

INSPECTION REPORT

HOLLYWOOD PARK COMBINED NURSERY CENTRE

Stockport

LEA area: Stockport

Unique reference number: 106015

Headteacher: Mrs M Gilmartin

Reporting inspector: Mrs S Whitehead
23024

Dates of inspection: 17th – 20th January 2000

Inspection number: 193724

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Nursery
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 4 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Hardman Street Chestergate Stockport Cheshire
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Appropriate authority:	Stockport LEA
Name of chair of governors:	Councillor S Bailey
Date of previous inspection:	November 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Area of learning responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mrs S Whitehead	Registered inspector	Under-fives Equal opportunity	School improvement School's results and pupils' achievements Quality of teaching and learning Assessment Efficiency
Mr J Arscott	Lay inspector		Attendance Welfare, health and safety Partnership with parents/carers Staffing Accommodation Learning resources
Mrs F Bridger-Wilkinson	Team inspector	Special educational needs	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development Social, moral, spiritual and cultural development Leadership and management

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Hollywood Park is a nursery centre for children aged three and four years old. The nursery offers 100 full-time equivalent places. Sixty education places are available, 30 for social services and 10 for employees of Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council. The nursery provides education for its children between 9.00am and 3.15pm. However, care facilities are available before and after these times for up to 20 children. Out of term-time care is provided for up to 30 children. Currently, there are 122 children on roll; 70 children attend part-time and 52 children attend full-time. Seventeen children are entered in the nursery's register of special educational needs; this is broadly in line with the national average. Six children come from homes where English is an additional language, which is below average. Children's attainment on entry to the nursery is broadly in line with national expectations for children aged three.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good nursery. The good quality of teaching by teachers, supported by educarers, enables children to attain standards which are above national expectations for children aged three and four in the key areas of literacy, numeracy and personal and social development. Standards in the other areas of learning, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative and physical development are in line with national expectations. Effective leadership and management result in the accurate identification of priorities for development such as standards in mathematics, language and literacy, information technology and children's behaviour. These are being successfully addressed.

What the school does well

- Standards in language and literacy and mathematics are higher than those expected for children's ages because these areas of learning are given suitable emphasis in the curriculum.
- The nursery enables children to develop good personal and social skills resulting in good standards of behaviour.
- The quality of teaching by teachers is always good or better and contributes well to children's basic literacy and numeracy skills.
- Effective leadership promotes a commitment to high standards, good relationships among staff, with children and parents.
- The nursery makes good provision for children with special educational needs and English as an additional language.
- The standard of display is very high throughout the nursery.
- Learning resources are of good quality and well chosen; especially for language and literacy, mathematics and physical development.
- The nursery is welcoming and has a caring and friendly atmosphere.

What could be improved

- The balance between the number of teachers (2) and the number of educarers (12).
- Long and short-term planning, policies and schemes of work.
- The range, frequency and support of creative development opportunities.
- Over-direction by adults limits children's choice.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The nursery was last inspected in December 1996. Since then the headteacher, deputy headteacher, teacher and nearly all of the educarers have left the nursery and new staff have been appointed. Therefore, the nursery bears little resemblance to that described in the previous report. Classes and staff allocations have been reorganised. There are now four classes with educarers deployed to work with each class. The two teachers have responsibility for the mathematics and language and literacy areas and teach these areas of learning to all children. The headteacher and the deputy headteacher have only been in post since January 1999 and the other teacher since September 1999. In this short time, good progress has been made in team building and identifying priorities for development. The key issues for action, identified in the previous report, have been successfully resolved by the current management. Resources have been enhanced and are good overall. Learning resources for language and literacy and mathematics are of particularly high quality. The high quality of teaching has been maintained and children's learning is still above national expectations for their age in most areas of learning. The outdoor play area has been developed and this provides a stimulating environment for learning.

STANDARDS

The table summarises inspectors' judgements about the achievements of pupils in relation to the nationally recommended learning outcomes by the time they leave the school.

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

The children in the nursery are aged between three and four years old. However, most children are on target to exceed the expectations of the nationally recommended learning outcomes for young children, by the age of five, in language and literacy, mathematics and personal and social development. Attainment in knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development is broadly in line with expectations for the ages of the children. However, attainment in information technology and knowledge of living things is above expectations for children's ages. There is under-achievement in aspects of music and art.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good; children are keen to learn and persevere with activities.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good overall. Often in lessons taught by teachers it is very good; it is at least satisfactory in the lessons taught by educarers.
Personal development and relationships	Good; children are willing to take responsibility, share equipment and take turns.
Attendance	Satisfactory.

Children responded well to good teaching and they were keen to please their teachers. When adults displayed effective child management skills, children concentrated on activities and good progress was made.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	
Lessons seen overall	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 is at least satisfactory in 96 per cent of lessons. In 48 per cent of lessons it is good or better. Four per cent of teaching is unsatisfactory. Teaching is at least good and sometimes very good in language and literacy and mathematics. The teaching of these areas of learning is led by teachers and their teaching is always good. The contribution to teaching made by educarers is nearly always satisfactory. They make a particularly good contribution to children's personal and social development, resulting in overall good teaching for this area of learning. Occasionally, child management by educarers is not so successful and children make unsatisfactory progress.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory; a good range of learning opportunities are provided, especially for language and literacy and mathematics, but there is insufficient provision for music, and art sessions supported by adults.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good; the procedures are effective and ensure that children make good progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good; these children are well supported by all staff and make good progress with their acquisition of English.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall; provision for moral and social development is good, spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The nursery provides good care for its children. Child protection procedures are particularly good.

