

Erratum

Please note the following change to the Inspection Report (IN 195574) for Evan Davies Nursery School:

Page 19, **How well is the school led and managed?** – Paragraph 50: the fourth sentence in this paragraph contains a statement pertaining to an attached unit's number of places available for children on the autistic spectrum. The sentence states that there are places for 13 children. This is incorrect. The correct number of places available to children on the autistic spectrum is five.

INSPECTION REPORT

EVAN DAVIES NURSERY SCHOOL

Stonebridge

London

LEA area: Brent

Unique reference number: 101490

Headteacher: Mrs J Snook

Reporting inspector: Brenda Spencer
20451

Dates of inspection: 10-11 January 2000

Inspection number: 195574

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:	Local Education Authority
Age range of pupils:	3-5
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Shakespeare Crescent Stonebridge London
Postcode:	NW10 8NP
Telephone number:	0181 965 9334
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Appropriate authority:	Local Education Authority of Brent
Name of chair of advisory body:	Ms A. Andrews
Date of previous inspection:	May 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Area of learning responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Brenda Spencer	Registered inspector	Language and literacy	What sort of school is it?
		English as an additional language	How high are standards? The school's achievements
		Mathematics	How well are pupils taught?
		Physical development	How well is the school led and managed?
Sue Thomas	Lay inspector	Equal opportunities	How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Lynne Palmer	Team inspector	Personal and social development	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
		Knowledge and understanding of the world	How high are standards? Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
		Creative development	
Linda Murgatroyd	Team inspector	Special educational needs	How well does the school care for its pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Evan Davies Nursery is a small popular school set in a large housing estate surrounded by high rise flats. This area of Stonebridge in north London together with the school is shortly to undergo substantial redevelopment. The socio economic profile of the area is well below average.

The school offers an extended day including breakfast and an extended school year. The school has six places within the main nursery which are reserved for children with communication difficulties and global delay. There is also a specialist provision which provides part-time teaching support for children who have needs which may be diagnosed as autistic spectrum disorder. Work with the parents and carers of these children, both at home and in the centre, is an integral part of the provision. In addition, a parent toddler group and toy library are available. The school serves both the local community and beyond because of the provision for children with special educational needs. Most children transfer to local primary schools however some take up places in special schools.

Broadly, children's attainment on entry is average. However, their communication skills are below average. The majority of children in the specialist provision enter with attainment below what might be expected of children of their age. This is particularly evident in their language and social development, since communication difficulties form part of the diagnosis. Unlike previous years, this year's overall nursery intake has few behavioural difficulties and socialises well.

The majority of children attend full time. There are 43 children on roll aged three to four years, 22 are boys and 21 are girls. The trend continues for the proportion of children from ethnic minorities, speaking English as an additional language and eligible for free school meals to be very high compared to the national picture. The majority of children are of African or Caribbean heritage. Of these, 16 are Somalian refugees. Twenty-four children speak English as an additional language and 22 are at an early stage of learning. Two thirds of children are eligible for free school meals. There are nine children on the register of special educational needs, one of whom has a statement.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Evan Davies is an effective school with many good features. The children achieve standards above expectation in personal, social and physical development. Standards are in line with expectations in all other areas except speaking where they are below. This reflects the children's attainment in communication skills on entry to school. The quality of teaching, management and leadership is satisfactory overall with some good aspects. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Staff manage behaviour well, as a result relationships are excellent and behaviour is very good.
- Children concentrate well and show great interest in their activities.
- Children with special educational needs integrate well in the life of the nursery and make good progress.
- The school has very good relationships with parents and works in full partnership with them.
- The headteacher has successfully created a school which responds to the needs of the community.
- Teaching develops reading, information and technology and personal and social skills well.
- Assessment procedures for children in the autistic support group are very good and are used well to plan for their individual needs.

What could be improved

- The effectiveness of monitoring in identifying what does or does not work well, including for teaching English as an additional language.
- Planning in greater detail for learning in mathematics, speaking and listening.
- The use of observations of children's learning to plan the next steps.
- The clarity of targets and success criteria in the school development plan for it to be an effective tool to support school improvement.
- The role of co-ordinators in contributing to curriculum development.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Since the last inspection in May 1997, overall the school has made satisfactory improvement. The important strengths identified in the curriculum, teaching, partnership with parents and ethos have been maintained and the school has also positively extended its role in the community. Whilst some initial steps have been taken to monitor and evaluate the work of the school this is not systematic enough to ensure that the good practice in teaching is consistently evident. Co-ordinators involvement in this process still needs clarification. Progress has been made to ensure that planning and assessment of children's achievements are carefully linked to the recommended areas of learning for children of this age. However, the useful observations made of the children are still not consistently used to ensure that planning for children's learning matches the range of children's needs and that outcomes for learning are clearly identified. Appropriate training has improved the provision for creative activities. The targets in the school development plan are now costed appropriately. However, the plan does not clearly identify the strategies for monitoring, key targets or their success criteria for it to be an effective tool for school improvement.

STANDARDS

The table summarises inspectors' judgements about the achievements of pupils in relation to the desirable outcomes for learning by the time they are five years of age.

Performance in:		Key
Language and literacy	C	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
Mathematics	C	
Personal and social development	B	
Other areas of the curriculum	C	

The children are likely to meet these expectations in language and literacy overall, in mathematics, knowledge and understanding overall and in creative development. They are likely to exceed them in personal and social development, physical development and in information and technology skills. Overall, the children are likely to reach standards below expectation in speaking.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Children are keen and eager to come to school and at the beginning of sessions choose an activity and settle quickly.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Children behave well which enables them to take full advantage of the activities offered.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are excellent and children's personal development is good.
Attendance	Satisfactory and in line with similar schools.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	
Lessons seen overall	Satisfactory

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 overall in language and literacy and mathematics is satisfactory. It is good for personal development. Ninety three per cent of teaching was satisfactory or better, three per cent was very good or better and seven per cent was unsatisfactory. Children's behaviour is particularly well managed so incidences of conflict or poor behaviour are very uncommon. Children's learning is not disrupted and they learn to sustain interest in their activities. Teaching often provides good examples of spoken language, extends children's vocabulary and encourages children to express opinions. This results in good language development. However, opportunities are missed for developing children's language effectively. Useful observations are made of children's achievements but these are not consistently used to vary planning so that it meets individual needs. Consequently, the needs of all groups of children are met overall but not consistently so.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Broad and balanced with a good variety of activities based on all the areas of learning. Systems for planning need to be used consistently and to take more account of the different needs of all the children.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	These children are integrated well into the life of the nursery and make good progress. The specialist project for children with autism is good and is supported by thorough assessment and planning for children's individual needs. These children make very good progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Satisfactory overall. Some development of language is very good however this is not always the case. There is no designated person with responsibility for monitoring the progress of these children consequently the quality of provision is inconsistent.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL continued

Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Satisfactory overall. In particular, children are taught well the difference between right and wrong and are very effectively supported in developing harmonious relationships.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Staff show a good understanding of the needs of young children and a commitment to providing for their personal and social well-being. Assessment is not used well overall to plan for children's educational needs.

The school works very well in partnership with parents and they are very appreciative of the work the school is doing. Additional visits and visitors support the curriculum well. Children with special educational needs are effectively supported in having full access to the curriculum, child protection procedures are understood well and outside agencies are used well to support the work of the school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory overall. The headteacher has successfully created a community school with an ethos which makes children and parents feel valued. The role of curriculum co-ordinators is underdeveloped.
How well the advisory body fulfils its responsibilities	The body is very interested in the welfare of the school and satisfactorily meets its responsibilities.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Unsatisfactory. The systems for monitoring and evaluation need to be more comprehensive and systematic.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. Spending is planned and monitored. Staff are well deployed.

