

INSPECTION REPORT

DUKE STREET NURSERY SCHOOL

Duke Street, Chorley

LEA area: Lancashire

Unique reference number: 119066

Headteacher: Karen Coffey

Reporting inspector: Paul Evans
20737

Dates of inspection: 14th – 16th February 2000

Inspection number: 195757

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: Maintained Nursery

Age range of Children: 3 – 5 years

Gender of Children: Mixed

School address: Duke Street
Chorley
Lancashire

Postcode: PR7 3DU

Telephone number: 01257 262430

Appropriate authority: Lancashire

Name of chair of governors: Mrs Doreen Caulfield

Date of previous inspection: 13th – 17th January 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Area of learning responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Paul Evans	Registered inspector	Mathematics English as an additional language Equal opportunities Knowledge and understanding of the world Personal and social development	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? How well are children taught? How well is the school led and managed?
Jenny Mynett	Lay inspector		Children's attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Robert Battey	Team inspector	Special educational needs Language and literacy Physical development Creative development	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to children? How well does the school care for its children?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Duke Street Nursery School provides nursery education for 80 children; 40 attend the morning session and 40 attend in the afternoon. There is an equal mix within the nursery of boys and girls. The nursery is a purpose-built, single-storey building constructed in the 1940s.

The school serves a large catchment area including council, privately-owned and privately-rented housing. The school is situated adjacent to the local primary school, although access is separate. The surroundings are safe and secure for the children. There is an area of tarmac with a numbered trail and painted footsteps, which lead to the main entrance. A garden has been developed with grass and planted areas.

The nursery has at present seven children with various levels of special educational needs. There are also four children for whom English is an additional language. The school is fully subscribed, with very few children leaving other than at the end of the school year during which they become five.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The overall effectiveness of the school is excellent. By the time they leave the nursery all children achieve the desirable learning outcomes¹ and approximately one third achieve standards which are higher than this. The quality of teaching is at least very good and in one third of lessons it is excellent. The leadership and management of the nursery are based on the outstanding teamwork of the teachers and all support staff. The governing body provides very good support through the management of the school. The leadership and professional direction provided by the headteacher are excellent. Considering its context the quality of education it provides, especially the excellent quality of teaching, the standards which children achieve and the amount of money that the local education authority spends on it, Duke Street Nursery provides excellent value for money.

What the school does well

- It achieves very high standards in all areas of learning.
- The quality of teaching is at least very good and much is excellent.
- The level of teamwork between teachers, nursery nurses and support staff is outstanding.
- It provides an excellent, highly enriched and stimulating curriculum.
- There is excellent personal and social development of all children.
- It successfully develops very mature and highly motivated children.
- There is a very close and highly effective partnership with parents.

What could be improved

- This school has no significant weaknesses.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

¹ Desirable learning outcomes – these are goals for learning for children by the time they enter compulsory education at the age of five. They mainly refer to literacy (speaking, listening, reading (recognising their own names and common words, enjoyment of stories, books and pictures) and writing, e.g. writing their names and recognising UPPER and lower case), numeracy (recognising the meaning of numbers, beginning to add and subtract small numbers, sorting and matching objects and numbers and recognising common shapes and patterns) and personal and social skills (showing confidence, self-respect, ability to work with other children and adults, concentrating, offering ideas, taking turns and sharing). These will be replaced with the Early Learning Goals in September 2000.

There were four key issues raised at in the last inspection report.

1. Extend the range of books by the purchase of additional storybooks, make them easily available and support children in their use.
2. Provide more opportunities for children to systematically develop and practise number skills.
3. Set more appropriate learning targets for more-able children to improve their learning in literacy and numeracy.
4. Clarify assessment procedures to better guide the planning of the curriculum.

The school has fully addressed all these issues. The ratio of books to pupils is now 60:1. The reorganisation of the school's book stock means that books are readily accessible both in classrooms and in the central storage area. Number skills are practised in activity sessions specifically planned for this purpose. Children are also enabled and encouraged to use their numeracy skills in all areas of the curriculum. The school has begun to develop systems which enable study within the National Curriculum for older and more-able children once they have reached the desirable learning outcomes. The procedures for assessing children's achievements are now very good. The high-level information provided by these assessments is very well used to guide future planning.

The school has made excellent progress since the last inspection.

STANDARDS

The table summarises inspectors' judgements about the achievements of children in relation to the national desirable learning outcomes by the time they leave the school.

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

By the time they leave the nursery all children achieve the desirable learning outcomes and many achieve higher levels. They are very well prepared for entry to their primary schools and many are already achieving standards equal to the National Curriculum Level 1 in some areas. The standards of pupils' past work which inspectors looked at were good. The impact of the new teacher who was appointed in September 1999 combined with the reorganisation of classes has raised standards. Standards in all areas of the curriculum are now very good. The quality of provision for pupils for whom English is an additional language and for those who have special educational needs is very good and the standards they reach are also very good.