Very good relationships are established with parents. These are started through the Parent and Toddler Group, Preparation for Nursery Group and continued through procedures such as the initial parents' meetings, a good induction programme and the daily contact after children are admitted to the nursery. Opportunities for parents to be involved in lessons are limited.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good leadership by the headteacher; the effective senior management team contribute well to evolving and implementing the nursery's development plan.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory; the newly formed governing body is supportive of the nursery and committed to further improvement.
The school's evaluation of its performance	There are good informal evaluation methods and senior staff are aware of the nursery's strengths and weaknesses. However, these are not always formally recorded.
The strategic use of resources	Very good use is made of human resources. The nursery makes good use of its learning resources and the outdoor play area.

There is an imbalance between the number of teachers and educarers. Teachers are very well deployed and make a substantial contribution to the effectiveness of the nursery, raising standards in the areas of learning where they have responsibility and acting as very good role models for the educarers. The accommodation is spacious and well adapted by staff for use as a nursery although there are no sinks in the teaching areas. The outdoor play facilities have been creatively developed. Learning resources are good overall; the resources for language and literacy and mathematics are of particularly high quality.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The nursery staff is very approachable, welcoming and willing to help with problems or suggestions. • Children are happy at the nursery. • The nursery is well led and managed. • The nursery enables good progress with children's social development. • The quality of teaching is good. • The standard of children's behaviour is good. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A few parents would like more work for their children to do at home.

Inspectors agree with all the positive comments made by parents. However, they consider that the nursery provides a suitable amount of work for children to do at home through shared reading. This is well promoted by staff.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. On entry to the nursery, at the age of three, the nursery's own initial assessment shows that the majority of children attain standards in language and literacy and mathematics which are broadly in line with expectations for children of their age. A small number of children attain standards above and below these expectations.
2. After one term in the nursery, the oldest children's attainment is above expectations for their age in language and literacy and mathematics. Most children are on target to exceed the expectations of the nationally recommended learning outcomes for young children, in these areas of learning, by the age of five. Children's reading and writing skills are particularly good for their age. Children recognise their own names and make attempts at writing them. Many children grip pencils correctly. More able children form letters well and name some of the letters. All children handle books carefully and recognise that text conveys meaning. More able children re-tell the story confidently using the pictures as clues. Most children count numbers up to nine and a few beyond this. More able children count beyond ten and some beyond twenty. Children's knowledge of shapes is particularly good. All children are familiar with simple two-dimensional shapes and more able children are learning to recognise and name some three-dimensional shapes such as cubes, cylinders and pyramids. The development of personal and social skills is also above expectations for the age of the children. Children have good relationships with adults and each other, and persevere with activities. They take turns and share equipment willingly.
3. Standards in the other areas of learning, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development and physical development are broadly in line with expectations for children of this age. However, standards in information technology and knowledge of living things are above expectations. Children use computers well. They know the function of some keys and learn to control a mouse. They independently use tape recorders and listening centres. Children have good knowledge of themselves and other living creatures. They name many body parts accurately. There is under-achievement in some aspects of music because children are not given sufficient opportunities to play percussion instruments or respond to music. There is also some under-achievement in art because children's activities are either too directed, restricting creativity, or children are left too long without adult support and do not make sufficient progress.
4. Although the staff has almost entirely changed since the last inspection, the above average standards described in the previous report have been maintained in the key areas of literacy, numeracy and personal and social development. In information technology and knowledge of living things, standards have been maintained at above expectations. However, standards in creative development are lower than the previous judgement which was above expectations. Standards in physical development remain in line with expectations for children's ages.
5. The nursery's targets for improvement this academic year have focused on language and literacy, mathematics, information technology and the development of the outdoor area. The allocation of the two teachers to the key areas of language and literacy and mathematics has resulted in good rates of children's progress because of the consistently good teaching. The high quality learning resources, recently purchased, have also contributed to raising standards. The deputy head has implemented the target for information technology. This has been successful and training for all staff has had an impact on raising standards to above expectations in this aspect of knowledge and understanding of the world. The outdoor area improvements provide good facilities for children to develop their physical skills as well as providing a stimulating environment for all other areas of learning.
6. The nursery's good systems for implementing the code of practice for special educational needs enables identified children to make good progress in many areas of learning, but particularly with language and literacy, mathematics and personal and social development in

line with their peers. Children having English as an additional language are well supported by all staff and this enables them to access all areas of the curriculum. Gifted children are provided with challenging activities and questioning is used well to extend their learning.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

7. Children's attitudes to the nursery are good. They are keen to come in at the beginning of the sessions and immediately settle down to the activities provided. This is helped by the warm welcome from staff to children, parents and carers and the well-established routines.
8. The behaviour of children throughout the nursery is nearly always good and often very good when with the teaching staff. Good behaviour is supported by a clear workable behaviour policy which is consistently applied and high standards of teaching. A few instances of uncooperative behaviour occasionally occur when there is ineffective child management by educators. Parents are impressed by the good standard of children's behaviour and the positive friendly attitude of staff.
9. Children at the nursery are friendly and caring. They have good relationships with each other and with all the adults working with them. The children who attend the extended day care sessions, before and after nursery, form particularly strong bonds and can often be seen playing together during the day. Children are happy to take on responsibilities such as taking registers to the office and most are willing to join in with tidying up at the end of the sessions. Many instances were observed of children's consideration, helping each other to complete jigsaw puzzles and taking turns on the tricycles in the outdoor area. They are beginning to develop a real understanding of the needs and feelings of others, for example comforting a child who had fallen over.
10. The attendance rate at the nursery is satisfactory. Children absent through ill health are welcomed back with enthusiasm by the staff. This level of consistent attendance makes a positive contribution to children's learning. Registration is a very informal procedure, where each child is greeted personally and invited to collect their name card and 'write' their name on a daily sheet, whilst staff mark the register. In this way the children soon recognise their own names in print, and are being prepared for more formal registration routines when they enter the next stage of education.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