There is a good match of the staff to the needs of the curriculum overall. Internal accommodation is spacious, resources are plentiful but are not always sufficiently accessible to the children. The school development plan needs greater detail to provide a better tool for school improvement. To achieve best value the school consults parents and has strong links with the Housing Action Trust.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How much their children enjoy school. • The good behaviour and high degree of racial harmony. • The quality of teaching. • The quality of information they receive and the ease of discussing issues with the school. • The support the school gives to parents in helping their children, for example, in acquiring early reading skills and meeting their special educational needs. 	

Inspectors' judgements fully support the parents' positive views. No negative comments were made by groups of parents on any issues either at the parents' meeting or in response to the questionnaire.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. The inspection took place one term after the children had entered the nursery school. Broadly, children's attainment on entry is average. However their communication skills are below average. Children in specialist provision enter with complex needs and have very low attainment because of the nature of their learning difficulties. The proportion of children speaking English as an additional language at an early stage of competence is very high compared to the national picture. Unlike previous years, this nursery intake overall has few behavioural difficulties and socialises well. In 1997, overall children's attainment was in line with standards expected for their ages in language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding and creative development. It was above these expectations in personal, social and physical development, music, science and information technology. Standards have remained broadly similar. There are expectations of the standards children can attain by five years of age called the Desirable Outcomes for Learning. The children are on course to meet these expectations in language and literacy overall, in mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world overall and in creative development. They are on track to exceed them in personal and social development, information and communications technology and in physical development. Overall, the children are likely to reach standards below expectation in speaking.
2. Children's personal and social skills develop well. The children have settled well into the routines of the nursery. They arrive eager and willing to learn and choose and move between activities with confidence. Children have positive attitudes to learning. They are interested in and persevere with tasks, they co-operate well and most patiently take turns. They are beginning to play collaboratively with adult support, for example, in the hospital role-play area. Staff have high expectations of good behaviour and this is reflected in the very few incidents of conflict observed. Children have a good sense of right and wrong and respond well to praise. Children participate well in tidying up and caring for the resources. Children's ability to choose resources within their chosen activities is less well developed because some resources and equipment are not easily accessible to them.
3. In language and literacy, children with English as an additional language participate fully and enthusiastically in the activities but often do so silently, understanding what is going on but not participating verbally. Some of these children use simple commands to express their needs, for example, 'open', and 'give me' or make simple protests such as 'she push me'. All children have well developed listening skills. Most concentrate very well during storytime and show great enjoyment. They have more difficulty listening to contributions made by other children during discussion sessions. Higher attaining children can remember familiar stories and make comments about what will happen next. Most children show interest in books, choose to read them and handle them appropriately, turning pages to follow the sequence of pictures. They use writing within role-play, for example, to record appointments as hospital receptionists by making marks. Some have already adopted a correct pencil grip and higher attaining children recognise the initial letter of their name when it appears in different words.
4. The ability to count is developing well for most children and they match objects one to one as they count. Some are able to carry out simple addition and subtraction using these objects. Many children recognise recorded numbers but some do not correctly identify them by name. In role-play children are becoming aware of measuring, for example, by using a clock to think about the length of time to wait for an appointment or by using thermometers for temperature. Whilst operating computer programs they show awareness of appropriate sequencing of dressing teddy and the appropriate clothes to wear for different purposes, for example, going into the garden. Many use language of size and some can compare identifying the biggest and smallest. They respond appropriately to instructions incorporating words describing position, for example, 'underneath', 'beside' and 'on top'. They develop understanding of space using jigsaw puzzles. Children can stand in circles for activities such as using the parachute and some recognise a button as being a circular shape but are not aware of other circles in their environment and how they can be used.

5. As part of knowledge and understanding of the world, children have well-developed skills in information and communication technology. They are able to select programmes and use the mouse to drag objects such as the appropriate clothes to dress the teddy. Children enjoy using construction kits and when they build they can refer to pictures of structures to aid their modelling well. They use large wooden blocks to support their imaginative play, for example, building an ambulance. Children enjoy exploring the properties of light and dark using a variety of resources. They are encouraged to predict leading to further exploration and some pictorial recording. Children engaged in spinning tops responded well to adult support and were able to make relevant observations and comments. There are good opportunities to develop children's understanding of the world around them. The weekly walks to local shops, post office, library and the hospital broaden the children's understanding and support their imaginative play. Birthdays are celebrated and children are encouraged to compare what they can do now to what they could do in the past.
6. In physical development, many children already use a correct grip for crayons and brushes and use small tools to shape dough effectively. They can operate a mouse, direction keys and a tracker ball to manipulate objects on a computer screen. They place pieces in jigsaws accurately. In constructing, they can balance wooden blocks on top of each other. Some are beginning to develop control in the use of scissors but these are not available often enough. In ring games outside, children practise a range of movements including jumping, turning quickly, using the right and left hand side of their bodies, stretching up and bending down. Children in the integrated unit are supported in undressing independently, rolling, waving streamers, running and crawling. Children outside are able to move around a narrow route for wheeled vehicles without bumping into each other. They learn to balance by walking along lines and help each other walk along a low wall. Children learn to jump and land on both feet showing control by landing in a small space. They are taught to roll and catch hoops and to hop.
7. In creative development, children have opportunities to paint. The work of the artist Jackson Pollock acted as a stimulus for 'splash' painting with appropriate background music used to support the experience. Children access the painting area well but aspects of the provision, for example, there is no opportunity to mix paints, limit the children's attainment. Children work with clay and make observational drawings of, for example, tadpoles. However, there is a lack of evidence of broader provision, for example, collage and printing. Children can work with playdough effectively to mould and cut shapes. Some opportunities are missed to talk to children about their creative work and to extend their expressive and descriptive vocabulary. This limits their progress in language development. Children progress well in music. The sessions are well structured and children are able to beat and march in time to the singing. They can count beats and are made familiar with appropriate language, for example, 'time', 'beat', 'softly', and 'loudly'. Children use the role-play area well to develop their imaginative play. They are beginning to understand the roles of doctors and nurses and how to make appointments. One child could skilfully bandage a member of staff's arm and leg and comment that she needed medicine to make her better.
8. Overall children's achievements are satisfactory. However, they achieve well in significant respects. They respond very well to their activities. After one term in the nursery, the children show positive enjoyment in their learning by applying themselves to their activities. Children make choices and stick with them; their behaviour is not characterised by aimlessly wandering around. They have made a good start in establishing positive attitudes to learning which form a strong foundation for future educational success. Achievement would be still higher in this area of personal development across the curriculum if some resources were more accessible to allow self-selection by the children. The children achieve well in information technology, reading and physical development because of the appropriate teaching of skills and the breadth of the resources available to them and the opportunities given to apply their skills. This could be further extended by planning story time explicitly for the needs of particular groups of children, for example, using texts with repeated phrases for children with English as an additional language. Children's achievements in language and literacy overall, mathematics, knowledge and understanding overall, and creative development are satisfactory. This is primarily linked to the need to improve the use of assessment to vary the planning for the different needs of children.