CHILDREN' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Excellent. All children thoroughly enjoy their experiences and show high levels of attention and concentration.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Excellent. Children support and respect each other. There is no oppressive behaviour of any kind.
Personal development and relationships	Excellent. Responsibilities are rotated so that all children are given opportunities to show initiative. Relationships between children and between them and the staff and other adults are excellent.
Attendance	Very good.

The expectation within the nursery is that children will show respect for each other and for their surroundings. Children demonstrate excellent behaviour and a mature attitude to all their activities. The nursery is a centre of calm endeavour and studious application.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of children:	
Lessons seen overall	Excellent

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 observed was at least very good. In one third of lessons seen it was excellent. Teachers' plan very closely with the nursery nurses and other support staff. This excellent teamwork leads to true collaboration between staff in the classrooms and a consistency of application, which is very effective in raising standards. In some lessons there was a real sense of awe and wonder when the teaching strategies used led children into a world of magical excitement and complete involvement. The use of big books, and the corresponding small readers for pupils to follow, is raising the standards of literacy very effectively. Some of the techniques from the national numeracy strategy have been adapted to suit younger children and this is raising the levels of numeracy very successfully. The development of children's understanding of mental strategies in mathematics is excellent. The very high levels of expectation of all staff for the behaviour and independence of children foster high levels of maturity. Relationships between children and between children and all members of staff are excellent.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Excellent. The appropriate curriculum is in place. It is highly enriched and provides a very wide range of stimulating learning activities.
Provision for children with special educational needs	Very good. They make excellent progress in all areas of learning. This provision fully promotes children's attainment, which is as high as can be expected.

Provision for children with English as a second language.	Very good. Children respond to the very high expectations of all staff for their full involvement. This promotes high levels of confidence and very good achievement in standards of speaking and listening.
Provision for children's personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Excellent. Provision is excellent for the moral and social development of children. For spiritual and cultural development it is very good.
How well the school cares for its children	Excellent. Procedures for assessing what children learn and the use of that information to guide planning procedures are very good. In all other aspects of the care and protection of children the school's procedures are excellent.

The great majority of parents believe that the school is very good. The impact of parents on the work of the school and the contribution they make to their children's learning are both excellent. The quality of the information given to parents about the progress that their children make is also excellent. The school works very hard to establish and maintain close links with the parents of its children. This is quite difficult because of the wide area from which children are drawn. However, the school's links with parents are very good overall.

The curriculum is broad, balanced, highly enriched and a strength of the school. The procedures for child protection and for ensuring the welfare of children are excellent.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Excellent. The excellent leadership of the headteacher enables outstanding teamwork on the part of teachers, nursery nurses and all support staff.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very good. The governing body provides very good support in the management of the school and fully understands and monitors its strengths and weaknesses.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. The monitoring of teaching and the use of appraisal and review fully guide the programme of staff professional development
The strategic use of resources	Excellent. The effectiveness of the use of staff and learning resources is outstanding. Specific grants for professional development and for the education of pupils with special educational needs are both used at the highest possible level.

The match of teachers and support staff to the demands of the curriculum is excellent. The accommodation provides good areas for teaching and learning. In some areas such as literacy and numeracy resources for teaching and learning are very good. Overall resources are good.

The quality of the leadership and management of the headteacher, in partnership with the other teacher, the nursery nurses and the support staff is excellent.

The school's application of the principles of best value is excellent. The governing body and the school's management team consider all expenditure carefully, match it very well to the priorities of the school development plan and evaluate the effects of spending on the quality of education provided for its pupils.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The fact that their children like school • They feel that the teaching is good • That the school is well led and managed • They are confident in approaching the staff with any questions or problems which may arise. • They feel that the staff work closely with them • They feel that their children are making good progress 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents would like to see the amount of homework improved • A small minority would like to see the range of extra-curricular activities improved • A small minority feel they are not kept well informed on the progress their children are making

The relevance and amount of homework is excellent for the age and levels of development of such young children. In this matter the inspectors do not agree with a small minority of parents. The provision of regular extra-curricular activities is neither possible nor practicable. The pace and intensity of the learning activities provided for all children are so high that most would not be physically or mentally capable of undertaking further learning. The wide distribution of pupils' homes and the fact that the school provides two sessions for different children make the provision of such activities impossible.

