • The good advice parents are given. • The lovely calm about the place and the atmosphere of respect. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some parents expressed concern at the closure of the after-school care club.

One parent commented, 'I think it is exemplary - the opportunities here are immense'. Inspectors agreed with all the positive points the parents put forward.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. Children enter the school with a wide range of experiences and abilities. While some children have well-developed language and communication skills, others are much less able to speak clearly and communicate confidently. A high proportion of children have English as an additional language, although they are able to communicate confidently and competently in their home languages, which are principally Bangla, Punjabi and Urdu. Children enter the school with a similar wide range of learning and social skills. Overall, however, attainment is broadly in line with that which could be expected.
2. New Early Learning Goals now establish expectations of the standards most children will reach in their learning on completion of the Foundation Stage, that is at the end of their Reception year in primary schools. These goals are presented in six areas of learning: personal, social and emotional development; communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical development; and creative development. Most children in the school are on course to meet these Early Learning Goals; a small number of children is likely to exceed them. In the area of physical development, for example, attainment is good and many children are likely to achieve standards which are above those expected nationally at the end of the Foundation Stage.
3. At the time of the inspection, some children had attended the school for a relatively short time and were still developing appropriate relationships with staff and other children. They are quickly gaining an understanding of the school's procedures and routines. Staff place a considerable emphasis on the development of children's personal and social skills and their importance is reflected in their planning across all activities. Children are adapting well, quickly responding to the high expectations of them. They make good progress, gaining confidence to try new activities, initiating ideas and speaking within a familiar group. They form good relationships with other children and adults; they work and play well together, with most able to share and take turns appropriately. Most children are able to sustain concentration on chosen activities, in which most children participate enthusiastically. Personal and social development are good as children learn where things belong and when they learn to clean their equipment, such as paintbrushes, palettes and pots and how to put things away when they have been used. Children's social skills are effectively promoted during snack times and lunch times. Children are on course to meet the Early Learning Goals in this aspect of their learning and a significant number will exceed them.
4. In communication, language and literacy, the good opportunities children have to practise the elements of speaking and listening, reading and writing enable them to make good progress. These areas are given appropriate emphasis through the wide range of experiences on offer throughout the school. Most children are on line to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation Stage. Children listen to stories with delight, and are often able to join in as they recognise familiar or repeated phrases or sentences. Most concentrate well on the pictures, words and on the explanations which teachers provide. Older children know that print goes from left to right in English and recognise a few familiar words, if frequently repeated in the story for example. When they handle books for themselves, they do so with care, replacing them after use. Children follow instructions well as they listen to their teachers during supported activities for example. Most children are keen to answer questions and as

they grow in confidence, they show they want to express their own ideas. Many can use full sentences as they speak, some already with good fluency. Some children are confident mark makers, shown as they write lists and messages for example, which they can then read back to an adult; a few children can write their own name. Children are generally making good progress through the identified stages leading to the goals in each aspect of this area of learning. Some children, particularly those at an early stage in developing their English language skills, may not progress on to the more advanced skills, like those concerned with exploring and experimenting with sounds, words and texts, for example. However, those children who already have particularly good language and communication skills are likely to exceed the goals.

5. In the area of mathematical development, the majority of children are on line to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation Stage. Children acquire good early counting skills, some counting to ten confidently and able to recognise numerals to ten. Some children can sort objects, counting how many in each set. Many of the children can identify biggest and smallest among a group of objects and some can recognise and know the names of some common flat shapes. A small number of children will exceed the targets set in this area of their learning. The majority show an interest in numbers and counting and use number names appropriately. Children participate enthusiastically and enjoy all the purposeful activities provided for them; effective learning is enabling children to make good progress.
6. The majority of children are on line to achieve the Early Learning Goals in the area of knowledge and understanding of the world. Children are interested in the world around them and enjoy talking about their activities. Some are able to bring their knowledge and imagination into their play, as they talk and plan a flight to Chicago in the large blocks for example. They enjoy the range of visits planned for them and these contribute to the good progress they make in recognising features and developing an understanding of the community around them. As they work with a variety of materials, children learn how to cut and join them, using both tools and glue. The children are enthusiastic to learn and generally make good progress across the various aspects of this area of learning. While children are beginning to make some progress in developing their skills in information and communication technology, the shortcomings in the resources currently available in the school are inhibiting their progress.
7. Attainment in the area of physical development is good and many children are likely to achieve standards that are above those expected nationally by the end of the Foundation Stage. The standards have been maintained since the previous inspection. Children move confidently and they develop a range of movement and co-ordination skills. They make good progress due to the effective learning environment, which provides them with easy access to the outside area and good opportunities to develop their physical skills safely. They can ride large-wheeled toys with confidence, skilfully manoeuvring them around objects. When using such play apparatus, they demonstrate how well they can control it; they use space well with consideration for others. Children are beginning to handle tools, objects and different types of materials safely and with control. They manipulate clay and fabric appropriately.
8. In the area of creative development, children are on line to achieve the appropriate goals by the end of the Foundation Stage; a smaller number will exceed them. Children are beginning to differentiate colours and the majority recognise red, yellow, blue and green. They are beginning to explore colour, texture, shape and form in a variety of art activities, like painting, printing and collage. Learning is effective and children make good progress mainly through the quality of the teaching and support which is good. In this area, as in all the others, the school is preparing children well for the next stage in their education.