9. Children make satisfactory progress in developing spoken language overall. Their achievements are good when the teaching actively draws out the vocabulary to be learned within an activity and models the spoken language. Some teaching does this very well. However, some teaching supports children in using the equipment and resources safely, keeps the activity flowing but involves too little talk or discussion. Children with English as an additional language, in particular, make too little progress in developing their language across the curriculum at these times. These children do however enjoy their learning overall, participate fully in the entire curriculum and show increasing understanding of what is going on.
10. Boys and girls progress equally well, are developing good attitudes to learning and choose to participate in the full curriculum. Both groups enjoy using the computers and imaginative play involving caring activities such as treating a patient or looking after a baby. As part of early literacy activities, boys and girls choose favourite books and sit quietly in the book area enjoying them. Children with special educational needs in both the main nursery and in the autistic support project enter the nursery with skills across the curriculum which are well below what might be expected for children of their age. In particular, most have little spoken language and few social skills. The children in the main nursery make good progress in the areas of learning; for example, in learning to dress themselves, and to communicate their needs to others, including by the use of Makaton signing when appropriate. Children who attend the autistic support project make very good progress against the clear and detailed targets set for them in their individual education plans, particularly in personal and social development. Progress in their use of language is in very slow steps because of the nature of their difficulties, but communication is clearly planned for and develops well over their time in the provision.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. The strengths in this area identified in the last inspection in relationships, behaviour and interest in activities have been maintained. There are very few incidents of conflict, the children are very well behaved and there have been no exclusions.
12. The many supportive and complimentary views expressed by parents on the children's attitudes and values are well justified. All the children have a very positive attitude to learning and are willing to participate in a wide variety of activities. They sustain concentration for good lengths of time, for example, in the book area two children stayed for 35 minutes reading with a teacher. Children stay for long periods working individually on the computer. Overall, they remain on task and complete activities well. Children are keen and eager to come to school and at the beginning of sessions choose an activity and settle quickly. They are willing to 'have a go' at predicting and exploring, for example, when playing with the spinners.
13. Children behave very well during focused activities and free play situations, for example, in the hospital role-play area. They conduct themselves very well moving from one activity to another. They play very well together and respond to adult direction in a positive and co-operative way. Children are courteous, for example, they greet adults in a friendly manner when they arrive in the morning. They value and respect each other, for example, when the group were lining up at the end of a session an older child took care of a younger one. Children with special educational needs and English as an additional language are welcomed into groups by the other children who take their hands in games and include them in play. Children value their environment and resources by treating them with care and respect. Children feel valued and their self-esteem is raised through the photographs of themselves on display participating in a variety of activities.
14. Children show high levels of independence in choosing their own activities. They also select appropriate resources when they are given opportunities. All children help with tidying up and clearing up at lunch time and breakfast time, for example, putting away chairs. The personal development of children is good. They can make decisions about whether or not to join in games or activities, for example, to choose to go outside for ring games. Some children use their initiative well, for example, during outside play children developed imaginative play, pretending they were in a lift. Relationships with each other and adults are excellent. Children from all social, religious and ethnic backgrounds work and play very well together with a positive acceptance of children with special educational needs.

15. Children with special educational needs within the main nursery are well integrated with their peers, and this makes a positive contribution to their good progress in personal and social development. They learn self-care skills, and although they often choose to work and play alone, they are effectively helped by staff to communicate with other children during activities. There is also a benefit to other nursery children, who learn about difference and take opportunities to help the children with special educational needs when appropriate.
16. In the provision for children with autism, children also increase their interaction with other children, although for some this means learning to play alongside others or in the absence of their parent or carer without becoming distressed. These children also make very good progress in learning to put on their coats, feed themselves and carry out simple hygiene such as brushing teeth and washing hands.
17. Attendance is satisfactory and in line with similar schools. Absences are associated overall with ill health.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

18. During the last inspection, the quality of teaching was satisfactory or better in over 90 per cent of sessions and was good in a significant minority of them. Particular strengths included the quality of teamwork and sharing of ideas, effective management of children's behaviour and the range and organisation of activities. At times, learning outcomes were not clearly identified and this resulted in missed opportunities to promote learning through questioning and discussion or lack of challenge for some children. Observations were not used sufficiently to inform planning and whilst children developed independence by choosing their own activities they were not given sufficient encouragement to choose painting or design activities. The present inspection findings broadly match those of the previous inspection. The strengths have been maintained and whilst some teaching shows improvement on the weaknesses identified at the last inspection this is not true of all teaching. Overall, children achieve a more balanced experience and they are encouraged to participate in creative activities.
19. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall with some 43 per cent being good or better and this has a positive effect on children's achievements. The teaching was satisfactory or better in 93 per cent of sessions. Seven percent of teaching was judged unsatisfactory. The development of children's personal, social, early reading, physical and information and technology skills is good. Teaching is satisfactory overall for language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding and creative development.
20. The most effective teaching gave high priority to developing children's spoken language by extending their vocabulary, providing a good example of spoken English and by encouraging children to communicate with each other. The broadening of children's vocabulary helped them both to improve their spoken language as well as to engage in their activities at a deeper level, for example, by observing more closely or seeing distinctions such as between their physical movements. This benefited both children with English as an additional language and those who are higher attainers. For example, children learned to jump along lines which were 'straight' or 'zigzagged', to 'stretch', 'bend', 'hop' and 'jump'. They 'rotated' or 'turned' shapes to fit them into puzzles. Some children, who are at an early stage of using English, were involved in role-play of making hospital appointments. When staff provided a model of the language they needed they responded, sometimes cautiously, to this encouragement. When children were asked for their opinions, on what was happening or likely to happen as they experimented with spinning tops, they gave complex answers which included predictions such as 'I think it will stop'. These open-ended questions allowed children to achieve at higher levels both in spoken language and in scientific thinking.

21. Staff consistently manage behaviour positively and well consequently there is little disruption of activities and children learn to sustain their involvement and behave very well. Staff are good role models. For example, when tidying up an adult encouraged a reluctant child to put away puppets by saying that she would do one and the child could do two. This successfully achieved the task without confrontation. Children are encouraged to help one another in tasks such as assisting in putting on overalls for cooking activities which develops their social skills well. Teaching often gives careful thought to presenting learning in interesting ways, for example, by playing appropriate music as children make large splash paintings inspired by the work of Jackson Pollock, reading stories in subdued and evocative lighting or by being full of enthusiasm for the different movements in ring games outside. These approaches, sometimes quiet at others boisterous, engage the children in appropriate response for different kinds of activity and generate great enthusiasm in their learning.
22. Staff have a good understanding of the needs of young children and of the curriculum. Mathematics is developed very often through other areas of the curriculum and this helps the learning to be meaningful for young children. In particular, children are encouraged to count. They notice the number of rings they can see on spinning tops, how many jumps they have made along a line and consequently counting skills are developing well and many children are secure in counting accurately. Mathematical concepts such as time and measurement are explored in interesting ways by, for example, considering how long children need to wait for an appointment or the need to keep thermometers to check on someone's health. Children are motivated by this approach, concentrate well and where the teaching has such a clear focus they make good progress.
23. Skills are taught well which will enable children to perform at increasingly higher levels and opportunities are given for children to apply these skills. For example, in completing a puzzle the teaching focused children's attention in matching the edges of the shape with the space as a useful strategy. They then persisted independently applying their new knowledge. Early reading skills are developed effectively by introducing children to good quality literature, using technical vocabulary such as 'author', 'page' and 'word', and reading to children sometimes moving a finger along the print. Consequently, many children show interest in books, choose favourites to read and handle them appropriately. They understand that print holds meaning and ask, for example, which of the words say the repeated phrase in the story. In focused writing sessions, children learn to hold the pencil correctly and then enjoy applying this in role-play, for example, when they record hospital appointments. Children are generally supported well in personal development, for example, in making choices of activities, however some children need to be taught skills such as use of the storage rack for storing their paintings to enable them to be fully independent.
24. The strengths of the teaching are not consistently evident. Parents expressed great appreciation of how their children's use of English has improved. However, at times opportunities are missed to develop children's language consequently children with English as an additional language particularly do not make sufficient progress on these occasions. For example, when shaping dough children spent a lot of time in silence concentrating on their endeavours but little attempt was made to help them describe what they were doing or to discuss which tools they could use and why. When trying to fit shapes in a puzzle, discussion could have considered the names of the shapes and words which describe their characteristics in order for children to reach a deeper understanding and to resolve the problem.
25. Staff make useful observations of children's competencies across the curriculum. For example, there are well observed records of children's developing use of spoken language. These observations are used very well to set targets and plan for children in the unit giving autistic spectrum support and advice to parents. However, whilst staff know children well generally these observations are not used sufficiently to set targets either for individuals or for planning the curriculum which explicitly meets the needs of a range of attainment. This can result in an unsatisfactory match of teaching to a child's needs, for example, such as physically guiding the movement of a computer mouse for a child who is already highly competent and could be challenged to reach standards well above average. Higher attaining children could be encouraged to annotate their work with their names more often. Some children have no observations in mathematics and often observations for physical development focus on larger physical activities. This makes it difficult to teach these children during these activities at an appropriate level to take their learning forward.