The level of information given to parents about all the activities of the nursery, and particularly about the progress their children are making, is excellent. The inspectors do not agree with the very small minority of parents who feel that they are not well informed.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. From looking at children's past work, particularly in literacy and numeracy, it can be seen that the standards they achieve are good. However, two major factors are raising standards to higher levels. A new teacher of excellent quality joined the school in September and there has been a major reorganisation of teaching, which was put in place at the beginning of this term. These two factors combined with the outstanding leadership of the headteacher are having a significant impact on the standards children are achieving.
2. In all lessons children undertake activities in all areas of the desirable learning outcomes. By the time they leave the nursery the great majority achieve standards which prepare them very well to undertake the National Curriculum in their primary schools.
3. Standards which have been achieved by pupils in their past work are good. However, inspection evidence, particularly from talking to children and from observing lessons, supports the judgement that standards in language are now very good. All children acquire very good skills in speaking and listening. They are consistently encouraged to express their thoughts and feelings orally. Their general and subject-specific vocabulary is very well extended at every opportunity. Children learn the sounds of the alphabet, learn to shape letters consistently and learn to read and write their own names. The use of elements of the national literacy strategy in literacy lessons and the grouping of children by ability for group work are enabling children to reach very high standards. Children learn the skills of reading and they enjoy using books from the very large and widely varied range available. There are approximately 60 books per child in the nursery. This is an outstanding provision.
4. In mathematics, including numeracy, standards are now very good. All children learn to count both forwards to 15 or 20 and backwards from 10. They gain skills in solving simple algebraic problems. All are consistently encouraged from the earliest age to explain their thinking when solving problems. Mathematical vocabulary is extended very well. Children learn to identify and name three-dimensional shapes, including cylinders, cubes and cuboids. In all areas of activity the skills of literacy and numeracy are used and extended. Children regularly count and measure when combining ingredients in recipes. In an outstanding adventure trail based on the story of 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears' they repeatedly counted objects they discovered and identified bowls as 'larger than', 'smaller than' and 'medium sized'.
5. Children develop excellent personal and social skills. They work very well collaboratively in the 'dressing up area' when acting out stories such as 'The Three Little Pigs' and 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears'. Children work very well together when using computers. They use high level skills of speaking and listening when undertaking this work. Relationships between children are very good and between children and all members of staff they are excellent. Children become mature and self-disciplined.
6. Creative skills of drawing, painting, designing and making are very good. Children have an excellent range of activities through which they develop very good standards. Their use and control of tools are developed to a very high standard. They learn songs and often sing to reinforce their learning.
7. Their knowledge and understanding of the world are very good. These are promoted through high-quality experiences in science and cookery. Children learn about living things through their close relationships with the very good variety of pets which are kept in the

nursery. They gain wider knowledge of the world around them through visits, for example, to a local lake. The celebration of religious festivals such as Divali and the Chinese New Year also contributes positively to their very good knowledge and understanding.

8. Physical development is very good. During outside activities the excellent staff consistently promote improved co-ordination and physical control using a very good number and range of large wheeled toys. Activities using a parachute are of an outstanding level and promote very good levels of physical development. Fine motor skills are very well promoted through the well-guided use of brushes and pencils.

Children' attitudes, values and personal development

9. Children's attitudes to learning are excellent. This continues to be one of the many strengths of the school. The children are enthusiastic and eager to participate in activities and learn new things. They enjoy coming to school. Children are able to concentrate on activities for extended periods of time. One child was observed deeply involved in exploring the consistency of bowls of porridge, measuring and pouring for about 30 minutes on her own, whilst others joined her for short periods of time. Another small group sat quietly in a corner looking through books during their free-choice time. A larger group of children were enjoying role playing, happily sharing their toys and equipment and working harmoniously together.
10. Children are happy to talk about what they are doing and to involve adults and others in their activities. Overall the children show very mature attitudes, undertaking independent work easily and clearing up after activities without much prompting.
11. Children demonstrate very good behaviour patterns and any small squabbles are quickly resolved. They know the rules and procedures in class and respond easily to sitting on the carpet without much fuss or calling out. They play happily outside, queuing up to go on the slides and apparatus and taking turns on the bicycles and trucks. There is no oppressive behaviour and there are no incidents of bullying or racism in the school. There are also no incidents of exclusions in the school.
12. Children's personal development is excellent. They are given every opportunity to show their initiative and become independent learners. Each day there are a large number of focused tasks as well as free-choice activities set up. Children are able to select what they would like to get involved in for a large part of their day. They also undertake different responsibilities, including taking turns to count the number of children present each day and to record the numbers on a chart, helping to set things up or clear away and assisting others on the computer.
13. Relationships within the school are exemplary, with staff providing excellent role models for the children. The rapport both between staff and children and amongst the children themselves is excellent. Children are supportive of each other and very caring of those less able. They work collaboratively on the computer, helping each other to count or work through the story programmes.
14. There were many instances of excellent co-operative work observed; for instance, the extraordinary teamwork displayed by the children co-ordinating their movements when undertaking a parachute exercise in role play which links with their current topic, or going on an adventure trail to help baby bear find his lost spoon. The children with special educational needs are fully integrated into activities with the other children, who take care of them without being asked.

15. Children are sensitively encouraged to consider the effects of their actions on others if they snatch an item or do not share willingly, and respond positively. They generally show respect for others and their feelings. Parents are very supportive of the values the school promotes.
16. Attendance levels in the school are generally very good. However, a current outbreak of chicken pox has resulted in more children being away than normal. Pupils are keen to come to school and a prompt orderly registration process sets a positive note for the day.

HOW WELL ARE CHILDREN TAUGHT?