9. Children with special educational needs make good progress and take part fully in the planned activities.

Children' attitudes, values and personal development

10. The children's attitudes to the school are very good. Parents have expressed the view that the children enjoy coming to the nursery and are learning how to share, socialise and develop relationships. The inspection confirmed their views. The children respond well to their teachers and can concentrate for long periods of time. A good example of this was in a creativity (art) session when they were seen carefully drawing snowdrops. They are eager to be involved in their lessons. During a role-play activity, using a steering wheel and gear stick, they discussed their journey. When the teachers ask questions they respond immediately and quickly settle down to tasks. Good attitudes to school contribute to successful learning.
11. Behaviour in and around the school is very good. The school has a suitable behaviour policy in place and the children are learning good manners and developing a keen awareness of right and wrong. The staff use requests and gentle reminders to implement the behaviour guidelines. The children show respect and tolerance and appreciate the effect their actions could have on others. No incidents of challenging behaviour were seen during the inspection and the children play together well regardless of gender or race. Good behaviour has a positive effect on the quality of learning.
12. The personal development of the children and relationships within the school are very good. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The personal and social development of the children is still a strength of the school and there are now more opportunities for the children to show initiative and take responsibility. Relationships between the children and the children and staff are caring and friendly. At lunchtime, the staff talk sociably with the children and encourage good manners and social skills. Lunchtime is not only a social occasion but also an opportunity to learn. The children work well together in pairs or groups regardless of ability, gender or race. They co-operate and share resources. A good example of this was seen in the playground where children readily shared the bicycles and pushed their friends along. They show respect for the feelings, values and beliefs of others. This was evident during a 'matching pictures' session where the children applauded each other's success. Very good relationships are a feature of the caring atmosphere in the school. The children show initiative and are taking responsibility throughout the school. They can choose their own activities and are familiar with school routines. They are independent in helping themselves to aprons when getting ready to use water or paint and then washing and clearing away resources afterwards. At lunchtime, they choose where they want to sit and can be relied on to deliver messages and return registers to the office. These responsibilities have a good effect on the children's personal development.
13. Attendance is satisfactory and most of the children arrive on time, which fosters good habits of punctuality for the future. The majority of absences are attributable to illness and extended visits to family abroad. The school maintains formal records of attendance but also involves the children who, on arriving at school, bring into the classroom their own photo card.

HOW WELL ARE CHILDREN TAUGHT?

14. The quality of teaching throughout the school is consistently high. In every activity observed, teaching was satisfactory or better; a high proportion of the teaching seen was good, very good or excellent.
15. Both teachers and nursery nurses work very closely together. The consistency of their approach, which enables them to provide such good quality teaching, is having a clear impact on the progress these children make and the levels of attainment they achieve. Teachers and nursery nurses show a good knowledge and understanding of the new national requirements and plan the curriculum carefully in the light of the stepping stones that children are likely to achieve as they make progress towards the Early Learning Goals identified for children at this age. Consequently, their teaching is underpinned by detailed planning and assessment, enabling them to meet the needs of all the children successfully, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language.
16. The teachers and nursery nurses share day-to-day responsibility for supervising particular activities and for teaching groups of children. Each of the two classes has a teacher and nursery nurses assigned to it, although both rooms and the variety of activities provided are managed very flexibly. Staff work closely together and are very supportive of one another. They are fully and highly committed as a team and they are able to adapt their time to meet the needs of the children.
17. The vast majority of teaching is very effective. For example, in play activity outside, adults interact very well with the children, encouraging them to take advantage of the variety of resources within this secure environment. Inside, staff take every opportunity to extend children's language skills, especially speaking and listening. They make very good use of questions to challenge and extend children's learning. Such questioning challenges children to think about what they are doing and this is successfully enabling children to develop and be able to express new ideas. At appropriate times, teachers make good use of the children's home language to enable them to understand and participate in some of the planned activities.
18. Teachers successfully provide a wide range of imaginative and well-organised activities. They have created a very interesting and stimulating learning environment and they are able to exploit the self-selected opportunities that arise to extend children's learning in the full range of activities they provide. The effectiveness of their organisation enables teachers and other staff to prepare, service and change activities smoothly, so children attending both sessions continue to have a good variety of activities from which to choose.
19. The quality of teaching is underpinned by close supportive relationships. The children are well managed and supervision is good throughout the day, including at lunchtime and times when children are outdoors. Teachers and other staff are lively, encouraging and good humoured in their conversations with children, yet where they need to be, they are calm and patient as they quietly reinforce the school's rules. The quality of the teaching and provision prepares the children well for their move into statutory schooling.
20. Teaching of children with English as an additional language is very good. Both teachers and support staff thoroughly understood the needs of these children and make good provision for the development of their English language skills. Children are also very well supported by home language support, which is available for all the major community languages. This effectively increases their self-esteem and successfully promotes their

involvement in activities. Some withdrawal teaching further assists their learning of English, although the biggest impact comes from the staff's consciousness of language, whose conversations turned all activities, whether independent or focused, into opportunities to improve communication skills. The ability of staff to assess children in their home language means that children with very little English are not ignored but stretched to their potential by appropriately high expectations. Their progress is carefully monitored and used as a guide to targeted support.

HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO CHILDREN?