26. Most often methods and organisation adopted by staff are effective. However, some resources could be more accessible to children to better promote some aspects of their personal development. For example, shiny objects are displayed in an enclosed glass case which prevents children from handling them. Children do not easily manage the easels so they can not fit paper independently and some of associated resources are out of their reach. Children often are in appropriately sized groups and staff are alert to ensuring manageable numbers use popular areas such as role-play. However, at story and key-worker time, the groups are too large for all children to properly benefit from the discussion or to see the detailed illustrations in books. Shy children find it difficult to talk to groups sometimes larger than twenty; all find it difficult to listen to each other appropriately. The adult focus quickly becomes one of management and the teaching can not focus properly on the different needs of the children in language development.
27. In the main nursery, staff show good knowledge of children with special educational needs and include them well in all nursery activities. As a result, these children are able to take part in activities across all areas of learning, and their personal and social development in particular benefits from the interaction with their peers. The specialist teacher and nursery nurse work well together to promote children's communication skills, and use language structures carefully and consistently to provide simple phrases which children can understand and in some cases reproduce. For example, the nursery nurse was persistent in prompting a child to use the correct Makaton sign to state a preference for water or milk during breakfast time, helping him to develop independence. However, when being taught as a group, the pace is sometimes too slow, and the children lose interest in the activity. Individual education plans for these children are not clearly expressed or reviewed, and assessments made do not result in work which is carefully matched to the needs of each child. This limits their usefulness in guiding teaching. However, staff know the children well, and to some extent this knowledge compensates for the limited usefulness of the individual education plan and day-to-day planning in meeting children's needs. As a result, children make good progress.
28. Teaching in the autistic support project is good overall, with very good practice in using individual education plans to provide a clear structure in which children's skills are built. Staff are lively and dynamic, and keep children's attention, although this can be difficult with these particular children. The teacher and nursery nurse work well together, and their consistency ensures that expectations of children are clear. They use a calm and sensitive approach, and have a range of effective strategies for managing challenging behaviour. However, on a very few occasions the need to find appropriate approaches for each child means that some strategies used may be less successful than others in letting children know what is not acceptable.
29. Overall, children make satisfactory progress. The rate of learning for children of all attainment is most effective when their spoken language is developed by extending their vocabulary, giving good examples of the language which will help children to communicate and think and by challenging them through discussion which does not require simple one word answers. They are progressing very well in developing very positive attitudes to their learning, in being independent in choosing their activities and in sustaining their interest.

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

30. Since the 1997 inspection, the nursery has continued to provide a broad and balanced curriculum and has made some improvement to the planning by linking key skills and experiences to the areas of learning. Staff are becoming confident in providing opportunities to develop imagination through art and movement and writing is given a higher profile. The curriculum continues to contribute well to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the children.
31. The nursery offers a broad and balanced curriculum, covering all the recommended areas of learning. It ensures that children can choose from a variety of enjoyable and exciting activities, which capture their imagination and promote their involvement. However, this range is not available outdoors where the focus is predominately on physical development. The curriculum draws from the children's interests, for example, mark making in the frost developed when the children became interested in the ice when playing outside. Because of the good integration, children with special educational needs have good access to all areas of learning. All classroom activities are relevant to their needs. There are good links with a local special school to which some of the children with special educational needs go after the nursery. There are also useful links with the primary schools which receive children at the age of four. In common with other

nursery schools there is no extra curricular provision.

32. The nursery is organised to include the six areas of learning and displays of photographs indicate a broad variety of experiences offered in the learning areas. Displays are satisfactory but do not sufficiently promote the development of aesthetic awareness in the children. Interactive displays are underdeveloped and activities, for example, the hospital role-play area where resources are good, are not enhanced by imaginative presentation. At the time of the inspection, there were few examples of children's work on display and photographs indicate that displays mostly consist of posters and photographs with a small amount of children's work.
33. Long-term planning in all areas of learning is in place and is used to build on children's gradually increasing skills and knowledge. Medium term plans with some detailed learning objectives identified are used to inform weekly and daily planning. However overall, these plans are very general and are not consistently applied. There are insufficient details and targets particularly for the development of speaking and mathematical skills. Consequently, opportunities are missed in children's activities to promote these areas. Planning does not explicitly accommodate the needs of the range of attainment. Children's involvement and participation in the activities are carefully discussed at the end of each day by the teams of key-workers. Development and planning for the next day is based on these meetings, but sometimes the focus is on activities rather than developing skills at different levels.
34. The curriculum makes a sound and in some areas good contribution to children's social, emotional, spiritual, cultural and intellectual development. There are very high expectations for children's behaviour and the need to consider others. The high adult to pupil ratio and visitors to the school, for example, the story teller and parents, provide children with good social opportunities to interact with adults. The children's knowledge and understanding of the world is promoted well through use of the outdoors. This includes a garden, weekly walks in the locality and visits to Burnham Beeches. Provision for the development of gross motor skills is good. There are good opportunities outside for climbing, digging in the garden and sand and using wheeled toys. Fine motor skills are developed satisfactorily through experiences with malleable materials, jigsaws, writing and painting tools and information and communications technology. Experiences for developing mathematical skills are integrated into activities, for example, counting 1 to 1 in the spinning activity, but opportunities are not consistently exploited and this is reflected in inadequate planning in this area. Reading skills are taught well, for example, children are encouraged sometimes to follow the text with their fingers from left to right and to predict using pictures. Provision for developing mark making and listening are good and well integrated into the activities, for example, children are encouraged to write their names on labels in the reception area of the hospital. However, they do not automatically label their artwork. Provision for developing children's speaking skills are limited through missed opportunities for adult interaction and planned questioning. The art area is well resourced and most of the materials are accessible. Children can paint, mould dough, but no opportunities for children to mix paints or cut and paste were observed during the inspection. Future planning indicated that some of these experiences would be provided for later in the term. Music sessions provided children with very good experiences in keeping a beat and singing. Resources are very good and available to the children if they request them.
35. Since the last inspection, the nursery has continued to make good provision overall for the social and moral development of the children and makes satisfactory provision for their spiritual and cultural development.
36. Spiritual awareness is provided for in the celebration of birthdays and births, festivals and life cycles. Planning indicates that festivals are celebrated and the display for Eid gave children some experience in this area. However, the impact on children's learning is limited as the display did not include resources such as artefacts or books and was not presented in a sufficiently interesting way to stimulate children's interest. There were a few occasions observed when children became fascinated or experienced wonder, for example, in the specialist unit for children with autism a child was fascinated with a floating golden streamer. In the movement session children were enchanted by their experience with the parachute.