17. The quality of teaching is a strength of the nursery. All teaching was at least very good and in a third of lessons observed the quality of teaching was excellent. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is very good and sometimes excellent. The adaptation of elements of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy in lessons focuses teaching extremely effectively on the basic skills. Teachers use a very good range of teaching styles including whole class, small groups and individual teaching. All staff have very high expectations for children's levels of application. The quality of the teaching of all support staff is excellent.
18. The levels of planning are excellent. Long-term planning leads to excellent medium-term planning, which in turn is translated into very good lesson planning. Lesson plans contain very good learning objectives, which are shared with the children. The excellent levels of co-operative planning between the teaching and support staff result in excellent levels of provision and support for children in all lessons.
19. All staff use excellent levels of questioning to improve children's learning. No answer given by a child in the nursery is ever 'wrong'. Staff identify positive aspects in all answers given by the children and use outstanding questioning skills to guide them to greater knowledge and deeper understanding.
20. The pace of all lessons is so high that all children are fully extended in all activity areas. Although the children attend the nursery part time, the intensity of their learning experiences constitutes a full-time education for such young children. They could not benefit from longer hours at school because they would be unable to maintain the high levels of concentration and involvement which they display in their lessons. Children develop skills as independent learners and show very high levels of attention and self-discipline in all their work. All children are very keen to explain their work, using very good skills of speaking and listening.
21. The recruitment of a new teacher and the re-organisation of curriculum delivery have had a very positive impact on children's learning.

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

22. The school offers its children a very enriched curriculum. It provides a very wide range of stimulating learning activities both in and out of doors and within the community for its children. The very good planning of the curriculum provides an excellent breadth, balance and relevance.
23. Teachers, nursery nurses and support staff plan and evaluate the curriculum very well together as a team. The curriculum covers all the areas of learning, with an excellent range of learning opportunities. There is an excellent emphasis on the personal, social and emotional development of the children and on language, literacy and mathematics. An example was the planned 'three bears adventure trail'. Here children had to follow a trail laid outside in the school grounds in groups of six assisted by the teacher. It started in class

with a letter, which had been sent to Goldilocks from Baby Bear saying that he had lost his bowl and spoon and that his chair was broken.

24. The children were led into the school garden, following the trail, stopping at vantage points to undertake investigative activities to find a new bowl, spoon and chair for Baby Bear. Children applied their very well developed speaking and listening skills, discussing and making decisions about what they should do. They counted and named numbers up to eight, very effectively using mathematical language such as 'bigger' 'biggest', 'small' and 'smallest'. The whole activity supported their social interaction, personal development and emotional development very well. They clearly showed the beginnings of logical thinking, excellent levels of behaviour, total involvement and awe and wonder. This activity was further enriched for children waiting their turn in the class to go on the trail. Here the nursery nurse and the learning support assistant involved the children very well in making salt dough to cut out and make models of bears. Other children in the group produce paintings and collages of the three bears. There was excellent organisation of the various inter-related areas of the curriculum, extending children's competencies in an outstanding manner.
25. Many other examples of the clearly-discerned and planned curriculum needs of the children are seen across the school where teachers, nursery nurses and support staff show an excellent interpretation and delivery of the under-fives curriculum and the needs of each child.
26. The school's policy of inclusion for all children ensures that those with special educational needs, those from minority ethnic backgrounds and those for whom English is an additional language have full access to the curriculum. Curriculum provision for these children is very good overall. It is very well organised to meet their very-clearly-identified needs.
27. Children's special educational needs are defined in excellent individual education plans which provide a highly effective means of ensuring that they are fully addressed. There are excellent levels of equality of access and opportunity for all children.
28. The school has very effective strategies for the teaching of literacy skills and excellent strategies for the teaching of numeracy skills. Children are fully supported in all their tasks in an excellent manner by all teachers and staff. They are encouraged to become thinkers and work in an excellent manner, both independently and collaboratively, as required.
29. The provision they receive for their personal, social and health education is excellent. Children are given an excellent range of learning experiences, both within school and outside in the near and wider community. Visits are encouraged which support their learning well, such as those to farms and the Eureka Centre (a structured adventure learning experience for children) in Halifax. All this is very well planned for as part of the integrated curriculum across all areas of learning.
30. Many outsiders come into school, such as the postman, firemen and people from ethnic groups to talk about and illustrate their work and their lifestyles. Overall the community makes an excellent contribution to children's learning.
31. Children, on leaving the nursery, go to as many as nine local infant or primary schools. The school has very good relationships with these partner institutions. An example of this is where teachers from receiving schools visit the nursery to meet the children before they go to their new schools.
32. Because the children only attend the nursery part time it is appropriate that the school does not provide at present any extra-curricular activities at the end of each session. However, all children have the opportunity during break to choose their own activities. They can socialise

and play outside if the weather is fine or can choose to involve themselves in an activity in school.