11. The quality of teaching by teachers is a good feature of the nursery. In nearly all lessons teaching is satisfactory or better and in nearly one half of lessons teaching is good or better. In twelve per cent of lessons teaching is very good. The low ratio of teachers to educators, one to six, results in educators contributing to an unusually high proportion of the teaching at the nursery. All of the teaching by teachers was judged as good or better and the teaching contribution by educators, working without the support of teachers, was judged as satisfactory.
12. Teachers have very good knowledge of how young children learn and are experienced and skilled in promoting learning. They have high expectations of children and extend the learning of more able children by individual questioning and challenging activities to improve their knowledge, skills and understanding. Children with special educational needs are also expected to do their best and to attain standards in line with their capabilities. Teachers manage children very well and this skill invariably results in very good standards of behaviour during lessons. They provide a good range of activities which interest children and motivate them to do their best by suitable use of encouragement and praise.
13. Teachers know the children well and make regular assessments of their progress. These assessments are used to inform weekly plans which are well matched to the needs of the children and contain clear learning objectives. The teachers are responsible for language and literacy and mathematics. They teach the basic skills of literacy and numeracy well and act as effective role models for the educators working with them. The good quality resources are used

well and children are keen to use them. Time is used very well and teachers ensure that all children, both part-time and full-time, receive their entitlement to the planned curriculum during each week. Small groups of children are often selected to improve their skills when teachers' assessments have shown a lack of understanding. There is good provision for children to be part of small groups for extra input on mathematics and language and literacy. This may be to reinforce a concept that has not been grasped, such as shape or colour or to extend more able children, for example writing invitations. Teachers do their best to oversee the work of the educarers and support their work but this is not always possible because of the large number of support staff. Parents are pleased with the good quality of teaching.

14. The educarers work well with teachers and provide a good contribution to teaching when supported by teachers. However, there are many sessions when they have sole responsibility for teaching. This is unsatisfactory but unavoidable because of the present staffing situation. Educarers have the main responsibility for teaching knowledge and understanding of the world, creative and physical development. Educarers' planning is often lengthy and does not have clear learning objectives. Teachers monitor some of the plans but much is left to the educarers and this skill is often beyond their expertise and places too much responsibility on them. Educarers make a good contribution to children's personal and social development and they generally manage children satisfactorily. Occasionally, child management skills are not so successful and uncooperative children become the focus of attention. This results in ineffective monitoring of activities and children make unsatisfactory progress. Sometimes resources are not prepared in advance of lessons. Children with English as an additional language are particularly well supported by educarers who provide extra language input during story sessions and take small groups to play games to increase their vocabulary such as 'dress the teddy'.
15. Teachers and educarers have received training in information technology and are competent at teaching skills to children in this area of learning. This has had a beneficial impact on standards, which are above expectations. Sometimes teaching is too directed; for example, giving children templates for their art work or providing ready-cut shapes in mathematics. This stifles their creativity and their ability to make choices. Children are not always sufficiently monitored during art activities. They are left to work unsupported, without guidance and encouragement, and this results in work that is below expectations. The standard of display is very high throughout the nursery. Children's work is carefully mounted, showing the value that staff place on children's achievements. Good use is made of photographs, which are printed immediately after an activity, providing immediate interest for children and a very good stimulus for discussion.
16. Children acquire new skills at a good rate in language and literacy and mathematics because of their keenness to learn and because teaching is good. They are interested in activities and most children persevere with tasks and finish their work, especially when they are encouraged and praised by staff.

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

17. Overall the curriculum is satisfactory. It is generally broad and balanced and encompasses most of the recommended curriculum for children under five. The exception is the insufficient number of planned activities in music and the quality of some art activities. In music, children are not given enough opportunities to explore sounds and make or respond to music. In art, planned activities are either too directed by adults or insufficiently supported by them. The range and quality of planned activities in language and literacy and mathematics is always good and sometimes very good. The curriculum offered for the development of personal and social development is good. Good opportunities are provided for children to develop skills in information technology. A previous topic about 'myself' resulted in children acquiring good standards in knowledge of living things. Curricular opportunities for physical development are always satisfactory and often good, especially in outdoor play. Equal opportunities are effectively promoted and all children, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, have equal access to the curriculum. The organisation of classes ensures that all children have equal access to the limited number of teachers and

receive an appropriate amount of time working on activities focused on literacy and numeracy. The teaching of these basic skills is well organised.