37. Provision for children's moral development is good. Children have a very good sense of right and wrong. There are very few incidents of conflict and children with special educational needs are welcomed and integrate very well. Staff provide opportunities to explain how behaviour can affect others. For example, a member of staff talked to two children who were having a disagreement. As a result, one apologised to the other and then settled happily back to the activity. Adults' expectations are consistently high and reinforced at every opportunity, for example, in the reading area a teacher drew the attention of the children to a torn book and explained how books need to be looked after and that it is wrong to tear them.
38. Provision for children's social development is good. Children are settled and very used to the routines of the school. The children are encouraged to choose their own activities. They are expected to hang up their aprons and coats, to tidy away and care for their environment. Children's progress in social development is monitored through observations and daily discussions. Opportunities for extending their social experiences are provided through visits, for example, to the hospital, which are then used effectively to promote imaginative and social play. Adults provide good role models, for example, promoting gentleness in caring for each other in the hospital role-play area.
39. The promotion of cultural development is satisfactory. The school draws on a wide diversity of cultures and the celebration of a variety of festivals and photographs of different life styles value the children's heritage satisfactorily. Some books have translations, but there is little evidence of home languages reflected in notices or posters. Children are made aware of others' beliefs and values and adults are good role models, promoting positive attitudes by, for example, encouraging children to sing 'I'm very pleased to meet you' in different languages that the children suggest. The multi racial composition of the staff and their good relationships provides a good model for the children and supports the evident good racial harmony and respect for all cultures in the nursery.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

40. The provision for ensuring pupils' welfare and guidance was judged to be good at the time of the last inspection. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour, regular attendance and children's personal development were all judged to be effective in ensuring that children were provided with appropriate support. This continues to be a caring school in which staff show a good understanding of the needs of young children and a commitment to providing for their educational, personal and social well-being. Standards in all the above aspects remain good, and the health, safety and welfare of children has a high profile in the nursery. As during the previous inspection, the way that children with special educational needs are integrated within the nursery is a strength. At the time of the last inspection, policies for health and safety and child protection were in place, but not effectively monitored. This aspect has now improved, and, in particular, the nursery's procedures for child protection are well known and understood by staff, including the need to work sensitively with parents and carers. The school is well supported by other agencies and the local education authority in promoting children's welfare, health and safety.
41. The positive way in which parents and carers are encouraged to stay with their children to support them until they feel settled into the nursery is one example of the care taken of all children. Those children whose parents wish it are given breakfast when they arrive, so that they can concentrate on their learning without being hungry. The nursery continues to offer an extended day and year, found to be supportive to parents and children, although the uptake of the latter is lower than that expected when the provision was established. Parents at the pre-inspection meeting praised the care the nursery takes of their children. Strategies for promoting good behaviour and ensuring that there is no bullying or other oppressive behaviour are unobtrusive and very effective. This results in a calm nursery where children can work and play together harmoniously free from anxiety. When minor incidents of unkind behaviour occur, staff deal with them very thoughtfully and quietly, and children quickly respond. On a very few occasions when there are slight lapses in vigilance by staff, children may misbehave in a very minor way, but these incidents are rare.

42. The knowledge of all staff of the needs of the children is good, and ensures that all children, including those with identified special educational needs and English as an additional language, make at least satisfactory progress. The school has developed a good range of procedures for the assessment and monitoring of children's progress, which are now related to the Desirable Outcomes for Learning, a weakness at the last inspection. In most cases, these are thorough but all staff do not yet use them consistently. In a few cases, there are too few observations under a heading to provide evidence of progress. Although observations of children are taken account of in the end-of-day evaluation and planning meetings, these are used to identify further activities rather than to set systematic learning targets for individuals and groups of children, and in this respect, the use of assessment is still unsatisfactory. As a result, the rate of learning of the majority of children is satisfactory rather than good.
43. Individual education plans for children with special educational needs in the main nursery have targets, but progress in reaching these is not recorded systematically enough to give clear information. The plans are not used in sufficient detail to guide further teaching. Despite these shortcomings, these children make good progress because of the detailed knowledge of the teacher with specialist responsibility, and the successful way which she shares this knowledge verbally with colleagues. In the attached provision for children on the autistic spectrum, there is very good practice in writing and using individual education plans. These are very detailed, carefully assessed and directly used to plan the next steps in learning. As a result, the children who attend this provision make very good progress.
44. Overall, the care taken of children by the staff of the nursery makes a positive contribution to the way children settle in. The calm purposeful atmosphere created by clear expectations and the strategies for promoting good behaviour ensure a positive start to school. The contribution made by assessment to children's learning is limited by the inconsistencies in its use to plan the next steps in learning.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

45. The school has maintained its very effective links with parents since the last inspection. Parents hold strong positive views about the education the school provides for their children. Ninety six per cent of the parents who returned the questionnaire feel that the school works closely with them. The school provides additional facilities such as the parent/toddler group and the extended day provision which parents say they appreciate greatly. The unit for autistic children provides helpful advice to parents and offers them a much welcomed opportunity to participate in and to observe additional ways of helping their children. To ease the transition from home to school, staff visit the children at home prior to entry. This gives the staff and the children time to get to know each other before formal education begins. These visits also help to allay parents' concerns. Parents and the school report that the visits have a positive affect on the progress the children make in their first few weeks. Staff also regularly visit the homes of the children in the unit as part of their continuing assessment of the children's progress.
46. Parents' involvement with the work of the school is very good and has a positive impact on progress. They are very supportive of the school. Parents of all the children attended the meetings arranged by the school to explain its approach to literacy. All parents have signed the home/school contract. There is much informal contact between staff and parents at the beginning and end of each day when parents bring and collect their children. In addition, the school operates an open-door policy which allows parents to drop into the school during the afternoons to see their child at work. This is helpful to those parents who may not always accompany their children to and from the nursery.
47. The quality of information provided for parents is very good. The school prospectus is attractively produced but is only written in English. In view of the large numbers of families who do not have English as their first language, this is a disadvantage. However, the school does provide translators for major meetings for parents. The school is quick to respond to parents' suggestions and concerns. This year, for the first time, it will be giving parents the full school profile for their child, rather than the summary. This will enable parents to have the full picture of their child's progress over the year. Information about the curriculum is available on request from the school but parents receive little prior written information. However, most parents feel they are well informed about school activities and appreciate receiving the school's newsletters.

48. Parents are willing to support their children's learning at school and at home. They help children with changing their reading books each Monday morning. Where necessary, they respond well to the school's requests for information. They are fully aware of their responsibilities under the home/school agreement.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

49. Since the last inspection there has been considerable change in the leadership and management of the school. Most members of the advisory body are relatively recent appointments including the chair and vice chair. A deputy headteacher was appointed at the beginning of the spring term and there have been many changes in the teaching staff because of the difficulty of recruiting qualified nursery teachers. The school is now entering a period of stability. In 1997, the school was described as well managed with strong leadership. There was a need for more formal monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning and for co-ordinators to be involved in this process. Priorities for educational development were not sufficiently costed in the school development plan and success criteria were not linked to improvements in children's attainment. Progress has been made in costing educational developments but there is still work to be done on describing targets, success criteria and monitoring strategies in greater detail for the plan to be an effective tool for school improvement. Developing formal monitoring strategies remains a priority in order to identify inconsistencies in practice.
50. Overall leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher, in line with the school's aims, has a clear vision of, and has been successful in creating, a school which meets the needs of the community. The school offers a wide-ranging level of service. This includes an extended day including breakfast and an extended school year, an integrated special educational needs unit with places for six children and an attached unit in the nearby Centre to provide autistic spectrum support and advice for parents with places for 13 children. In addition, a parent toddler group and toy library are available. Very good relationships are maintained with parents. With the recently achieved stability in staffing there is a commitment to address the issues for improving management which remain outstanding from the last inspection.
51. The advisory body is enthusiastic about supporting the community character of the school. However, it has a limited role compared to the statutory duties of a governing body. The headteacher has full responsibility for delivery of the curriculum, management of the budget, appointment and dismissal of staff, internal organisation and safety and well being of staff and children. The advisory body, in line with requirements, meets on a regular basis and receives reports including those on finances and special educational needs. The reports on finances are not sufficiently detailed for them to give support in making any necessary decisions. Members of the advisory body make useful contributions to the school, for example, by links to the Housing Action Trust, giving advice on health and safety and by being regular visitors to school and accompanying external trips with the children. Consequently, they have a valuable overview of the context of the school and also its every day functions. The Local Education Authority is presently conducting a review of the role of advisory bodies. Overall, members of the advisory body of Evan Davies Nursery express reservations about the extent of their role because it limits their ability to shape the direction of the school and to make full use of their experience and enthusiasm to its benefit.
52. The way in which the school monitors and evaluates its performance is unsatisfactory. The process of setting up systems for this has recently been started. Observations have been made of the role of adults at lunchtime and the profiles of observations on children's achievements have been analysed for coverage of the curriculum. However, the monitoring needs to be more systematic and comprehensive in order that the aspects of good practice in teaching, planning and assessment are consistently evident and publicised. The methods of monitoring are not sufficiently considered within the school development plan with the result that monitoring is not fully effective.

