

INSPECTION REPORT

FLAGG NURSERY SCHOOL

Flagg, near Buxton

LEA area: Derbyshire

Unique reference number: 112481

Headteacher: Mrs Linda Munn

Reporting inspector: Michael Hewlett
1569

Dates of inspection: Monday 20th – Wednesday 22nd March 2000

Inspection number: 196437

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Nursery
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3-4
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Flagg Buxton Derbyshire
Postcode:	SK17 9QT
Telephone number:	01298 85208
Fax number:	
Appropriate authority:	Derbyshire Education Authority
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Elizabeth Greenfield
Date of previous inspection:	29.4.97

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Area of learning responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
MICHAEL HEWLETT	Registered inspector	Language and Literacy	How high are standards?
		Mathematics	How well are pupils taught?
		Knowledge and understanding of the world	How well is the school led and managed?
		English as an additional language	What should the school do to improve further?
JANE HUGHES	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
JUNE HUNTER	Team inspector	Physical development	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
		Creative development	
		Personal and social development	
		Special educational needs	
		Equal opportunities	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

1. Flagg nursery is a small school serving a rural community near Buxton. It provides nursery education to children from five villages and a range of isolated farms. There are 43 children on roll of whom 17 are girls and 31 are boys. They all attend part time. They are taught by the headteacher and two nursery nurses. One of the nursery nurses works full time and one part time. Only a small percentage of children (5%) have special educational needs. Children's attainment on entry to school varies considerably but is average overall. Due to the isolated nature of many of the communities some children arrive with delays in their social and communication skills. Targets for the future are identified in the school development plan. They include improving planning and assessment as well as developing children's skills when they use small apparatus.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

2. Flagg nursery is an effective school. Standards are above average because children make good progress during their time in school. They enjoy coming, work hard and their behaviour is excellent. The quality of the teaching is good overall with a fifth of lessons very good and this contributes to the good progress they make. There is strong leadership. The headteacher, staff and governors work as an effective team to deliver the school's main priorities. There are very good arrangements for caring for the children and parents and carers are kept well informed about the children's work.

3. What the school does well

- Helps children achieve standards which are above average in many areas
- Teaching is good, often very good
- Promotes excellent relationships and provides a high standard of care
- Behaviour is excellent and children have a very good attitude to school
- Leadership and management are very effective
- Makes very good provision for children who have special educational needs
- Enhances the curriculum through very good links with the community and other schools
- Provision for personal and social development is a strength

4. What could be improved

- Planning for higher attainers requires more detail
- Monitoring the progress of the whole year group
- Writing is under represented around the nursery

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

5. The school was last inspected in April 1997. Since then, it has made good progress in many areas. Standards have been raised in reading, writing and number during the intervening years. This is due to better curriculum organisation and because more time is spent teaching the basic skills.

6. Good use is now made of day to day assessment and staff have detailed information about individual children's progress and the targets they hope they will achieve. More work is still needed in planning the curriculum so that the needs of higher attaining children are always met.

7. The school development plan is much better. It clearly sets out the school's priorities, has good links with finance and more people make a contribution. Governors and staff are actively involved in all aspects of development planning.

8. Parents receive detailed feedback on their children's progress during the year as well as comprehensive written reports as they leave.

9. The school has set clear and realistic targets for the future and is well placed to make further improvements

STANDARDS

10. The table summarises inspectors' judgements about the achievements of pupils in relation to the national early learning goals by the time they leave the school.

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

11. The school's standards are above average because children make good progress during their time in nursery. They exceed national standards in all areas of the curriculum except in creative development where they match them.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Children enjoy school, they have very positive attitudes and participate fully in all activities.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Children's behaviour is excellent in all areas. They are particularly good at sharing.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are excellent. Children are very kind to each other. They are becoming increasingly independent learners.
Attendance	Satisfactory despite the very long distances some families have to travel.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	
Lessons seen overall	Good

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

12. Over three quarters of the teaching is good, a fifth is very good and the rest is satisfactory. The quality of the teaching is consistently good across all the areas of the curriculum. Staff set high standards for the children and make sure that lessons move briskly with little time wasted. They plan their work thoroughly but activities to stretch the higher attainers are not planned in enough detail.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides a good range of stimulating learning activities both indoors and out. Curriculum planning is clear and provides a good level of support for the teaching. Greater detail is needed in some of the planning so that the needs of the higher attaining children are always met
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good provision. Children's individual learning needs are being well met. Effective support and good teaching enable the children to make consistently good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good provision is made for all aspects of children's personal development. Early experiences in the development of spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects are sensitively encouraged through well planned activities and careful explanation.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school takes very good care of the children. Staff are consistent in their management of behaviour and children grow in confidence as they experience a variety of social settings.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The leadership and management of the school is very effective. The headteacher and staff have created an excellent ethos within the school.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors play an active part in the life and work of the school. They fulfil all their statutory responsibilities.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good systems are in place to collect detailed information about the progress of individual children. Not enough use is made of this data to check on the progress made by each year group or to make year by year comparisons.
The strategic use of resources	Very good use is made of the available resources. The school does not have a delegated budget but applies the principles of best value when making spending decisions.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Children like school and they behave very well• Standards in literacy have improved in recent years• Self confidence and independence are encouraged and children make very good progress• Staff are approachable and friendly, they respond positively to any concerns that are raised• The school is well led and managed• Teaching is good	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Some parents would welcome more information about their children's achievements