18. The curriculum is organised through long-term plans based on the topic for each term. These show the broad aims of work to be covered throughout the year. Short-term plans are prepared by educators or teachers. Although teachers make good use of their assessments to plan their work for language and literacy and mathematics, educators' plans do not highlight clear learning objectives and are not concise. There is no evident path, showing the goals of the recommended learning outcomes for children under five, through all stages of planning. The schemes of work do not include all of the ongoing basic skills needed to ensure good progress in all areas of learning. There is insufficient guidance to help staff with their planning. Too much reliance is placed on teachers' skills and experience. Policies are in place for all of the areas of learning but have not been adopted by the present staff. The nursery is rightly focusing on developing new policies, for each area of learning, and this is identified in the school development plan.
19. The development of children's personal skills is supported by an effective behaviour policy and high expectations from all staff to include turn taking and consideration for others. Routines are established and children know and understand what is expected of them, for example rules for playing in the 'bears bedroom' are explained to the children and clearly displayed on a poster.
20. The provision for children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. The nursery satisfactorily promotes children's spiritual development by the celebration of important events in their lives such as birthdays. Religious festivals are celebrated, for example a nativity play at Christmas and discussions about Easter. Children are introduced to and helped to appreciate cultural diversity by activities associated with celebrations such as Eid and Hanukkah, and by playing with dolls representing different ethnic groups. The need to care for living things is encouraged by visits and talks, for example staff from a local pet superstore brought a selection of animals to the nursery. On another occasion a parent brought in a pet corn snake. Children are encouraged to appreciate the wonder of new life by the planting and caring for spring bulbs. However opportunities for children to reflect on their experiences are not sufficiently developed.
21. The nursery has very good links with the community. The adjacent Stopford Open Learning Centre provides courses for parents; these are well promoted by the nursery. Currently a joint course, by the nursery and the centre, is focusing on training parents to help their children with mathematics. The nursery provides very good extended care facilities for children. This provides a useful community service. Parents come from a wide area to avail themselves of this facility for their children. There are good links with local businesses; for example these resulted in a recent cash donation to the nursery. Links with local colleges enable student placements at the nursery. It is difficult for the nursery to establish strong links with receiving schools because children transfer to numerous schools spread over the Stockport area.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

22. The provision and practice of measures which ensure the safety and well being of the children is a good aspect of the nursery. The local education authority provides a comprehensive child protection policy, which has been adopted by the nursery, and there are very effective monitoring procedures in place. Frequent contact is maintained with local child welfare agencies. The nursery is often used as a discussion base by social workers and family workers. The health visitor provides good support for parents and children. Thirty of the places at the nursery are reserved for children referred by social services. The school has a well-documented Health and Safety Policy which is put into effect through a risk assessment to identify potential hazards. Day to day monitoring of Health and Safety is in the very capable hands of the caretaker. For example, the nursery is completely free of hazardous cleaning fluids. Three members of staff are trained in first aid at work. Typical of the awareness of all aspects of safety is the provision of a soft rubberised surface in the playground, and child-proof gates at the bottom of staircases. Fire precautions are clearly displayed and the nursery has an adequate number of appliances. These high standards have been maintained since the

previous inspection.

23. The nursery has good procedures for assessing children's attainment and progress. Children are assessed during their first weeks at the nursery, using the nursery's own initial assessment procedures, for their attainment in language and literacy and mathematics. This provides staff with a useful benchmark for assessing future achievements in these areas of learning. Ongoing assessments are made of pupils' attainments in all areas of learning. These are noted in a variety of ways, by staff, and recorded in individual children's profiles, which provide a good record of what children can do. The profiles are shared regularly with parents who appreciate the opportunity to know about their children's achievements and the progress that has been made. Educators have the responsibility of collating and recording the assessments for a group of children and are allocated time for this task. However, during the inspection, there was little evidence of staff noting achievements as they occurred; they mainly relied on their memories of events. There were some instances of good use being made of photographic evidence of children's achievement with helpful annotations. This occurred frequently during the inspection. Teachers make good use of children's profiles to plan the next stage of learning. However, several of the children's individual profiles are not up-to-date and teachers rely on their own day-to-day assessments to keep abreast of the rapid progress made by some children, in order to plan well-matched activities. Staff monitor the personal development of children well, in particular their attitudes to learning and their social relationships.
24. The provision of educational support and guidance is good. The children are clearly happy, and enjoy the very caring, friendly and inviting atmosphere provided by the nursery. This is a strength of the nursery and is recognised by all parents. The annual reports for parents indicate that staff know the children very well. There is good written detail on children's achievements but this does not state how well children are progressing towards the goals of the nationally recommended learning outcomes for children under five. The reports provide space for parents to comment on their child's progress and children are encouraged to consider their own learning and their comments are recorded by parents. Good guidance by staff ensures that the learning objectives of children with special educational needs are met and this has a positive impact on their academic progress. Children with English as an additional language also receive good guidance and support.
25. The nursery promotes attendance well through guidance in the prospectus, but mainly through daily contact with parents. Parents and children are greeted at the door by a member of staff every morning. This charming introduction sets the scene for the rest of the day. It is no surprise that almost all parents report that their children enjoy their time at the nursery. Many parents are at work during the day and have a strong incentive to ensure their children attend regularly and arrive on time. Staff monitor absences well and make prompt contact with parents if the nursery has not been given a reason for the absence. The secretary keeps account of the numbers of persons on the premises. The nursery has extended care facilities for fifty weeks of the year and out of term-time care is provided for up to thirty children. Care facilities are also provided before and after normal nursery hours for up to twenty children. This facility is well organised and children are happy to stay for the extended day. This is a very good facility for working parents.
26. There are good procedures for promoting and monitoring good behaviour based on a well-written policy. This includes a section on how the staff is expected to approach bullying. Behaviour management is subtly but firmly established and is reinforced by peer pressure from children already familiar with the rules and high expectations. Throughout the day children go about their activities in a quiet, purposeful way. The overwhelming majority of parents approve of the good behaviour standards set by the school. The level of mutual respect and good behaviour is such that any incidents of antisocial behaviour are easily identified and resolved promptly and effectively, in simple sensitive terms that young children can understand.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

27. Over two thirds of parents responded to the Parent Questionnaire. The overwhelming majority consider the nursery is very good and fully approve of and support it. Interviews with parents

revealed an even greater level of enthusiasm. In particular, all parents who responded to the questionnaire considered the teaching was good and that the staff is very approachable.