21. The quality and range of learning opportunities are very good. Planning ensures a coherent and imaginative curriculum, based around stories, within which all aspects of the Early Learning Goals are addressed. There are policy documents for all learning areas, which contribute to the effectiveness with which teachers promote learning, whenever given the opportunity by children's freely chosen activities, as well as in focused adult-led sessions.
22. Personal and social development are given a high priority and are evident in the way that children new to the school this term are able to participate, co-operate and share. The development of independence is a strength of the school. Communication, language and literacy permeate the work of all teachers and support staff. This is one reason why children with English as an additional language do very well in this nursery. Mathematical development is given a specific focus but also permeates many activities, such as counting in stories, putting objects in order, measuring capacity at the water tray and focusing attention on shape. There is a wide range of activities, which promote all aspects of knowledge and understanding of the world, where children begin to learn concepts that will lay the basis for science, technology, geography and history. The practical nature of these activities, which include food making, observation, model and map making and discussion about the past, are a further strength for all children. The development of children's skills in information and communication technology and the use of computers is well done, although the computer provision is currently low and this limits the rate at which they can make progress. Children are systematically given the opportunity to learn mouse skills and simple graphics procedures. Teachers use the Internet for acquisition of teaching resources. Creative development is well done, across a wide range of art, music, dance, imaginative play and group role-play. This too gives opportunity for interest, involvement and language development. Physical development is also well catered for by specific activities, use of tools, large construction and playground toys. Overall, this is a very diverse and imaginative curriculum, very well tailored for the children of this nursery.
23. All children have access to the curriculum. Its practical nature means that all children can undertake activities without barrier. The consciousness of language and the role of home language support mean that children learning English are developing their language skills, while enjoying the activity and achieving success. The home language teaching groups increase confidence and general communication skills. No group of children was excluded. Boys and girls participated equally in all activities.
24. Provision for children with special educational needs is very good. Children are fully integrated into the nursery for all aspects of the curriculum. They receive very good support from teachers and all other staff. These children enjoy equality of access to all

aspects of the curriculum. The provision of a wide range of learning activities ensures that all children, including those with special educational needs, have full access to the foundation curriculum at the appropriate level.

25. The curriculum is greatly enhanced by visitors to the school and by a series of visits to places of interest. Artists in residence and staff training have led to children's involvement in creating permanent improvements to the school environment, such as the sandpit mosaic and the Withy Tunnel. Visits to parks, woodland, the football ground, local museums and shops, help to develop children's sense of place in the local environment.
26. Community participation is very good. The local communities are represented on the staff and parental access is open. Parents enter the school freely, which increases their knowledge of what it does and helps the children to settle. A parental language learning group and a toddler group help to cement relationships.
27. Provision in the fields of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. Children develop a sense of wonder because of the interesting and challenging activities set up for them. For example, they were entranced by the appearance of bubbles in large lumps of ice and by a trip to see Mother Bear. Many of the creative experiences such as painting and colour mixing allow contemplation of results and wonder at outcomes.
28. Teachers and support staff provide clear guidance on what is right and wrong and act as very good role models. Social skills have a high emphasis and lead to the very good way that children take turns, share things, co-operate in games and value each other's contribution. They are very good at selecting activities and resources and in fetching equipment and putting it away. They show a lot of independence and responsibility considering their age. Cultural provision is also very good. Activities such as festivals and the preparation of food reflect all aspects of local culture.
29. The curriculum was judged as broad and balanced in the last report. Nevertheless, it has been improved since then, with appropriate policies completed and now informing practice. The curriculum has been successfully linked to the recent guidance for the Foundation Stage, yet the imagination of the activities and their suitability for the children at the nursery stage have been maintained. Curricular provision for personal development is now very good.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS CHILDREN?

30. The school cares for the children very well. Parents have praised the care that the children receive and how well the school integrates children of all abilities. This view was confirmed by the inspection. Children of all abilities, cultures and religions are treated equally and with respect. The staff value the children and know them well.
31. Procedures for child protection and for ensuring the children's welfare are very good. There is an appropriate child protection policy in place and the headteacher is the named person responsible. All staff, including lunchtime supervisors, are aware of procedures and receive regular training. The school adheres to the health and safety policy and fire-fighting equipment and electrical appliances are checked annually. Whole-school risk assessment has been carried out and is regularly reviewed. This was an issue at the last inspection, which has now been resolved. The children are well supervised by the staff at breaks and lunchtimes. There are good arrangements in place for dealing with accidents and illness and a member of staff is trained in first aid procedures.

32. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are very good. The headteacher monitors attendance each week and parents provide good support by informing the school if their child is unable to attend. Good attendance is discussed at the induction meeting for children and parents, and explained in the *Preparing for school* leaflet. Staff also encourage good attendance when talking to parents.
33. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour and eliminating oppressive behaviour are very good. There is a whole-school approach to monitoring behaviour, which involves all the staff. Each member of staff follows the behaviour guidelines and any significant incidents are referred to the headteacher. Parents are involved as necessary. Behaviour is frequently discussed at staff meetings and promoted with the use of encouragement and praise.
34. Procedures for monitoring and supporting the children's personal development are very good. The procedures are supported by the very good relationships within the school. The staff know the children well and help them to develop confidence and self-esteem. The school has very good procedures in place for introducing new children to the school. A weekly Toddler Group is based at the school and the multi-lingual outreach workers provide the school with information about the children. The school makes visits to their homes to assess the needs of the child and a relationship with their families can then begin to develop. The member of staff who makes the home visit becomes a 'special teacher' to that particular child and provides additional support when needed. The children are slowly introduced into school life and parents are encouraged to stay with their children during the first few weeks of term. The children's personal development is discussed at staff meetings and the children's records are regularly reviewed. The school maintains effective links with outside agencies, such as health professionals, who help to support the academic and personal development of the children. The school makes every effort to support and guide the children, which makes them feel happy and secure.
35. The provision for children with special educational needs is very good. External agencies are used appropriately to the benefit of the children. Liaison with such agencies is good. The nursery provides very good support and guidance, which contribute positively to the progress children make. The school has good assessment and monitoring procedures for children on the special educational needs register. As soon as the school has a concern about a child's progress, parents are contacted. If, after initial support and monitoring, the concern remains, then parents are invited into school to meet the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO). Parents are closely involved in the setting of their child's individual education plan (IEP) and in following up its effectiveness. The plans are of good quality; they have specific, measurable targets with clear indications of how these are to be achieved. Children's progress is regularly monitored and reviewed against the targets on the individual education plan. Individual educational plans are well constructed and give clear guidance to staff as to what action is required to meet the particular children's needs. Very good bilingual support is available to assess language and in the detection of language acquisition problems.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS AND CARERS?