33. As staff do not take any breaks themselves all children have the choice of extra experiences in addition to their planned curriculum. For example, children can choose to work on the computer during their break or to work with construction materials or role-play by dressing up. According to the children's choice, teachers and staff then support each activity if the children want this help. This is an excellent means of providing them with further learning experiences of their choice and with extra-curricular activities. This is further supported with a wide range of visits, outings and special days. For example, the school had very good displays celebrating the Chinese New Year.
34. Since the last inspection the school has made substantial improvements with the curriculum and its implementation of policies and planning. Literacy and numeracy are now given sufficient time and very good attention is given to reading and retelling stories, counting and number recognition.
35. Provision for children's personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is excellent. Opportunities to nurture children's personal development are carefully and sensitively integrated throughout the day and woven into the ongoing process or provided through specific activities.
36. The provision for children's spiritual development in the school is very good. It has improved since the last inspection with more opportunities being built into the curriculum. The class teacher was seen to sensitively open up a brief discussion on God, which arose out of some singing. The children become aware of life and death through the ongoing life of the school. They experience great awe and wonder at the hatching of ducklings and chickens or when undertaking funerals with due ceremony when one of the pets dies.
37. Provision for children's moral and social development is excellent and a strength of the school. Children are learning to distinguish right from wrong. They behave very well, knowing the established rules and procedures in the school. They are encouraged to consider the effect of their actions on others. This is pointed out on the odd occasion when a child does not share the equipment or offer care and respect, having thoughtlessly snatched an item from one of the other children. They generally know that they should not do this.
38. Frequent opportunities are offered to enable children to develop their social skills. They are offered a large range of activities to develop their independence and freedom of choice, which also enables them to work cooperatively with others. They play happily together at break times, waiting patiently and taking turns on the apparatus. Children learn to be tidy by helping to clean away after activities. They also have opportunities to help with fund-raising activities for charities or take care of the pets during the holidays.
39. Provision for cultural development is very good. Opportunities to explore the diversity of other cultures have been strengthened since the last inspection, drawing upon the school's excellent links with parents and the local community. The children recently celebrated the Chinese New Year with a collective dragon dance, written scrolls and a Chinese buffet. Other celebrations in the nursery have recognised saints' days and religious festivals such as Divali. Children explore their own culture through books, story tapes and music.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS CHILDREN?

40. The steps taken to ensure the welfare, health, safety and protection of the children are excellent and make a significant contribution to their personal and academic development. The teachers know the children very well and have their best interests and welfare in mind. The school provides a very supportive and caring environment in which the children flourish. A sensitive induction process ensures that both parents and their children are supported when they first enter the school.
41. Staff monitor the children's attendance closely. Parents are encouraged to telephone the school if their child is likely to be absent and the school follows up any concerns with home visits.
42. The procedures which are in place to promote children's good behaviour are excellent and ensure that the school is free from harassment and bullying. Children's progress or behaviour is rewarded by stars and stickers, which they value highly. There are also excellent systems in place for identifying and supporting those children with special educational needs and the school has well-developed links with the appropriate external agencies.
43. A comprehensive health-and-safety policy is in place, plus appropriate guidelines and procedures, which are followed consistently by all staff. Parents are well aware of and approve of the improved security arrangements. The school undertakes termly fire drills and there are regular health-and-safety checks, with reports going to the governing body. Effective arrangements are in place to deal with any sickness or accidents which may occur and parents are informed appropriately. The school has a suitable child-protection policy and all members of staff have undertaken relevant training.
44. The school has very good procedures for assessing children's attainment and progress. Skills are recorded for each area of learning and recorded as each child acquires them. Teachers and support staff keep very good records of the children's academic and personal development. They know their children very well and have very-detailed precise information to tell them which skills children have acquired and where they need help. These assess the attainment and progress of each child very well and are very well used to guide the planning and provision of a curriculum, which is closely matched to the ability of each child.
45. Tasks and responses are very well modified to meet the children's assessed needs. This was seen where the teacher challenged pupils to place three pigs of different sizes 'in front of', 'by the side of' or 'behind' their huts and show how the pig could be turned on its side to get it under the hut. She modified her approach very well to match her assessed and evaluated needs of each child.
46. The school has excellent assessment procedures for determining children's levels of attainment of the desirable learning outcomes. It is developing similar procedures to assess the levels of attainment of children who have achieved the desirable learning outcomes and are beginning to work within the National Curriculum.
47. The school regularly completes reviews for all children who are identified as having special educational needs. It involves parents, teachers and support staff very successfully. All its reviews are up to date and clearly identify the date of the next review. There are excellent, concise, relevant details on the needs of each identified child. The information obtained from these reviews is used very well to plan further activities for all children who have individual education plans.