53. Members of staff have responsibility for co-ordinating areas of learning however their roles are very limited. They do not undertake a monitoring role and have too little impact on the school development plan or improvements within the curriculum. No member of staff with specific responsibility for children with English as an additional language. Key workers keep an overview of the progress of individual children within their care and make appropriate observations of their developing skill in using English. However co-ordination is needed to set targets from these focused observations for learning, to explicitly state their implications for teaching and to keep an overview of how successful overall the provision is for children with English as an additional language. The school has a positive ethos for children with special educational needs. This is shown by the way these children are well integrated into the nursery as a whole, and by the headteacher's support of the project for children with autism and their parents. The special educational needs co-ordinator works well with other staff to share her knowledge of the children and their needs, but the administration of the provision within the main school is not always efficient. The good practice, in the project for children with autism, in writing and using individual education plans is beginning to be shared with the co-ordinator, but this has not yet had an impact on the plans or on children's learning.
54. The school makes satisfactory use of the resources available to it. Specific grants made by the Housing Action Trust to support the community use of the Centre and by parents to school fund are spent appropriately. The funds available to the school are split into four sections:
- Mainstream school
 - Evan Davies Centre
 - Integrated special educational needs unit
 - Autistic Spectrum Support and Advice for Parents
55. During the inspection, few people made use of the extended day or of the parent toddler group for children with special educational needs housed in the Centre. The school indicates this is unusual, however, action needs to be taken to ensure that the service on offer is more fully used. At present, the school budget is balanced but there is little contingency fund. The present level of service can not be maintained without access to more funds and strategic decisions must be made to ensure that next year's budget does not go into deficit. The headteacher is aware of this and of the options available. The school addresses two principles of achieving best value. The school has used the findings of the Housing Action Trust to establish the needs of the community and makes itself available to hear parents' views. Very careful scrutiny is made of spending to ensure there is no unnecessary expenditure, for example, by looking out for special offers. More systematic monitoring would enable the school better to compare itself to other similar schools and to challenge the effectiveness of how it allocates the resources available to it.
56. There is a good match of staff to the demands of the curriculum overall. Staff have a good understanding of the needs of young children and those with special educational needs. There is no one with specialist knowledge of meeting the needs of children with English as an additional language; however, the school has booked courses for two staff to address this need. Resources are plentiful across the curriculum but they are not always sufficiently accessible to the children. The internal accommodation available in the school and centre is spacious and would benefit from stimulating displays of children's work. The external accommodation includes good quality large equipment but is cramped when children use pedal vehicles.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

57. In order to continue the improvements since the last inspection, staff and advisory body need to:

- (1) Implement systematic and comprehensive procedures for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning, including that for children with English as an additional language, in order to highlight good practice and support its consistent use (**see paragraphs 24, 49, 52 and 53**);
- (2) Improve the focus in planning on learning outcomes for speaking and listening and mathematics to ensure children make smooth progress in learning (**see paragraphs 24, 25, 33, 34, 67 and 71**);
- (3) Make consistent use of the accurate observations of children's achievements in order to provide a better match for the range of attainment in planning the curriculum (**see paragraphs 25, 33, 42, 53, 63 and 75**);
- (4) Provide greater detail on the targets and success criteria in the school development plan so that it becomes a more effective tool for guiding school improvement (**see paragraphs 49 and 52**);
- (5) Define the role of co-ordinators more explicitly so that they can make an effective contribution to leading curriculum development in their areas of responsibility (**see paragraphs 53, 68, 72, 76 and 83**).

58. In addition to the key issues above, the following less important weaknesses should be considered for inclusion in the plan:

- * Give greater opportunities for children to choose resources and equipment within the activities they have selected to do (**see paragraphs 34 and 61**);
- * Improve the quality of opportunities for speaking and listening by enabling children to participate in appropriately sized groups (**see paragraphs 26 and 67**);
- * Extend the range of the curriculum available to children outside (**see paragraph 31**);
- * Consider ways of increasing the use of the extended day and of parent/toddler toy library provision (**see paragraph 55**); and
- * Improve quality of display so it incorporates more examples of children's work and develops children's aesthetic awareness more fully (**see paragraphs 32 and 82**).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	30
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	17

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	3	37	53	7	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 pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	41
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	27

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	9

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	24

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	2
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	2

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	Not Applicable

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	Not Applicable

Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

None of the children are of statutory school age.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and support staff

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	8.2 FTE

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	280

Number of pupils per FTE adult	3
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1998-99
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	£
Total income	215897
Total expenditure	228295
Expenditure per pupil	6523
Balance brought forward from previous year	26000
Balance carried forward to next year	13602

Expenditure per pupil provides full time mainstream education for an extended year for all children and an extended day for thirteen children

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	43
Number of questionnaires returned	27

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	93	7	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	70	22	0	7	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	70	30	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	48	43	0	0	9
The teaching is good.	78	22	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	58	42	0	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	69	23	0	4	4
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	63	38	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	73	23	0	4	0
The school is well led and managed.	88	13	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	80	16	0	4	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	68	28	0	4	0

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

59. Since the last inspection, staff have maintained the good provision identified in the previous report. Children showed interest in their activities, were gaining confidence and were developing a sense of responsibility for small tasks such as laying the table. This continues to be the case. Children's attainment overall in personal and social development is on course to be above expectations by the time they are five years of age.
60. Most children have positive attitudes to learning. They arrive eager and willing to learn. They have settled well into the routines of the nursery and move between activities with confidence. Most children can make decisions about activities well. They are interested in and persevere with their choices of activity. They co-operate well, for example, when playing with the trailer bike outside, pushing and pulling each other and taking turns. They are beginning to play collaboratively with adult support, for example, in the hospital role-play area. Staff have high expectations of good behaviour and this is reflected in the very few incidents of conflict observed. Children have a good sense of right and wrong and respond well to praise. This fulfils the aims in the policy for positive behaviour management of children by helping them learn from their experiences and giving praise and positive reinforcement of appropriate behaviour. Children participate well in tidying up and caring for the resources. Children with special educational needs concentrate for short periods and with support from staff are learning to make choices, express their needs and integrate with the other children in the nursery.
61. Children, including those with special educational needs, make good progress overall. They are able to sustain interest in tasks and complete them and are able to concentrate for a considerable length of time. Most of the children listen well in small groups and they respond appropriately to adults' directions and requests very well. They are developing independence skills well in choosing their activities. They also show the ability to make decisions about the resources that they need within these activities when opportunities are offered. For example, in the role-play area children are able to select and replace doctors' uniforms and equipment. However, provision for developing the skill of making choices of resources and equipment within activities is at times limited. Resources are sometimes unavailable, for example, scissors to practise cutting and use independently and name cards to give children opportunities to label their work independently. Some equipment is difficult to manage, for example, the painting easels are slightly too high to enable children to replace paper.
62. Relationships are good and children respond to each other and adults well. For example, they welcome children with special educational needs into the key-worker groups, hold hands with them in games and include them in activities.
63. The teaching of personal and social education is good overall. The staff have a good knowledge of the children and their sensitive and gentle approach avoids conflict and supports the children's growing self confidence. This is particularly effective for children with special needs. Children are encouraged to help each other, for example, when putting each other's overalls on for painting. Key-worker group times are overall effectively used to promote the children's awareness of themselves and each other in singing 'hello' and 'name' games. Staff are good role models in tidying up, for example, one member of staff encouraged a reluctant child to put away puppets by saying she would do one and the child could do two and this was successful in completing the task without confrontation. Best practice achieves a good balance between giving children strategies and challenging them to do tasks for themselves. For example, when supporting a group doing inset puzzles, the teacher taught strategies and then challenged the children to do the task for themselves. The organisation of the nursery gives children good opportunities for choosing activities independently. Occasionally opportunities are missed for promoting personal and social development. The lack of vigilance in the art area led to one child inappropriately daubing paint on a table. Some children were not sufficiently aware of procedures. For example, children did not know where to place their paintings when unsupported. The sometimes

limited modelling of language for children with English as an additional language results in missed opportunities for encouraging independence in communicating their needs. In contrast, teaching the use of Makaton to children with special educational needs effectively promotes their ability to express their needs independently.