36. Parents provide very good support for the school. Parents who attended the parents' meeting have expressed the view that partnership with the school has improved and that the school is welcoming and supportive. Parents spoken to during the inspection also spoke highly of the school. The views of the parents were confirmed by the

inspection. Some parents did express concern at the closure of the after-school care club. This was originally funded by a grant but the majority of parents did not use the club. This made the provision expensive to maintain with regard to the small number of families using the facility. At present, the headteacher, in co-operation with the early years service, is discussing ways of extending the school day. The very good partnership between the parents and the school has a good effect on the children's learning.

37. The school maintains very good links with parents and carers. Parents' questionnaires have been sent home asking parents for their views on various aspects of the school. The school building contains bilingual signs to assist parents and make them feel welcome. There is a parents' notice board, which displays a good range of information and leaflets and the most recent issue of the Bradford Schools News. The school brochure is attractive and informative. A very good link with parents is the provision of the Toddler Group. This provides good support for parents and introduces the children and their families to the school. Parents provide good support when invited to celebrations such as Christmas, Eid and Diwali.
38. Parental involvement has a good effect on the life of the school. The school brochure invites parents to volunteer to help in the school. Some parents assist with activities such as art and cookery sessions. The parents provide good support for fund-raising activities. They have attended book and plant sales and bring and buy afternoons. The funds raised during these events have benefited the children by assisting in the purchase of playground equipment and the creation of the mosaic alongside the sand box in the playground.
39. Parents of children with special educational needs are appropriately involved in identifying their needs and they are involved in the reviewing process. A very good guide explaining important issues about special educational needs is available for parents. This is written in an accessible style, is informative and reassuring. A cassette is available translating this information into other languages.
40. The quality of information for parents is very good. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Notice boards are easily accessible as the parents arrive at school with their children. A very good range of information is displayed on each area of learning such as creativity (art) or mathematics. Photographs of the children involved in the activities support this. The school has found this to be a very effective way of providing parents with information about their children's learning. Regular newsletters keep parents informed of forthcoming events and leaflets such as 'Preparing for School' and 'Questions Parents Often Ask' are also available to support parents. All the information can be translated into the required language by the bilingual support staff or volunteer parents. The need for information to be translated is discussed when home visits are made prior to children commencing at the school. The reporting of the children's progress to parents was an issue raised at the last inspection. This has improved and is now very good. When the children have settled into school and attend on a full-time basis, the teachers arrange to meet formally with the parents and discuss their child's progress. Bilingual support is available at these meetings. The children's records of achievement are of a very high quality. They contain detailed explanations about each piece of work included and interesting photographic evidence. A great deal of care and time has been given to make these record books a wonderful reminder for both children and parents of their time at the school. Parents are also invited to include their comments in the books. Should parents require any additional information on their child's progress, staff provide further informal discussion.

41. The contribution of parents to children's learning at school and at home is satisfactory. The children are encouraged to take home library and storybooks to share with their parents. Some children take home 'Bella', the bear who keeps a diary. She is taken along on family events and outings and the children are encouraged to involve their parents in completing details about how Bella spent her time. The school organises courses for parents such as English classes, the creativity (art) course and the parenting class. Some of the courses are supported by the local college and have the potential to help parents to assist their children at home and have a good effect on learning.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

42. The very good leadership by the headteacher is a strength of the school. She has a very clear vision for the school based on very clear ideas about the ways in which young children learn. She firmly believes that children learn best through active involvement in chosen tasks. She also gives high regard to the role parents play in early years education seeing the school working fully in partnership with parents. The staff share her ideas and all work well together to ensure that a high quality of provision is maintained. All staff share a high commitment to improvement and have the capacity to succeed well.
43. The school has made good improvement since the last inspection. The headteacher and staff have resolutely tackled the key issues for action from the last inspection. A system of curriculum leadership has been successfully introduced. Staff with curriculum responsibilities effectively assist the headteacher with the development of each of the areas of learning. Plans for improvements are identified in the school improvement plan which covers the present year, the forthcoming year and the year beyond. The plan incorporates a good programme of review. Curriculum planning and policy documents focus on the needs of children at the Foundation Stage. The school has reviewed its policy for the assessment and reporting of safety risks. Very good procedures are now in place. One reason for the good improvement made is the commitment the school gives to monitoring and evaluating its effectiveness.
44. The school's aims and values are wholly appropriate and the school promotes them very well in all its work. The nursery provides very effective learning in a calm but often exciting and well-organised environment which fully reflects the aims and values. Midland Road Nursery School is a caring school.
45. The school has made a considerable investment in training staff. This has given them the skills and knowledge to make a very good contribution to children's learning and welfare. For example, staff have attended courses on ethnic minority achievement and on gender issues. They have clearly defined duties and they carry them out very effectively. The structures in place to monitor standards throughout the school are very good. The headteacher effectively monitors teaching. She gives teachers oral and written feedback on performance and advises them on areas for further development.
46. Management of special needs by the co-ordinator is very good. Careful monitoring of child progress throughout the school usually leads to an early identification of children with special educational needs. Very close liaison is then maintained with the parents of these children. The progress made by these children is very carefully monitored and regularly reviewed.