48. The school has developed its assessment procedures very well since the last inspection. Procedures, which were previously satisfactory, are now very good. There is a very clear record of each child's progress, which supports curriculum planning very strongly.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

49. The school's partnership with parents is outstanding and parents hold the school in high esteem. They feel that their children are well cared for and make good progress. The information provided by the school is very thorough, keeping parents aware of what is going on and how their children are progressing. The school operates an open-door policy and there are frequent opportunities provided for parents to meet teachers to review their children's progress and achievements. Parents value very highly the personal record of achievement produced for each child.
50. Parents have good opportunities to visit the school and meet with staff before their children join the nursery, including a weekly mothers-and-toddlers group. This excellent inclusion policy continues with frequent invitations for parents to participate in various events, activities and celebrations during the course of the year.
51. The school offers every opportunity for parents to participate in their children's learning. The excellent 'Why Don't You' sheets provide ideas and guidance for parents, enabling them to follow up and pursue further the topic ideas which have been developed in class. This has a positive impact on the children's development and enables parents to become directly involved in their children's education.
52. Currently only a small number of parents are involved in the day-to-day activities in the school. Most significantly, a small group have been successfully under-going some training linked to the new numeracy strategy. They are able to put this experience into practice in lessons.
53. The Parent Teachers Association makes a valuable contribution to the life of the school. It runs a number of successful fund-raising and social events, which generate between £2,000-£3,000 a year. This money has been targeted to help purchase various resources and equipment for the school. Additionally parents pay a regular weekly donation, which helps to support the school to stage special events and to provide birthday and Christmas presents for children.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

54. The headteacher leads the nursery in true partnership with the other nursery teacher and all the support staff. The level of leadership and the level of delegation of responsibilities are both excellent. The aims of the nursery include the development of each child's potential to the highest possible level. These aims are met at the highest level by the work the school undertakes. The behaviour of all children, their attitudes to school and their levels of personal development and relationships are all excellent.
55. The teachers, nursery nurses and support staff plan very well the highly enriched curriculum offered equally to all children. It offers excellent coverage of all areas of the desirable learning outcomes. This excellent curriculum provision is offered at an appropriate level and with excellent support to children for whom English is an additional language and to those who have special educational needs. All these children make very good progress.
56. The excellent leadership leads to very high expectations on the part of all staff for the educational achievements of all children. The targets set by the school are the very highest and the standard of education offered enables these targets to be reached. The school

development plan is a document of very high quality which addresses all areas of provision. Responsibilities are delegated to staff, initiatives are costed where appropriate and criteria are developed for measuring success and the monitoring of ongoing development. The action plan, based on the last inspection report, is of a similar very high quality. The school's success in meeting the key issues raised at the last inspection is excellent.

57. The monitoring of teaching is very good. This, together with very good levels of appraisal and mutual support between staff guides the excellent use of specific funding for staff training. Excellent value is achieved from this funding as each member of staff who attends a course is given the appropriate time and excellent support to share their learning with all other staff members.
58. The excellent staff-development programme is guided and supported by a total commitment to improvement and to enabling the success of every child. All teaching and support staff are totally dedicated to their work. The excellent induction of an outstanding teacher in September 1999 has considerably strengthened the team. The excellent skills that this teacher has brought to the school fully complement the excellent management skills and very good teaching of the headteacher.
59. Planning to improve the learning environment for children has led to changes in the organisation of classes from January 2000. This has been an outstanding success and is already having a marked effect on the raising of standards.
60. The governing body is a strength of the school. All its members are enthusiastic supporters of the nursery's provision of high-level education. They plan a very good part in the management of the school and fully understand its strengths and plans to develop these even further. Governors are very active in discussions with the local education authority whenever a need is identified.
61. The school has a very good number of very well trained and experienced staff. They have excellent levels of training and expertise to teach the very enriched curriculum offered to children. The nursery nurses and learning support staff provide excellent levels of support to teachers and children.
62. The school's accommodation is good. It enables all the areas of learning to be taught in an excellent manner. Even though the classrooms are sometimes a little cramped they are organised and presented by staff in an excellent manner. Good use is made of other work areas around the school, including the staff room, for focussed learning experiences. There are very good grounds surrounding the school. They include a large grassed area and recently tarmaced and marked-out play areas. The site and building are well secured.
63. The site and the school are very well presented due to the excellent efforts of staff and the site supervisor. The building is kept in a very good state of repair with new windows having been recently installed and the outside painted. All staff make excellent efforts to present a stimulating, well-maintained learning environment. The dedication and teamwork of the teaching staff, nursery nurses, learning support staff and site supervisor provide the school with well-maintained and stimulating areas for teaching and learning.
64. There are good levels of resources to support all areas of learning and for information technology. Available funds are very well and prudently used. For example, a recent grant of £800 for books has led to the purchase of large books and associated readers and this is doing much to improve children's reading standards.
65. Resources are very well used and all staff are confident in their use, deploying them very effectively to support the children's learning very well. The school has a good range of large

toys and portable climbing apparatus, which it mainly deploys for outside use very well. However, there is no fixed climbing apparatus to provide children with experiences of higher-level work during play and for their physical development.