13. The school has established a very effective partnership with parents. They are overwhelmingly positive in their views on almost all aspects of the school. The school promotes very positive attitudes amongst the children and encourages excellent behaviour. Children enjoy coming to school and, once there, they are well taught. A small number of parents would welcome more information about their children's achievements. However, the school makes good attempts to keep parents well informed through regular feedback, individual meetings when they deliver and collect their children from school and written reports which contain detailed, evaluative comments.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

14. Children arrive in school with levels of attainment which are broadly average. By the time they are five, they are likely to reach standards which are above the national standard in all areas of the curriculum except creative development where standards are average. Children are enthusiastic and hard working. They learn well during the time in nursery and this results in the good progress they make. Standards are higher than when the school was last inspected. On that occasion, standards in reading, writing and number were found to be below average.

15. Improvements have been made because more emphasis is placed on the direct teaching of these basic skills, the quality of the teaching is consistently better and the planning of work is more detailed for most groups.

16. By the age of five, children's attainment in personal and social skills is likely to be above the expected standard. This is similar to that found during the school's last inspection. Children make very good progress in developing these skills during their time in the nursery. Most are confident in the nursery and are eager to try new activities. Children make friends and play well together in the home corner or in the pretend Noah's Ark. When sharing things, such as the computer or listening stations, for example, they respect the rights of others. They take turns sensibly on the climbing frame and share the favourite tricycle, which has room for a passenger. At all times, children co-operate well with adults, listening carefully to music, stories and instructions. Children take an active part in the school's routines and accept responsibility willingly. For example, they pour either water or milk for their drink and clear away when they have finished. Most of the children are beginning to understand the differences between right and wrong and carefully remind others of the school rules.

17. Children's attainment in language and literacy is likely to be above the expected standard by the time they are five. Improving children's language and literacy skills is given a very high priority within the nursery and all staff encourage children to practise their emerging language skills. Children are attentive and respond positively when asked to do something as, for example, when they pass on a message or collect the post as it is delivered and then explain what has arrived. At group time, they listen patiently to the contributions made by their friends and take their turn. Their ability to listen and concentrate for such extended periods is a particular strength. A good example of this was seen when children shared a snack time outdoors. Most were able to describe in detail what they had done during the session using words they had learned during their discussions. Adults sitting with them kept the conversations purposeful and asked questions which gave each group member the chance to express them self. Children handle books well and they share them with others, often retelling their favourite stories. They are able to explain how books convey a meaning and some have made good attempts at producing their own, writing words that they know. Many can already recognise simple words in text and know the sounds that letters make. Standards have improved since the last inspection.

18. Children's attainment in mathematics is likely to be above the expected standard by the time they are five. Numeracy skills are given a high priority with most of the children able to count to ten and many counting much higher than this. A particular feature is the way in which they can apply their knowledge in practical situations. For example, they can calculate how many more of their classmates should be allowed into the home corner. On another occasion, a group of children were able to make simple addition and subtraction calculations as they tried to work out how many bean bags and skittles they would need to organise their game. They have a good understanding of mathematical language and

are able to talk about position, shape, size and quantity. Standards achieved in mathematics have improved since the school was last inspected.

19. Children's attainment in knowledge and understanding of the world is likely to be above the national standard by the time they are five. Most are confident when they talk about features of their local community and the jobs that need to be done. They also have a good understanding of other communities through the school's links with a partner school in the City of Derby. They can recognise some elements of time passing such as the ages of their brothers and sisters or household objects which are older than them. They use tools safely and know how to design and construct models. Teachers plan activities which ensure that children are introduced to simple scientific processes. They look at a range of materials and demonstrate good observation skills as they talk about what they have seen, picking out similarities and differences. For example, when a group planted seeds with a member of staff, they were able to talk about the conditions that the seeds would need if they were to flourish and why some grew bigger than others. Children's attainment in information technology is good. They are confident when they use the computers and many know how to use the programmes independently, changing shapes and sizes using the mouse to control the screen. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection.