47. The school's strategy for teacher appraisal and performance management is very good. The headteacher has regular reviews with teachers and other staff to discuss their professional development. Following these reviews, continuous professional development targets are set. Staff performance is reviewed through a process of direct lesson observation. Following these reviews, strategies for giving support are devised if necessary. The local education authority's Early Years Education Officer reviews the performance of the headteacher. She is set targets and these are reviewed annually. The training programme available to staff in the school is effective in raising professional effectiveness, with much of it focused on curriculum development. The school is effectively involved in the training of new teachers. It has good links with a local training institution and the deputy headteacher is a trained mentor and able to effectively supervise students in school.
48. Along with five other nursery schools and the Canterbury Children's Centre, Midland Road Nursery shares a single joint managing body. This body gives the school good support. It receives very full and open reports from the headteacher, which the members carefully scrutinise and ask questions. These keep them well informed.
49. The school does not have a fully delegated budget. The decisions the school is able to make on spending relate clearly to priorities for improvement. The school works in partnership with the local authority Early Years Education Officer and its system for financial planning is good with available resources being managed well. Guided by priorities outlined in the school improvement plan, the budget is set by the headteacher and the Early Years Education Officer. Money is appropriately allocated and kept under constant review by them using information on spending provided by the local authority. In its management of financial resources the school gives appropriate consideration to principles of best value.
50. The school uses funds designated for particular purposes very well. Standards funds and other funding from the Department for Education and Employment are put to good use centring on school improvement. For example, additional funding has been used to refurbish classroom areas, flexible furniture has been installed in classrooms, a new hygiene area has been installed and part of the front elevation of the building has been much improved. Taking account of these recent improvements, including an improvement to the outside sheltered area, accommodation is very good. Classrooms and other areas of the school are maintained as stimulating and interesting environments. Attractive displays of children's work and other stimulus displays are on show in classrooms and corridors.
51. Effective routines are in place for the day-to-day running of the school and these ensure that the school runs smoothly.
52. Satisfactory use is made of educational technology in the administration of the school. For example, all admissions are entered on disk, class lists are generated by computer and most school policies are stored electronically.
53. The school is very well staffed to meet the demands of the curriculum. All staff have clearly designated responsibilities. Co-operation amongst staff is of a high order and this makes a major contribution to the high quality of learning. Subject co-ordinators manage subjects well. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Children's language needs are very well supported by several staff who are bilingual. The nursery employs outreach workers who work with families in the community and with under-threes at pre-nursery groups.

54. Resources for teaching and learning are very good in all areas of the curriculum, other than information and communication technology in which they are unsatisfactory. The school is very well resourced for outdoor play activities with a wide range of appropriately challenging and exciting equipment being available. The outdoor environment for learning is very well developed.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

55. The headteacher and staff should continue to build on the many good and very good features of the nursery. To further improve the standards of children's attainment and the quality of education provided they should now:
- Extend the opportunities children have to develop their skills in information and communication technology, by:
 - (a) providing more computers of better quality;
 - (b) providing a wider range of software resources to support children's learning;
(paragraphs 6, 22, 54, 77, 78)
 - Re-organise whole-group activities at the ends of sessions to ensure that all children have the opportunity to participate fully, by:
 - (a) reviewing the arrangements for parents collecting children at the end of the session;
 - (b) providing group times at other times in the day.
(paragraph 68)

OTHER SPECIFIED FEATURES

The school was subject to a detailed inspection of the provision it makes for children with special educational needs. Overall this provision was found to be very good.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	28
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and children	12

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
7	32	43	18	0	0	0

The table gives the percentage of teaching observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

Information about the school's children

Children on the school's roll	Nursery
Number of children on the school's roll (FTE for part-time children)	52
Number of full-time children eligible for free school meals	4

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery
Number of children with statements of special educational needs	0
Number of children on the school's special educational needs register	10

English as an additional language	No of children
Number of children with English as an additional language	55

Child mobility in the last school year	No of children
Children who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	4
Children who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	5

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and support staff

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	3
Number of children per qualified teacher	18

Total number of education support staff	10
Total aggregate hours worked per week	219

Number of children per FTE adult	5.2
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999-2000
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	£
Total income	36,412.92
Total expenditure	181,597.46
Expenditure per child	3,518
Balance brought forward from previous year	N/A
Balance carried forward to next year	N/A

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	72
Number of questionnaires returned	40

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	87	13	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	63	27	0	0	10
Behaviour in the school is good.	70	30	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	22	18	15	5	40
The teaching is good.	77	18	0	0	5
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	63	30	5	0	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	78	22	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	68	27	0	0	5
The school works closely with parents.	53	42	0	0	5
The school is well led and managed.	75	23	0	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	68	27	0	0	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	58	20	0	0	22

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

56. The provision made for these young children is very good and has a significant impact on their learning. There has been sustained development since the previous inspection and the quality of education provided is now very good. Children enter the school with a wide range of social, language and early learning skills, although among the majority these skills are as expected for their age. Most children make good progress during their time in the school because the quality of the teaching and learning opportunities provided are high. A high proportion of the children are likely to exceed the Early Learning Goals, which set out what most children should achieve by the time they reach the end of the Reception year in their primary school.