66. Since the last inspection the school has substantially improved the outside areas. It has greatly increased the number and range of good-quality books and its resources for counting, number recognition, recording and number games.
67. The effectiveness of Duke Street Nursery is excellent. Taking into account its context, the very high standard of education provided for all its children, the standards children reach and the money spent by the local education authority on the school, this nursery provides excellent value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

68. The Duke Street Nursery is an excellent school, which has no significant weaknesses. However, the governors may wish to include the following items in an action plan to help improve the school even further:
 - 1.) provide fixed large-scale and high-level climbing and play apparatus to further improve the provision for children's physical development; (Paragraph 65)
 - 2.) consolidate and extend the practice of introducing children who have attained the desirable learning outcomes to activities contained in the National Curriculum Key Stage 1 programmes of study. This will raise standards even further. (Paragraph 46)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	15
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and Children	3

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
5	10	0	0	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's Children

Children on the school's roll	Nursery
Number of Children on the school's roll (FTE for part-time Children)	40
Number of full-time Children eligible for free school meals	17

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery
Number of Children with statements of special educational needs	0
Number of Children on the school's special educational needs register	7

English as an additional language	No of Children
Number of Children with English as an additional language	4

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of Children
Children who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	2
Children 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.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and support staff

Total number of qualified teachers(FTE)

2

Number of children per qualified teacher

20

Total number of education support staff

5

Total aggregated hours per week

65

Number of Children per FTE adult

10

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

This school does not have a delegated budget. During the last full financial year the school was given £3,450 pounds for staff development and advice and £536 for cleaning and caretaking costs. The local education authority directly undertakes all other funding.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate 77%

Number of questionnaires sent out	78
Number of questionnaires returned	60

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	82	18	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	73	27	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	63	37	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	33	28	32	0	7
The teaching is good.	83	17	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	58	35	7	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	83	17	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	53	37	7	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	63	33	4	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	83	17	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	65	33	0	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	58	30	7	0	5

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

69. The personal and social development of all pupils is very good. They develop excellent relationships with each other and with all the staff of the nursery.
70. The approach of all staff is that a child's answer is never wrong. They use excellent skills of questioning to guide children to greater knowledge and understanding. This approach leads children to become confident in their dealings with other people. They use very good skills of speaking and listening to discuss their work with each other and with staff and other adults.
71. Children are highly motivated by the learning experiences which they are offered. Although often excited by their work, the children demonstrate high levels of maturity when working together to solve problems or formulate opinions. They develop imagination through structured play activities. During the inspection children in both classes were acting out the stories on which their studies were based. In one class groups of four children played out the story of the Three Little Pigs. Their play was accurately based on the story and was thoughtful and collaborative in presentation and each child took turns in playing the different roles.
72. Through their exposure to the very good range of pets in the nursery children learn about the needs of living things. They have undertaken a study of the birth of living things; the whole nursery was involved in hatching chicks from eggs using an incubator. Through this and through dealing with other live animals, such as fish and a chinchilla, children develop a moral view of how to treat living things.
73. Children celebrate religious festivals such as Divali and the Chinese New Year. They learn to accept that we are all different and show real concern for each other, particularly when a friend is upset or in difficulty.
74. During the inspection occasions of real awe and wonder were observed in both classrooms. In one room the whole class sat spellbound as the teacher produced and read a letter, which had arrived addressed to Goldilocks and the class. The letter was from Baby Bear and led to an outstanding experience for the children following an adventure trail in the school grounds.
75. The very high expectations of all staff for the behaviour and co-operation of all children powerfully lead the personal and social development. All children know about basic requirements of hygiene such as washing their hands before preparing food. Children are given responsibilities on a daily basis. After each activity session children know that they have to clean and tidy their areas. Other responsibilities, such as distributing milk, are rotated so that all children have the experience.

Language and Literacy

76. In the past good standards have been achieved in the children's language and literacy development. However, recent improvements in the quality of teaching and in the organisation of classes have led to an improvement in standards. Standards in language and literacy are now very good.

77. A very well organised introduction is given to literacy. The classrooms are effectively organised to support the full range of development in language and literacy very well. Children learn very well and make very good progress. The support given to children with special educational needs and those for whom English is a second language is very good. All these children make very good progress.
78. Standards of speaking and listening are very good. For example, when asked questions most of the children will answer in full sentences. They describe their experiences clearly, showing very good levels of understanding. Children are learning to develop their pre-reading and early reading skills very well. Standards overall are good and have been much improved in reading due to the introduction of 'big books' and the associated small readers for each child, which have the same content as the big book. Software has been purchased for the computers, which supports this strategy very well. For example, children listened with rapt attention to a story, following the points in their own books. They know that pictures and words have meaning and they understand 'front' and 'back' and the contents of a book. Many know simple letter sounds. They can recognise their own name and many recognise the printed names of other children.
79. Standards of writing are good. Many are learning to form letters correctly, knowing that writing conveys meaning. For example, after the teacher had developed a recipe book with them they readily 'wrote' their own recipes using many recognisable letters. Some more-able children are starting to write recognisable words. Some children know the alphabet. For example, they know the order of objects named on the alphabet line in the classroom, readily picking out objects, naming the initial letter sounds and the name and associating the word with the objects. Many successfully copy write, forming letters with high degrees of accuracy. Improvement since the last inspection is good.