64. Parents are very appreciative of the support given to personal and social development both in terms of the preparation children receive for moving on to primary school and the positive impact it has on the children's behaviour and attitudes at home.

LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

65. Attainment during the last inspection was as expected for children of their age in most respects. Development of speaking and listening received high priority but opportunities were limited for developing children's understanding that writing is used for different purposes. Since the last inspection staff have examined ways in which writing can be incorporated into imaginative play and set an example to children by writing themselves. Developing speaking and listening remains a high priority for some staff but this is not a consistent picture.

66. By the age of five, most children are on course to achieve expectations for language and literacy in all areas except speaking where standards are on track to be below. The proportion of children speaking English as an additional language at an early stage of competence is very high compared to the national picture. The children with special educational needs also have limited verbal skills. Both groups of children participate fully and enthusiastically in the activities but often do so silently. Some use simple commands to express their needs, for example, 'open', and 'give me' or make simple protests such as 'she push me'. Many children have well developed listening skills. Many show they understand more than they say by gestures such as nodding in response to questions at lunchtime. Most concentrate very well during storytime and show great enjoyment. They have more difficulty listening to contributions made by other children during discussion sessions. Higher attaining children can remember familiar stories and anticipate forthcoming events by making relevant comments. Most children know how books work, hold them with care and turn pages to follow the sequence of pictures. They use writing within role-play, for example, to record appointments as hospital receptionists by making marks. Some have already adopted a correct pencil grip and higher attaining children recognise the initial letter of their name when it appears in different words.

67. Teaching is satisfactory overall. The best practice makes the most of opportunities to extend and introduce children to technical vocabulary, for example, during storytime they are introduced to 'page' and 'author', or in mathematical activities to words which accurately describe their actions or resources, such as 'turn' and 'rotate'. Some staff model the phrases and words well which children need for their activities, for example, how to invite patients to make hospital appointments and to say at which time they wish to come. This particularly benefits those at an early stage of using English. However, opportunities are also missed for extending and setting a good example of spoken English. Large sized books are used to familiarise children with good quality literature and consequently many show interest in books, choose to read them and handle them appropriately. Stories are read with expression and on one occasion closed curtains and a single back light created an atmospheric effect and kept the children entranced during the story reading. Simple strategies such as tracing a finger along the words which are read help children appreciate that words have meaning. Already some children identify pages of familiar books, such as one on dinosaurs, and ask which of the words say 'big teeth'. Staff try to draw children into discussion at story or key-worker time but often the groups are so large that some children lose attention, find difficulty listening to each other and have difficulty seeing the details of illustrations. In particular, children with English as an additional language do not benefit from such speaking and listening activities. Writing opportunities are encouraged appropriately in children's play, for example, recording appointments made by patients, and there are also useful focused activities such as making books. However, children are not encouraged sufficiently often to annotate items such as artwork with their name. Staff manage children's behaviour positively and there are very rare incidents of conflict; consequently their activities are rarely disrupted. Staff maintain carefully observed records of children's developing competence in language and literacy but these are not used sufficiently to inform planning in order that activities are explicitly tailored to the range of ability. Nor is there explicit planning for language development for other activities across the curriculum, so whilst there are examples of good practice this is not consistent.

68. The co-ordinator is very recently appointed; however the role in the past was underdeveloped and did not support taking the area of learning forward.

MATHEMATICS

69. At the time of the last inspection children achievements were in line with what might be expected for their age and teaching was consistently satisfactory and often good. At that time there was a need for more detailed planning for mathematics which occurred outside focused mathematical activities. The findings of the present inspection are broadly similar.
70. Overall, children's attainment in mathematical development is on course to meet expectations by the age of five and they make satisfactory progress. Many children count up confidently to five and some beyond. Most count objects accurately. Some are able to carry out simple addition and subtraction using these objects. Many children recognise recorded numbers but do not correctly identify them by name. Children with special educational needs are developing simple concepts of size, shape and number. In role-play they are aware that clocks record the passage of time and are familiar with terms to describe blocks of time, for example, 'five minutes' and 'thirty minutes'. Using computer programs they show awareness of appropriate sequencing of dressing teddy and appropriate clothes to wear for different purposes, for example, for going outside. They develop understanding of space using jigsaw puzzles and respond to instructions which include words such as 'rotate' and 'turn'. They use language of size, for example, 'big' when describing the teeth of a dinosaur in a favourite book. Children can stand in circles for activities such as using the parachute, and some recognise a button as being a circular shape, but are not aware of other circles in their environment and how they can be used. In all their mathematical activities the children show great interest, persist in their endeavours and work together well.
71. Teaching is satisfactory overall. The best teaching is alert to the potential mathematical development within many activities around the nursery. In role-play set in a hospital children were asked to wait for appointments and the clock hands were moved to show the passage of time. Children were introduced to the idea of thermometers. This supported their understanding of the everyday application of mathematical ideas. In experimenting with spinning tops they counted the number of rings they could see. They counted the number of circles they were jumping into during physical activity outside. Children, motivated by the focus of such teaching, concentrate well and the pace of their learning is good. Effective teaching introduced children to words which described what they are doing with mathematical accuracy, for example, 'rotating' or 'turning' shapes to fit them in jigsaw or inset puzzles. When hopping, jumping and walking along lines children learned the words 'straight' and 'zigzag'. This particularly supports children with English as an additional language. However, planning for this language and mathematical development is not explicit enough to ensure it occurs. For example, the opportunity was missed to describe or name the three dimensional shapes which fitted into particular spaces. Staff make observations of children's achievements in their activities but at the time of the inspection they did not include all children. These observations do not inform planning sufficiently well to explicitly plan a curriculum which meets the needs of the range of abilities. Whilst overall children make satisfactory progress the rate for each individual can not be guaranteed.
72. The role of the co-ordinator is underdeveloped. The lack of a monitoring role results in inconsistencies in planning, assessment and in the attention given to promoting mathematical development across the curriculum. The range of resources is satisfactory but many are not easily accessible to the children.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