Personal, social and emotional development

57. Children's personal, social and emotional development is very good. The quality of this aspect of the school's work has been successfully sustained since the previous inspection. The personal, social and emotional development of children is a very high priority in the school, and it receives appropriate emphasis. At the time of the inspection, some children had been in the school for a very short time and so they were still developing relationships with teachers and other staff. However, they are happy to leave their parents or carers at the start of each session because they feel safe, secure and trust the school staff. They have settled quickly and already understand the school's various routines. They are helped to settle in by the new friendships they form with other children and the support they receive from all the staff. Older children are helpful in suggesting the ways things are done, like how to use various pieces of equipment or how to get an apron when they want to work with the paint. These youngest children begin to work in small social groups, as they did when working with the steering wheel apparatus in planning a journey, for example. These groups are sustained through a variety of other activities, both indoors and outside.

58. Children quickly learn to take turns. At snack times for example, they take turns to sit and chat with their friends. Outside they take turns with some of the more popular large toys, often without guidance from the staff. Staff consistently reinforce the need to say please and thank you and this enables children to learn manners. In their role-play for example, in larger group activities, in sharing a story, most children listen carefully to others and are able to take turns to speak. These opportunities to speak in front of a larger group are successful in promoting children's self-confidence.

59. Children tackle the wide variety of activities provided with interest and enthusiasm. They choose readily what they want to do and are frequently able to concentrate over quite lengthy periods of time, as they build on their ideas and share them with others. At times, children show they can work individually and independently, as some did with the tools on the workbench. At other times, they work very effectively in pairs or small groups, helping each other with a computer program for example. Where children choose to work at an adult-supervised activity, like the making of porridge or working with clay, they show how carefully they can listen, how enthusiastically they participate and how hard they can try. Children show curiosity when encountering something for the first time or when a member of staff makes a suggestion of something to try and they are not afraid to experiment for themselves, as they frequently did with a colour mixing activity.

60. The quality of children's learning is very good and this ensures that the majority of them make good progress. They quickly understand the difference between right and wrong and show consideration for others. At times, older children show how effectively they care for younger ones, as they play outside for example. Their personal development is most effectively advanced through the opportunities they have to make choices for themselves about the various activities they will pursue, and to be independent about when they will take their snack for example. Children are learning to take appropriate responsibilities in the way they are involved in finding, using, cleaning and clearing away some of their own equipment.
61. The quality of teaching by all the staff is making a most effective contribution to the personal, social and emotional development of these young children and ensures they make good progress in this area of their learning. Staff are very good role models; they know these children very well indeed and are aware of their various needs. Children who have particular needs in terms of help in forming appropriate relationships are most effectively supported. Staff have high expectations of children's behaviour and are skilful in monitoring how this develops over time. Both teachers and other staff all have a clear understanding of how young children learn and this underpins their relationships with them as they work. They have developed very warm, caring and supportive relationships with these children; each child matters as staff show their interest and concern not only in their work in school but also in their understanding of things that happen at home. All the staff respond positively to the children, making good use of praise to motivate, encourage and promote self-esteem. Children respond positively and this contributes most effectively to the quality of their learning and the progress they make.

Communication, language and literacy

62. Children enter the school with a wide range of communication and language skills. A very high proportion of the children has English as a second language; a high proportion of these are at an early stage of English language acquisition. The majority of children are likely to achieve the Early Learning Goals set for this aspect of their learning by the end of their Reception year in primary school. A significant proportion is likely to exceed these goals since their understanding of elements of stories and their ability to experiment with sounds and words are already good. These standards have been sustained since the previous inspection.
63. The attainment of those children with English as an additional language is not significantly different from others. There are good standards throughout the school. While children already familiar with English enter the school with higher attainment in this area, the progress of bilingual learners is rapid. Those children supported by home language teaching, including the youngest and least fluent, are able to communicate effectively in their home language, willing and confident to talk to the group and to adults in Bangla for example. Similarly, children are able to follow the story of Goldilocks in English and spontaneously match bears and porridge bowls, counting accurately up to three in English. As a result of the effective teaching and support they receive, children leave the nursery appropriately able to hold their own in conversation and to follow classroom discussion. Within the school, the practical nature of the activities makes it possible for all children to show achievement across the Early Learning Goals.
64. The development of children's communication, language and literacy skills is given an appropriately high priority throughout the school, with a selected story providing the theme for each half term's activities. Consequently, there are very good opportunities

provided for children to learn the skills and practise aspects of speaking, listening and early reading and writing. The quality of their learning in this area is very good. Children enjoy stories, rhymes and songs and show they can join in with repeated key phrases they know. Similarly, they join in enthusiastically with action songs, responding to the familiar repeated phrases in *When Goldilocks went to the house of the bears*, for example. In this song, not only were there good opportunities for counting to three, there was also good reinforcement of the vocabulary of size with the words 'huge', 'small' and 'tiny'. Children enjoy looking at books, sometimes they choose to look at one on their own and at other times sharing one with an adult. Older children can discuss elements of the story and sometimes the characters in the story. They learn that print has meaning and communicates the story. Children enjoy listening to stories, sometimes sitting for quite lengthy periods to a story read by their teacher. One such story session, sharing *We're all going on a bear hunt*, was excellent as the teacher quickly interested the children with the quality of her story telling. They were immediately keen to hear how the story developed, joining in with the repeated phrases. A classroom assistant provided very good support for one child during this session, using his home language to involve him in what was happening in the story but moving onto speaking English to ensure that he was also becoming more independent of his home language. As a result, all the children were fully attentive throughout this story.