Mathematics

80. The mathematical understanding of the great majority of children is good. For older and more-able children it is very good. The recent changes in class organisation and the introduction of elements of the national numeracy strategy are already raising the standard of achievement in mathematics.
81. By the time they leave the nursery all children can count to 15 and many count to 20 and beyond. They count backwards from 10 successfully and begin to develop skills in addition and subtraction. Children in both classes were seen identifying missing numbers in a sequence. They can explain their mental strategies using phrases such as 'it comes before' and 'it comes after'. No opportunity is missed to consolidate and extend children's numeracy skills. They count the number present each morning after registration and count spoonfuls when combining ingredients in a recipe. Children learn to sequence events and numbers and are consistently taught to write numbers. Computers are very well used to consolidate and extend skills of matching and number recognition.
82. When undertaking an outstanding 'adventure trail' in the school grounds children were presented with a series of problems of number recognition and counting. The trail was focussed on the story of Goldilocks and the Three Bears and very excited and highly motivated children counted spoons and identified the different sizes of bowls using phrases such as 'smaller than', 'larger than' and 'medium sized'.
83. In a lesson for older children they identified a variety of shapes including cubes, cylinders and cuboids. Older and more-able children are very well prepared to undertake National Curriculum mathematics when they move to their primary schools.

84. Children for whom English is an additional language make very good progress in mathematics. One child invited an inspector to watch him building a tower. He used clear sentences when talking and repeatedly counted accurately the number of blocks he had used.
85. All children show a very high level of interest in their mathematical experiences. From the earliest age they develop the ability to work with very good concentration even when not directly supported by a member of staff.
86. The quality of teaching is at least very good and often excellent. Children are taught specific mathematical skills in small groups within overall lesson planning based on the national desirable learning outcomes.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

87. All children are developing a very good understanding of the world around them. They use very good skills of speaking and listening when talking about their families and where they live.
88. They develop a very good understanding of how materials change when combining materials in recipes and producing edible products after cooking. During the inspection children combined a wide range of ingredients to make 'chocolate crispies'. In the context of the Three Bears story they made and sampled porridge.
89. Children develop very good skills in the use of tools. They mix, shape and cook salt-dough models. Their models in wood show very good skills in sawing and joining timber.
90. The animals, fish and birds in the school gave children very good opportunities to learn about living things. There is a very good display of photographs showing children monitoring and recording an experiment in hatching chicks from eggs using an incubator.
91. All the children are developing very good skills in their independent use of computers. They all use the mouse well to follow instructions and some use sophisticated skills such as 'click and drag'. All their computer work is very well integrated into teachers' high-quality planning of activities within the desirable learning outcomes.
92. The quality of teaching is at least very good and often excellent. Teachers are particularly skilled in questioning children to lead them to greater understanding of the world around them.

Physical development

93. Children are provided with a good range of activities to encourage their physical development. They learn well and make very good progress. They have the use of a play area of tarmac, which is very well marked out for activities. There is a good field for their physical education activities and creative play. Furniture is effectively moved in the classrooms to provide space for physical activities. An excellent example of this was when the children very successfully performed an extensive range of motor movements around and under a large parachute. First they moved a teddy bear and then a ball from one side of the parachute to the other. They showed very good levels of control, moving their arms, hands and legs to control the movement of the parachute. They changed pace, level and direction as required, completing a variety of tasks with very good control and understanding.

94. There is a very good range of large wheeled toys which children use in the playground area each day. The school has a good range of portable climbing frames, slides and other equipment, which is moved in and out of storage each morning. The regular, very well supervised use of this equipment promotes good physical development in all children. They move confidently, imaginatively and with increasing control and co-ordination. They demonstrate a very good awareness of space and others.
95. The school does not have any fixed, large-scale or high-level equipment for children to play on.
96. Children develop very good manipulative skills and learn to handle and control very skilfully a range of tools. They cut, saw, file, drill and fix materials accurately when making models with wood and other media. There has been very good progress in the physical development of the children since the last inspection.

Creative development

97. A very good range of opportunities is provided for children to develop creativity and imagination. They respond very well to appropriately structured play situations, learning to play their respective roles very well in harmony with each other. Artwork is very well matched to literacy and other areas of learning. They paint and draw very well from observation and imagination. Children create a wide range of models from recycled materials, with very good degrees of understanding. They make collages and paint pictures, illustrating very well stories and nursery rhymes they have heard. For example, there are very good displays of work in classes and around the school of activities linked to the stories of 'The Three Little Pigs' and 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears'. There are also displays of children's prints, paintings and collages associated with the seasons.
98. In music children sing songs very well. They play instruments, are aware of the instruments' properties and successfully produce loud and soft sounds. For example, excellent levels of behaviour were seen when each child was given a percussion instrument that would produce a soft or loud sound. They did not play their instrument until requested. They were able to respond to the teacher's conducting and used their instrument very well to produce soft or loud sounds. In their musical activities children enjoy putting actions to songs. Standards of creative work overall are good with many very good features. This has been maintained at a high level since the last inspection.