28. The nursery maintains very good links with parents. Staff are eager to discuss the progress of children with their parents at the start and end of the day. In collaboration with the adjacent Stopford Open Learning Centre, the nursery arranges adult education courses. The nursery hosts a 'Parent and Toddlers Group' and a 'Preparation for Nursery Group' as part of the induction and introduction to the nursery. These strategies send a very clear message to parents that the nursery considers them as an integral part of the learning process.
29. Many of the parents are in full-time work so they are unable to help directly in the classrooms. Parents, who are available to help, have not been invited into the nursery because new staff have been establishing their working partnerships. The nursery intends to involve parents in its work. At present, through a government initiative, the nursery is working with Stopford Open Learning Centre to provide a 10 week course for parents and children on 'learning about mathematics at home and at school'. However, parents do have a satisfactory impact on the work of the nursery through their support at fund-raising events. In one particular case a former parent enabled a considerable charitable donation for the nursery which was used to purchase mathematics resources.
30. The quality of information provided for parents by the nursery is good. Newsletters are colourful, informative and frequent. The prospectus gives parents a good insight into the aims and values of the nursery and its high expectations. Parents appreciate the friendly daily contact with staff. The annual reports for parents are very detailed and give a clear picture of what each child knows and can do. However the comments about progress in these reports are not related to the goals of the nationally recommended learning outcomes for young children.
31. The contribution of parents to children's learning at home is satisfactory. It is very clear from parents' comments and observations on the annual reports that most parents are interested in their child's progress and participate in their development. The good support from parents at courses provided by the nursery indicate that many want to improve their own education in order to be of more help to their children. Parents also share books at home with their children on a regular basis.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

32. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have only been in post since January 1999. However during that time they have undertaken an effective audit, identified priorities and successfully rectified many of the key findings. The monitoring of educarers' teaching and the resulting revised staff deployment has resulted in best use of staff in an unusual staffing situation. The assessment of teachers' expertise has led to changes in the use of teachers; they cover language and literacy and mathematics for all children and lead the work of the educarers in these areas of learning. Re-deployment of staff to work in teams has had a positive effect on staff morale, enabling educarers to support each other. A direct consequence of this re-organisation has been the positive effect on raising standards of attainment, particularly in language and literacy and mathematics, and good teaching by teachers. The nursery makes very good use of its limited number of teachers and educarers are effectively deployed according to experience. Formal teacher and headteacher appraisal procedures are not in place. The nursery is aware that this needs to be rectified.
33. The nursery's aims, including 'helping children to become better learners' and 'offering quality educate' are explicit and are truly reflected in the work of the nursery. The headteacher has provided a clear vision which is understood and supported by staff and governors alike. Although in its infancy, the headteacher has created an effective management team which is sharing the considerable workload involved in moving the nursery forward.
34. The annual development plan, although adequate in the short-term, does not include long-term goals and clearly itemised costings, nor do they refer to time, finance, resources or training.

35. The newly re-constituted governing body, from September 1999, does not have any statutory duties. However it is very supportive of the nursery and is developing its monitoring role. Governors are beginning to question the work of the nursery in order to secure further improvements.
36. As a nursery school, Hollywood Park does not have access to the grant under the 'National Grid for Learning'. It does not have provision for internet access or electronic mail. However, it makes effective use of the information and communication technology facilities at its disposal. A pupil database is efficiently maintained by the secretary, who also uses the computer to produce attractive newsletters for parents and carers.
37. The Special Needs Co-ordinator has a good overview of children's individual needs through her regular contact with all the children and this leads to early identification of special educational needs. She works hard to provide practical help and guidance to all members of staff. Well kept documentation supports her work.
38. The nursery's annual budget is set by the local education authority (LEA) and the headteacher has no part in this process because the nursery does not receive full delegation of finances. The budget set for the last financial year, 1998/99, was in deficit by £21,000 at the end of the year and the current year's budget is forecast to be £36,000 in deficit. This is because of inaccurate calculations of actual staff costs. A representative from the LEA stated that the budget would be accurately costed in the next year to ensure that it remained in balance. The nursery is not provided with a monthly computer print-out, therefore staffing and other expenditure cannot be checked for accuracy by the nursery. This LEA practice was criticised in a recent auditor's report.
39. The capitation element of the budget is delegated to the nursery. Effective use is made of this and other money allocated through grants, by linking expenditure to the targets set in the school development plan. However, this plan is not costed, therefore financial implications for development are not clear. Good use is made of money raised by parents, which has been used to develop the outdoor play area. Also a donation from a local business source has enabled the purchase of learning resources for mathematics. The mathematics co-ordinator was given the responsibility for this spending, aiding staff development.
40. Day-to-day financial administration runs smoothly and senior staff are given responsibilities for overseeing different pockets of money. This system works well. The secretary handles dinner monies and actions authorised orders. Financial orders are kept as a manual record and checked against the monthly computer print-out, provided by the LEA, for capitation and grants. The nursery had an audit in December 1999 and financial procedures were judged satisfactory. Recommendations for improvement have been agreed and implemented by the nursery. The nursery's private fund is properly audited. Money allocated through the Standards Fund and for special educational needs is used effectively.
41. The provisions for monitoring the effectiveness of the staff and their professional progress are satisfactory. There is a staff development policy in place. The nursery has a clear strategy to promote a culture of education in addition to the predominant culture of care. To this end all the educarers have received additional training on courses. The headteacher is very much aware that the educarers need greater daily exposure to educational practice, which is difficult with the limited number of nursery teachers, but teachers act as very good role models whenever possible. There is a good staff handbook and job descriptions are in place. All the staff have a very clear understanding of their duties and responsibilities. There are good clear procedures for the induction of new staff although mentoring is not formalised. However, the headteacher makes frequent informal classroom observations and feeds back to staff at regular weekly meetings.
42. The nursery teachers are well qualified and have a range of experience well matched to the needs of young children but there are insufficient teaching staff to meet the demands of the curriculum. There is clear evidence that standards are higher in those classes taught by qualified nursery teachers. Educarers have a range of different experiences, several coming from care rather than education backgrounds. The headteacher is aware of this imbalance