73. The previous inspection reported that attainment overall was in line with expectations, and was good in the aspects of science and information and communications technology. Effective progress was made overall with particularly good progress in information and communications technology. Teaching was sound but opportunities were missed to stimulate children's interest and their design technology tasks lacked purpose and challenge. Some progress has been made in the purposefulness of the activities, for example, the spinning of tops activity provided opportunities for children to predict and explore. During the inspection, activities in design technology were restricted to using construction kits but planning indicates that broader provision will be made during this term. The strengths in information and communications technology have been maintained.
74. Children's attainment overall in knowledge and understanding is on course to be in line with expectations by the age of five. Children have well-developed skills in information and communications technology and make good progress. They are able to select programmes and use the mouse to drag effectively, for example, to select the appropriate clothes to dress the teddy. Children gain experience and make satisfactory progress in working with construction toys. For example, when they build they can refer to pictures of structures to aid their modelling well. Large block play is used effectively to build structures linked with the role play area. For example, children were encouraged to build an ambulance and this supported the development of imaginative play and extended their knowledge about the role of hospitals. The policy for science is very detailed and supports the development of skills and opportunities. Children are working on a theme of light and have had experience of exploring the properties of light and dark using a variety of resources. This encouraged predictions leading to further exploration and some pictorial recording. Children were engaged in spinning activities and could respond well to adult support. They were able to make relevant observations and comments. There are good opportunities to develop children's understanding of the world around them. The weekly walks to local shops, to the post office, library and the hospital broaden the children's understanding and support their imaginative play. For example, whilst playing in the outside area children were pretending to be in a lift. Birthdays are celebrated and children are encouraged to compare what they can do now to what they could do in the past.
75. Teaching is satisfactory overall and good in science. Good questioning skills during the spinning tops activity promoted exploration and extended the children's vocabulary. For example, one child was able to predict 'I think it will stop' and comment 'I made it go faster'. This challenging type of activity commonly motivates children who become eager to participate in activities, sustain concentration, become involved and remain on task. Children with special educational needs are supported well to play alongside other children in social areas such as role-play. Staff have sufficient knowledge and expertise overall. However, this is not always sufficiently applied, for example, one member of staff moved the tracker ball for controlling a computer program for a child who was fully competent in moving it himself. Generally, however, teaching of skills in this area is good and consequently children are confident and often choose to work on the computers. When teaching applies subject knowledge well it encourages children to experiment, for example, in spinning tops and to reflect on the effect on colour and shape. Sometimes links are made with mathematical development, for example, by asking children to count the circles on the top to 10 and beyond and comment on their observations. Staff help children appreciate natural changes through encouraging them, for example, to think about the texture of soil outside in different weathers when burying a potato. Children's independence is encouraged through helping them to make choices such as deciding on the appropriate tools for shaping playdough. Good observations are made of children and discussed at the daily meetings. However, the observations are not consistently used to vary the planning so that it meets individual needs.
76. Resources are good and well looked after by the children. The role of the co-ordinating group is underdeveloped. There are some good ideas and plans being promoted for development in the area of science but the co-ordinating role overall is not sufficiently explicit. The outside area has a garden and areas for planting and growing and watching birds.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

77. At the time of the last inspection children's physical development was very good. Staff were confident and a good range of resources were available for developing large and fine muscle control. Teaching remains good and children are on course to achieve standards which will be above expectations by the time they are five. Children are confident in their physical abilities and show great enjoyment in their activities. They are developing the capability of making precise movements, for example, placing the ends of stethoscopes in their ears in role-play. Many already use a correct grip for crayons and brushes and use small tools to shape dough effectively. They can operate a mouse, direction keys and a tracker ball to manipulate objects on a computer screen. They place pieces in jigsaws accurately. In constructing, they can balance wooden blocks on top of each other. Some are beginning to develop control in the use of scissors but these are not available often enough. Children practise a range of movements in ring games outside including jumping, turning quickly, using the right and left hand side of their bodies, stretching up and bending down. Children in the integrated unit are supported in undressing independently, rolling, waving streamers, running and crawling. Children outside are able to move around a narrow route for wheeled vehicles without bumping into each other. They learn to balance by walking along lines and help each other walk along a low wall. Children learn to jump and land on both feet showing control by landing in a small space. They are taught to roll and catch hoops and to hop.
78. Teaching is good overall. Staff have a good understanding of the needs of young children and of the expected outcomes for their learning. The good relationships between adults and children and the use of praise to recognise children's achievements in their activities helps them grow in confidence and persist in their activities. Skills are taught well, for example, how to roll a hoop or land securely on both feet when jumping, and this supports the good progress children make. Songs such as 'Do the Hokey Cokey' are used well in ring games to develop children's awareness of parts of their bodies and knowledge of the vocabulary of movement, for example, 'bending', 'stretching', 'turning' and 'jumping'. Some opportunities are missed for developing language of children with English as an additional language, for example, by talking about what they are doing and giving example in this talk of the words which could be used. Adults use instructions clearly in a helpful way for children with special educational needs and support them with calm intervention when they have behavioural difficulties. Staff support children in becoming independent by helping them consider which tools of those on offer they may wish to use, for example, when moulding plasticine or by choosing the songs they wish to sing to accompany action ring games outside. The observations made of children capture their achievements well. However, these are not systematically monitored to ensure all children are included and they most often describe larger rather than finer aspects of children's physical development. Planning for developing increasing control of tools and construction kits is most often incorporated within the other areas of learning, for example, writing. When these other areas do not receive priority then the physical aspect is neglected in planning. The careful assessment of children through observation is not exploited to plan the curriculum which meets the needs of the range of abilities.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

79. At the time of the last inspection progress and attainment in music were good and in art and dance sound. Children had insufficient opportunity to enjoy a range of dance activities, did not choose painting often enough and had few opportunities for exploration of colour, shape and space. Displays were functional and remain so, consisting mainly of photographs, posters and some children's work. The levels of attainment have been maintained and there are now opportunities for children to paint and the work of the resident artist has increased the confidence of staff to implement the planning of art. Dance sessions had not begun during the current inspection. They are timetabled but there is no evidence to make judgements on the impact of some of the training that has taken place.

80. Children, by the time they are five, are likely to reach expectations for this area of learning. There are now opportunities for children to paint and the work of the artist Jackson Pollock is used to stimulate 'splash' painting with appropriate background music to support the experience. Children access the painting area well but the organisation of the provision limits their development. For example, there is no opportunity to mix paints. Children work with clay and make observational drawings of, for example, tadpoles. However, there is a lack of evidence of broader provision, for example, collage and printing. Children can work with playdough effectively to mould and cut shapes. Some opportunities are missed to talk to children about their creative work so as to extend their expressive and descriptive vocabulary. Children progress well in music. The sessions are well structured and children are able to beat and march in time to the singing. They can count beats and are made familiar with appropriate language, for example, 'time', 'beat', 'softly' 'loudly'. Children use the role-play area well to develop their imaginative play. They enjoy acting out the roles of doctors and nurses. One child could skilfully bandage a member of staff's arm and leg and comment that she needed medicine to make her better.
81. Children enjoy this area of learning. They respond well, join in singing and use the resources well, for example, they play the musical instruments appropriately, shaking and beating, setting a rhythm for each other. In music they sustain concentration well and in the 'splash' painting were attempting to move to the music when painting and indicating real pleasure in the activity by laughing and getting excited.
82. Teaching is satisfactory. The activities address the needs of most of the children satisfactorily but planning is not sufficiently tailored to match the range of attainment, for example, to extend the higher attaining children or to support those with special educational needs. Children with English as an additional language have some support, for example, in music. Staff used gestures and clear vocabulary to help these children to understand. However, this approach is not consistently applied. Good clear instructions and demonstrations gained children's attention and enabled them to participate well in some activities, for example, the 'splash' painting. The use of appropriate language to stimulate understanding in this activity was discussed at the daily planning meeting and strategies for improvement were suggested. These were applied the following day and children responded more appropriately to the music whilst painting and were beginning to make comments about what they were doing. All staff have good control over the children and this has a positive impact on learning by enabling the children to participate fully in activities without disruption. Good quality resources are used. However, the stimulation of these resources is not supported by the mainly functional nature of displays and presentation of activities. For example, shiny items are displayed in an enclosed glass cupboard with some interactive labelling. The children cannot handle these items so the tactile and learning experiences are very limited.
83. Co-ordination and leadership in this role is underdeveloped and this limits guidance to staff to develop this area of learning.