65. All the staff give priority to extending children's speaking skills. There is a wide range of opportunities for children to talk. They can say what they prefer to do at any particular moment and can suggest what they need for a particular activity. Staff take every opportunity to discuss aspects of what they are doing with the children, encouraging children to respond with a variety of open questions in particular. Such questioning also enables staff to talk about other experiences outside school which boosts children's self-confidence. Children use talk effectively as they work in their groups. One such small group, building a plane with the large blocks and then planning to fly to Chicago, held lengthy discussions about the best design for the plane to carry all they wanted to take and what they were going to do when they got there. Here, children took turns to speak, listened to each other carefully and allowed the child with experience of flying to tell the others what it was like. Children are encouraged to listen carefully as staff talk to children quietly and sensitively. Children learn to listen to instructions and good opportunities are provided to further these skills in a range of activities. In one session, children showed how effectively they could listen to instructions to go to find a hidden teddy in another part of the room, understanding phrases like 'next to', 'on top of', 'near to' and 'under'.
66. Children are encouraged to recognise their names in print, with various well-chosen opportunities provided to do so. In some sessions, as children are asked to do something, the teacher holds up their name so that individuals know who is being requested to do it. At a writing table, children have the opportunity to find their name from a rack of cards with their names stored alphabetically. In both the writing and paint areas, children are encouraged to discuss what their marks mean and to read them. In the writing area, a good range of materials support children's early mark-making activities.
67. There are very good displays of books around the school, some related to a chosen theme which children can access at any time. As a result, children soon learn to enjoy books. Sometimes books are used effectively to support other activities, like the map books available for children planning a journey for example. Children handle books with care, frequently sharing them with others. Teachers make very good use of labels

and other signs to extend literacy skills. Throughout the school, resources, materials and activity areas are labelled, frequently in other appropriate languages as well as English, ensuring that all pupils can understand them. Staff use every opportunity to promote children's acquisition of appropriate vocabulary. In one-to-one discussion with a child about some flat shapes on display, the teacher enabled the child to sort out the shapes, while also providing their names on separate cards. Children knew the names of the shapes and some could pick out the labels for them.

68. The quality of teaching in this aspect of their work is very good. The planning clearly builds on children's learning to provide a wide range of further learning activities. Teachers and other staff have provided an environment for learning that is rich in language and they make the most of opportunities to extend children's vocabulary and use of language. They do this successfully in both specific learning activities and also at other more informal social times. Teachers are particularly skilful in assessing children's progress in learning and this positively informs their further work with the children. The quality of teachers' questions and the effectiveness with which they involve children in talk contributes very positively to the progress children make in this aspect of their learning. The organisation of the whole-group end-of-session activities is not always as effective as it might be however. Where this includes a story, as it did when the group shared *Owl Babies* for example, children who are collected earlier than others leave before the story is completed and this prevents them getting the most out of this valuable part of the session.
69. The teaching of children with English as an additional language is also very good. Teachers and support staff thoroughly understand the needs of these children and make very good provision for the development of English language skills. Children are very well supported by home language support, which is available for all the major community languages. This increases children's self-esteem and their involvement in activities. Some withdrawal teaching further assists the learning of English. However, the biggest impact is made by the staff whose conversations turned all activities, independent or focused, into opportunities to improve communication skills. The ability of staff to assess children in their home language means that children new to English are not ignored but stretched to their potential by high expectations. Their progress is carefully monitored and used as a guide to targeted support. The provision the school makes for children with English as an additional language is very good.

Mathematical development

70. Children's mathematical ability is as expected for their age when they enter the school; some are already achieving well whilst others have little knowledge. By the time they are ready to leave the nursery, the majority of children are on course to achieve the Early Learning Goals and a small number will exceed them. The judgement is similar to that made in the last report; the standards and provision having been maintained since the last inspection. Children make good progress in the nursery school.
71. The majority of children show an interest in numbers and counting, using number names and language spontaneously. For example, when filling buckets in the dry sand tray, they will talk about small spades and large spades and small buckets and large buckets. They enjoy joining in number songs. They show interest in shape and space, being able to complete a self-correcting board by placing three-dimensional shapes in their correct positions. They begin to measure, for example when helping to make play-dough they measure and count out amounts using small and large spoonfuls. They make choices based on mathematical concepts, for example when nailing pieces of wood together they will choose small nails or large nails as appropriate for a given task. They match the three bears with the right sizes bowl, spoon, chair and bed.

72. Learning is effective because staff organise a wide range of activities within the nursery that children enjoy. They are given choice and encouraged to initiate activities within the carefully planned environment. For example, they learn about shape when using wet sand and a range of shaped moulds to produce designs and patterns with the sand. They explore weight and capacity when filling containers with water and pouring from them and when filling and emptying buckets with dry and wet sand. They practise using their mathematical skills and knowledge, learning about full and empty when using containers. Higher ability children talk about containers being half filled as appropriate.
73. Children enjoy mathematical activities, concentrating on them well and often sustaining high levels of involvement. They share equipment and take turns. They readily discuss their ideas both with adults and with one another. It is during these discussions that they learn to use a wide range of mathematical vocabulary in context. For example, when asked they select the large spoon correctly for measuring out ingredients when baking. They can classify according to a range of criteria, for example they can sort things by colour, size and shape explaining the choices they make. They enjoy the opportunities they have to independently select activities. They make their selections confidently and enthusiastically.
74. The quality of teaching is very good. It is supported by very good quality planning and assessment which takes account of new national guidance. Children are encouraged to explore mathematical concepts by the very stimulating environment within which they work. All staff make an effective contribution to learning. They work well as a team. Interaction is very supportive giving children the time and confidence to carry out tasks correctly and independently. Staff are good at seizing opportunities for focused questioning to reinforce children's understanding and to enable them to use mathematical language well. Very effective bilingual support is available for children who require it. Assessment is an integral part of the teaching process and makes a valuable contribution to the good progress children make. The curriculum is imaginative and stimulates children to learn. Resources for this area of learning are very good. Children use them well and with care.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

75. Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is better than that expected of children this age. Older children are able to make recognisable drawings of flowers and identify parts of a plant. They show good knowledge of place and can make appropriate maps that show understanding of their route to school and important features on the way. They are able to handle tools and to make simple structures out of wood.
76. Children respond very well to questioning and are able to talk about what they are doing. They show curiosity. Some children were very interested in the structures within large blocks of ice in the water tray and keen to observe them with a hand lens. Their concentration span is well above average and they carry out sustained tasks, fetching equipment as needed and are helpful in clearing up afterwards. Children co-operate, share equipment, talk about their work and value that of others. Although some of the children joined the school this term, the general attitude to work, behaviour and social development is very good.
77. Teaching in the practical subjects is very good. The activities cover all aspects of the early years guidelines on knowledge and understanding. For example, children observed changes that take place when porridge is cooked, they were able to make models with construction kits, to compare the weight of different materials and join

materials with nails, tape and glue. They have grasped the idea of a map and they understand that life in the past was different, reinforced for example in visits to an industrial museum. They are being given experiences which will subsequently develop into study of science, technology, geography and history and respond to them with very good learning. The practical nature of the activities, combined with a very good level of support in English and their home language, lead to very good learning in all groups of children, including the youngest and those new to English. Children develop a knowledge and sympathy for their own and other cultures through the focused work on food and religious festivals, which are very well documented in the half-term evaluation booklets. Although there is only one computer as yet, the children make very good use of it and have developed mouse skills and the ability to use simple programs and to print out their results. The practical curriculum is very good and promotes interest, involvement, wonder and very good learning.

78. Tracking of children and records of what they have achieved, enable the teachers to keep careful records of child skills and communicate them to parents by photographs and samples of work. This aspect of the curriculum is very well managed and resourced and contributes to the positive impact of the school. The one area of shortage is the single computer, but this is to be rectified shortly as more are on order. The home language skills of teaching and support staff mean that children in the early stages of learning English are not underestimated. They do very well in the practical activities and through them increase their self-esteem and their command of language since it is easier to learn when the physical objects are in front of them and can be handled as they are talked about.

Creative development

79. Children's creative development is better than that expected of children at this age. This marks a rise in standards since the last inspection. Older children were able to make paintings that were mature for their age and showed very good control of brushwork. Children were able to select materials and use them in three-dimensional artwork and collage. Older children could systematically mix paints of different colour to make interesting shades and to describe the colours they produced. They were also able to take great art, for example by Van Gogh, and make their own paintings showing some appreciation of his style.
80. The quality of children's learning is now very good in this area. Even the youngest children respond well to the opportunity to be creative and are able to talk about what they are doing. Some children were engrossed in their work and extended the challenge set by the teachers. For example, two girls, who had taken part in the production of play dough, were able to recall the recipe and fetched dried peas to hide in the material for a texture contrast and to decorate their dough models. Their concentration span was well above average and they fetched equipment as needed and were helpful in clearing up afterwards.
81. Teaching in art is very good. The activities were well chosen and well supported. Children chose them independently and often worked for a long time. There was a change in activities on each day. There was a wide range of activities that included modelling clay and other malleable materials, as well as fabric, tissue paper and disposable materials used for three-dimensional modelling. Art makes a further contribution to the school by the work of artists in residence and of teachers sharing techniques that they have learned on courses. There were very good records of past work on colour layering, and the Withy Tunnel and the sand pit mosaic have made a lasting contribution to the school environment. Other aspects of creative development

were not observed in the two days, but there are visual records that these activities also contribute to the curriculum. A splendid percussion stand enlivened outdoor play and was used well with the children clearly knowing how to produce sounds.

82. Children's creative work makes a strong contribution to evaluation records, to work samples and to display around the school. This aspect of the curriculum has improved since the last inspection as a policy is now in place. It is very well managed and resourced and contributes to the positive impact of the school. Creative activities are also used very well to increase the self-esteem of children new to English and to promote their learning of English through developing a vocabulary for materials, shapes, colour and texture.

Physical development

83. Children's physical development on entry to the school is broadly in line with expectations. They make good progress overall with attainment on leaving the nursery being good with many children likely to achieve standards which are above those expected nationally by the end of the Foundation Stage. These standards have been maintained since the last inspection.
84. Children use a good variety of wheeled toys, which help them to develop good control and co-ordination in pushing, pulling and pedalling and steering. They adjust speed or change direction as they encounter obstacles. They are developing a good awareness of space. They use the climbing frame carefully and imaginatively. They climb confidently and slither through tunnels easily. When working on the large equipment, children experiment with different ways of moving.
85. Children play together very well. They are considerate and sensitive towards each other. They take turns and share equipment.
86. The quality of their learning in this area is very good. Children enjoy the feel of play dough as they push, roll and cut it. They show considerable skill when making things in wood and they handle a range of tools both skilfully and safely, for example a saw when sawing a piece of wood and a hammer when hammering nails into wood. They make good progress in developing fine motor skills when painting and when mark making. When using pencils and brushes, they are encouraged to hold them properly. They use scissors and other tools with accuracy and skill.
87. The quality of teaching is very good. All adult interaction is supportive and appropriately challenging. This enables children to feel secure. Within this context, they feel able to experiment and try out new things and new ways of moving. Planning is very good and it takes account of the new national guidance for the Foundation Stage. The school has sufficient space both indoors and outside to provide very good quality physical activities. The availability of a wide range of imaginatively organised equipment and apparatus enables children to make good progress in their physical development.