between teachers and educarers and has established systems to make the best use of the staff available. The administrative and caretaking staff are deployed very effectively and make a valuable contribution to the smooth running of the nursery.

43. The nursery is very clean and tidy and is maintained in good condition with clear attention to small details. The accommodation is well adapted by staff for effective use as a nursery and learning resources are sensibly stored and well utilised. Comparisons of prices from several different sources are made, before the purchase of equipment, to ensure best value for money. The classrooms are lofty, spacious, well set out and used effectively. The library is centrally located and takes the form of a charming 'bears cave'. The soft-play room provides an excellent facility for encouraging physical development. Whilst this classical Edwardian building has many admirable structural features, such as rounded safety corners, the original plumbing does not provide water to all areas. As a result sinks are not available in classrooms which inhibits creative and 'wet-area' work. The outside area is a very good feature of the nursery. There is a secure hard surface playground, grassed play area and a small wildlife garden. These facilities are imaginatively laid out. The quality and condition of the premises provides a good environment for the children to enjoy their learning.
44. The resources for IT are satisfactory, and for all other learning areas the resources are at least good in terms of sufficiency, quality and accessibility. The resources for mathematics and language and literacy are very good. The library is well stocked and there are many attractive books available for children to take home. The inside role-play areas are also well resourced, as is the outside play area. There is a small covered area for outside play during inclement weather. A particular feature of the outside resources is a well designed imaginative tricycle track which the children use with enthusiasm. The area surrounding the outside climbing equipment is of soft rubber. The enhancement of learning resources and the development of outside resources are significant improvements since the last inspection.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

45. In the context of the nursery's many good features the following points for improvement should have priority in the action plan:
- improve the ratio of teachers to educarers at the earliest opportunity; (paragraphs 11, 13, 17, 42, 64, 72)
 - improve planning by:
 - i. ensuring that links between long- and short-term plans and the recommended learning outcomes for children under five are evident;
 - ii. ensuring that specific learning objectives are clearly stated in all short-term plans;
 - iii. continuing to develop policies and schemes of work for all areas of learning so that the current staff are involved in the process; (the review of policies is identified in the school development plan)
(paragraphs 14, 18, 55, 64, 72)
 - ensure that music and art are sufficiently included in plans and appropriate support is given to enable children to develop their creativity; (paragraphs 3, 15, 17, 71, 72, 74)
 - ensure that there is a suitable balance between adult direction and children's choice within activities (paragraphs 3, 15, 17, 48, 57, 72).

OTHER ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL

(These are indicated in paragraphs 32, 43, 74)

- Ensure that teacher appraisal complies with statutory requirements.
- Provide sinks in teaching areas.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	25
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	15

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
	12	36	48	4		

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 pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	87
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	29

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	17

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	6

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	8
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	3

Attendance No figures available – not statutory

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and support staff

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25

Total number of education support staff	12
Total aggregate hours worked per week	444

Number of pupils per FTE adult	7
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1998/99
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	£
Total income	341,191
Total expenditure	361,299
Expenditure per pupil	4,302
Balance brought forward from previous year	-
Balance carried forward to next year	-20,108

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Number of questionnaires sent out:	100
Number of questionnaires returned:	67

Responses (percentage of answers in each category):

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strong disagree	Don't know
My child likes school	84	15	1	0	0
My child is making good progress in school	78	19	0	0	3
Behaviour in the school is good	61	33	0	0	6
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home	27	30	3	4	36
The teaching is good	82	18	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on	60	30	7	0	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem	90	10	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best	49	40	1	0	9
The school works closely with parents	66	25	7	0	1
The school is well led and managed	84	12	1	0	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible	81	13	0	0	6
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons	64	16	0	1	18

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

Personal and social development

46. The development of good personal and social skills is rightly a high priority for all nursery staff. Opportunities for its development are exploited across all the areas of learning, for example children are encouraged to take turns in role-play areas and help tidy up at the end of sessions. Standards attained are above expectations for the oldest children. These high standards have been maintained since the previous inspection.
47. An effective behaviour policy, consistently applied, along with high expectations from staff means that behaviour is good. Rules and routines such as washing hands before lunch and walking inside the building are introduced, understood and generally followed by the children.
48. The quality of teaching in this area of learning is good and results in confident children who are content to work independently and as part of a group. They persevere with tasks, trying to work things out for themselves but are happy to ask adults for help, for example constructing beds for bears out of reclaimed boxes. These opportunities for children to make their own choices are not sufficiently planned for and, although happening, are limited.
49. Sensitivity to the needs and feelings of others is encouraged through the use of stories, for example 'Peggy Doll' trying to find a house of her own, 'she can come to my house', suggested one child.
50. Cultural and religious events are appropriately celebrated. A prayer is said before lunch each day and children created mendi patterns as part of the celebration of Eid. Children are encouraged to show a range of feelings such as wonder through activities including planting bulbs. However, these sort of opportunities and the chance to reflect are not included in planning on a regular basis.

Language and literacy

51. Standards of attainment are above expectations and the oldest children are likely to exceed the goals of the nationally recommended learning outcomes for young children by five years old. This high attainment has been maintained since the last inspection. Teachers' assessments of children's capabilities, on entry to the nursery, shows attainment in line with expectations for their age; therefore, they have made good progress. Teaching by the language and literacy teacher is always at least good and sometimes very good. The good and very good teaching is characterised by good subject knowledge and a very good understanding of how young children learn. The teacher has high expectations of children's learning, explanations are clear and good use is made of praise and encouragement. Children with special educational needs and English as an additional language are well supported, particularly by educators. Children acquiring English show confidence in their new language. They are willing to use new words such as jumper and shoes. Good use is made of imaginative role-play areas linked to the theme, for example 'the bears bedroom', to promote speech and language development.
52. Children are confident in their use of speech. They are keen to talk about what they are doing, using wide-ranging vocabulary. Children listen attentively to stories and respond enthusiastically to questions, for example 'can you see anything in the nursery that is the same as in the picture?' and joining in with repetition of 'peepo'. They enjoy books, handle them with care and are beginning to form opinions about those they prefer, for example 'Funnybones'. Most children recognise and will attempt to write their names beginning to use upper and lower case letters. Children with English as an additional language show pride when they recognise their names and attempt to write alongside their class-mates. Many children are aware of the

different purposes for writing and are able to 'write a letter' to Peggy doll and 'address the envelope'.

53. Activities provided are interesting and meaningful encouraging children to become involved, for example writing invitations to a dolls' tea party and making 'teddybear books'. Children are keen to participate, show good concentration and persevere until they complete a task.
54. Literacy is well promoted through all areas of learning. Opportunities are seized throughout the day to develop children's range and use of vocabulary. Books are positioned to attract children's attention and the high quality of display, including photographs, interests children and encourages discussion and enthusiasm for writing.
55. Resources for this area of learning are very good and support all aspects. They are well organised, for example books divided into categories such as 'alphabet', 'bears', 'favourite authors'. Good use is made of photographs to enhance displays and support assessment. The co-ordinator has a real enthusiasm for language and literacy and is able to inspire both children and staff. Although the nursery's scheme of work includes plans for topic work associated with this area of learning, the short-term planning, which reflects the basic skills of literacy, is not recorded in a scheme of work.

Mathematics

56. Standards are above national expectations for the oldest children. Most children are on target to exceed the goals of the recommended learning outcomes for young children by the age of five. Assessment, on entry to the nursery, shows children's attainment as in line with expectations for children aged three. Good progress has been made since admission. Children of average ability count to ten and more able children beyond this. Children recognise numbers to nine and attempt writing the numbers. Less able children work within numbers up to five. Many children are able to match the number symbol with its name. More able children know that one more than eight is nine when counting numbers in a favourite number book. Children have particularly good knowledge of shapes. Most children recognise and name two-dimensional shapes such as circles, triangles, squares and rectangles. More able children are learning to recognise and name three-dimensional shapes such as cubes, cylinders and pyramids. They notice these shapes in a variety of different contexts; for example road signs, in the shape of iron railings and barrels, during a 'shape walk' outside. Children understand that dough and paper can be divided in half and recognise half of a shape such as a semi-circle. They recognise patterns and continue a simple sequence. Children order objects by size and know the language of comparison, long and short, big and little. They understand the meaning of 'in front of' and 'behind' and use these when making a line. They use different sized containers while playing with water and begin to estimate how many small containers will fill a larger one, using the correct vocabulary of empty, full and nearly full. Children gain an idea of comparative weights when cooking doll-shaped biscuits. They tell staff when to add more sugar for the scales to register number four.
57. The quality of teaching is at least good and often very good. The mathematics co-ordinator leads the teaching and provides a very good example for the educators in the teaching of this area of learning. A good range of stimulating activities is provided. Children are keen to learn and are motivated by the activities, for example finding different shapes in the outside area and recording these by crayon rubbings. Good use of encouragement and praise helps children to maintain their concentration and complete tasks. Tasks are well-matched to the abilities of children providing a challenge for all; for example, children were asked to look for different shapes and questioned about them based on the knowledge acquired during a previous lesson. Occasionally, an activity is too directed by adults such as providing ready-cut shapes instead of allowing children to cut out their own. There is no policy or scheme of work for on-going basic skills to guide staff with their planning, although the creation of a policy is included in the school development plan.
58. Numeracy is well promoted throughout the curriculum. Staff take opportunities to count with children during many other activities and use mathematical language effectively, especially

when cooking or using the play-dough.

59. Standards in mathematics have been maintained since the last inspection when they were judged as above national expectations. Children still make good progress in the short time that they attend the nursery. Learning resources have been improved recently and are of high quality. They are used well and contribute to the good standards achieved by children.
60. The mathematics co-ordinator is providing effective leadership for mathematics. She has audited resources and assessed the need for new equipment well. Resources are well displayed to attract children. The large mathematics area is very attractive, photographs and children's work are displayed to a high standard and this has a positive impact on children's desire to learn.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

61. Overall, standards in this area of learning are in line with expectations for the oldest children. However, standards in information technology and knowledge of living things are above expectations. Children are on target to meet the goals of the nationally recommended curriculum for young children by the age of five. Approximately one third of children are on target to exceed these goals. Standards of attainment on entry to the nursery are broadly in line with national expectations. Satisfactory progress is made overall but good progress is made in information technology and knowledge of living things. Children have good knowledge of parts of the body. Most children name at least ten body parts and more able children name twenty parts or more including eyebrows and wrists. They apply this knowledge when making a 'Teddy Book', placing the leg in the correct position. Also when making animals with the play-dough, more able children include details such as paws and facial features, naming them accurately. Children talk about the differences between day and night and notice changes in the weather. They begin to understand about changes in materials through freezing and melting in cooking and describe the sequence of events accurately after cooking doll biscuits. Children's skills in information technology are well developed for their age. They use tape recorders and headphones well in listening centres. They use this equipment independently, knowing the correct buttons to use. Children use computers well. They accurately use the space bar to stop the colour train in the matching colour station and use arrow keys correctly to guide Teddy through the maze. They are improving their mouse control, dragging and clicking to give each cat a toy.
62. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Educarers make the main contribution to teaching. They support children well with information technology and have good knowledge of this subject as a result of recent training. They often make a good contribution to children's learning through discussion; for example extending children's knowledge when driving cars along the roads using a floor plan. They set children suitable tasks such as 'drive to the post office' and ensure that children are familiar with the names of features such as rivers and bridges. However, sometimes resources are not prepared in advance such as cooking equipment, and the adults do not give children opportunities for weighing their own ingredients. When teachers are involved in the teaching it is at least good. Activities are interesting and stimulating and result in good learning by children, for example making large spirals with a suspended container of glue and closely observing the changes in the swinging action.
63. Since the last inspection, standards have been maintained in information technology and knowledge of living things. Standards in history, geography and investigative science are in line with national expectations for the oldest children. They were previously judged as 'generally higher than national expectations'.
64. There is no available teacher to lead developments in this area of learning because of the low number of teachers in the nursery. When teachers become involved; for example, the deputy headteacher led the school development target for information technology, this is reflected in improved children's learning. There is a shortage of resources for investigative science. The nursery is aware of this and it has been identified as a target for development. There is no policy to record the good practice in information technology, although this is planned for the

near future.

Physical development

65. Children's physical development is in line with expectations for the oldest children and they are likely to reach the nationally expected learning outcomes by five years of age. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection. On entry to the nursery, children's attainment is in line with national expectations. They make satisfactory progress.
66. In the outdoor area most children are able to pedal and steer a tricycle. They kick footballs with accuracy and some are able to aim and throw a ball into a basketball net. With the support of an adult, most children can participate in an organised game such as 'traffic lights', which necessitates walking, running, starting and stopping whilst avoiding other players. The majority of children climb and balance with confidence.
67. Indoors, most children are able to handle tools such as scissors, glue spreaders, pencils and paintbrushes safely and with skill. When rolling and cutting out play-dough some children show considerable dexterity.
68. Teaching in this area of learning is always at least satisfactory. Educators interact well with children. In the outdoor area they participate in the children's games, sustaining the play and model ball throwing skills. Educators are fully aware of safety issues, for example in the soft-play room. However it is in activities in which teachers are involved, such as rolling out play-dough and writing letters that children are extended and higher order teaching skills are observed.
69. All children show a real sense of enjoyment in physical play. They ride around the cycle track with enthusiasm and are adventurous and willing to have a go at new challenges in the soft-play room. They are equally keen to master the fine motor skills needed to write their names and cut accurately.
70. Resources are varied, of high quality and used appropriately. The outdoor area has been imaginatively developed and the soft-play room is a real asset. Both support this area of learning well.

Creative development

71. Standards overall are generally in line with expectations for the oldest children. Most children are on target to achieve the goals of the nationally recommended curriculum for young children, by the age of five. Children's attainment, on entry to the nursery, is in line with national expectations. They generally make satisfactory progress. However, there is some under-achievement in art and music. Children's paintings often display recognisable features, people and objects and printing displays effective use of colour and pattern. However, many pictures, during the inspection, were not carefully painted, lacking the inspiration of a suitable subject and were below expectations for pupils' ages. Children complete collages with pasta and use their imagination to create pattern and form. Interesting patterns, using blocks of colour, are created on computers using graphics software. Children are keen to complete and print these. In music, children sing appropriately for their age. Many maintain the melody line when singing 'the wheels on the bus'. Children enjoy imaginative role-play and co-operate well in these activities. They take on the roles of Mummy Bear and Baby Bear when playing in the bears' bedroom and dress up in dressing gowns and slippers, putting baby to bed in the home corner.
72. The quality of teaching by educators is satisfactory overall. The quality of display is very good throughout the school and provides a good stimulus for creative activities. Imaginative play areas are creatively set out such as the bears' bedroom and the bears' cave. These areas interest the children and ensure that they are keen to take part in role-play. Teachers and educators interact well with children during imaginative play, extending their use of vocabulary and the quality of the activities. However, much of the art is too adult directed. Templates are provided for shape vehicles and fluffy owls, for example, so that the resulting activity is an exercise in gluing or applying paint and this does not extend children's creativity. Sometimes children are left unsupported for too long when painting, without a focus for their work, and this

results in standards which are below expectations. There is no policy, agreed by current staff, to aid them with their practice.

73. Since the last inspection, standards have fallen from the previously judged 'generally higher than national expectations' to broadly in line with national expectations. This is mainly because there are insufficient teachers to lead activities in this area of learning.
74. There are no sinks in the teaching areas. This results in children washing their hands in buckets because of the remoteness of washing facilities; this practice is not hygienic. The long- and short-term plans for creative development do not contain sufficient opportunities for children to play percussion instruments, experiment with sounds and respond to music.