20. Children's overall attainment in physical development is likely to be above the expected standard. This is similar to that found during the school's previous inspection. Children move around the nursery confidently and have easy access to the outside for the development of a wide range of movement and co-ordination skills. They use the space well with careful attention to their own and other children's safety. They use the outdoor area and equipment with great enthusiasm to extend their physical skills and powers of co-ordination and control, running, jumping, climbing and sliding with increasing skill and confidence. Indoors, they handle tools and pencils well and manipulate materials such as dough and clay with increasing precision. All children make good progress.

21. Children's overall attainment in creative development is likely to be in line with expectations for their age by the time they are five years of age. This is similar to the attainment recorded in the previous inspection. Children make satisfactory progress in all aspects of creative development. Most can express themselves with growing confidence and skill through drawing, painting, imaginative play and music. They apply paint in a variety of ways and successfully mix colours to produce differing shades. Some are able to produce detailed pictures which they are pleased to share with others. Children readily initiate role play in the home corner which helps to capture their imagination. Children listen and respond well to music, sing songs tunefully and join in using appropriate actions.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

22. Children have extremely positive attitudes to learning and this helps them to become effective learners. They really enjoy coming to school and participate eagerly in all the activities. Children listen very carefully and persevere well with the tasks set. They are extremely industrious throughout the session and always engage wholeheartedly in an activity whether this is constructing a tiger's face with long whiskers or digging furiously in the leaf pile to fill the wheelbarrow.

23. Children's behaviour is excellent and is a direct response to the very effective strategies used by staff. Their calm and consistent approach allows children to make the most of their time in school. Children show a very clear understanding of the simple school rules and are aware of the very high expectations staff have of them. A particular strength is the way they share resources and take turns so well. During one activity, one boy said to a watching girl "Just wait a minute while we clear up and then you can come and have a turn". He made sure the area was clean and tidy so that she could start her activity properly.

24. Acts of kindness between children are common at Flagg Nursery where constructive relationships are easily established between children and adults. Children are sensitive to the needs of their peers and take care to look after each other. They readily help each other to put on aprons, tidy away or give supportive advice when tackling tasks in pairs such as working on the computer. When one little boy was slightly reluctant to swap places with his partner at the computer, she persisted in reminding him that she needed to be directly in front of the screen, with the mouse, in order to complete the task properly. After some quiet negotiation, independent of any adult involvement, they swapped places and continued to paint their multicoloured pictures quite companionably.

25. Children's personal development is very good because they make the most of any opportunities they are offered by the school. They respond very well to any requests for help from adults. They sit and eat their snack independently and several are able to pour their own drinks of milk and water from the large jug - even when it is full - without spilling a drop. They know where everything belongs and are quick to tidy away at the end of a session. They take responsibility for their own personal needs and even children with special educational needs are able to go confidently to the cloakroom to wash their hands. Many of the children at Flagg Nursery live in isolated rural communities and it is a particular benefit for them to meet other children in a variety of social settings. The headteacher has established a very useful link with an inner city Derby nursery and children from both nurseries meet up from time to time in order to compare various aspects of their lives at home and school. Such an opportunity is immensely beneficial as it allows children to experience some aspects of city life and to appreciate some of the cultural diversity which is an integral part of their country. Parents also participate in these trips and find them very valuable.

26. Levels of attendance are satisfactory overall. As the nursery is set in an isolated part of rural Derbyshire, many parents are unable to maintain a full time commitment to the nursery. However, they are conscientious about bringing the children to school on the days they have specified and all the children usually attend very regularly within this timetable. It is understandable that the headteacher allows some flexibility for parents because of the site of this particular nursery. Parents greatly appreciate this flexible approach. The majority of parents bring their children to school on time although some are a little late due to the long distances they have to travel.

27. The school has maintained similar standards to those reported at the time of the previous inspection.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

28. Overall, the teaching in the school is good with one in ten lessons seen judged to be very good. One in twenty lessons was satisfactory and none was unsatisfactory. This is better than when the school was last inspected when fewer lessons were good or very good. Staff have responded well to the weaknesses pointed out then. Tasks set for the children are well organised and no time is wasted. Planning is more detailed and the learning outcomes for each lesson are clearly stated. Children know what they are expected to achieve and they are given suitable explanations. However, teachers' planning of activities for higher attaining children is less detailed than for the rest of the groups. This reduces the level of support that the planning can offer the teaching. Children are set work which is interesting but also demanding. They learn faster and make better progress because of this.

29. All staff have a good knowledge and understanding of the needs of young children. They are successful in introducing the national strategies in language and literacy to nursery age children. For example, during some lessons there is a strong emphasis on teaching phonic skills and many of the children can confidently identify letters and the sounds that they make. By skilful questioning and sensitive support, staff teach the children how the collection of sounds, when joined together, combine to make words that they know. In lessons such as these, children stay actively involved and learn quickly.

30. Most lessons move at a brisk pace but cater for children of all levels of prior attainment. An example of this was seen during a matching and sorting activity when a group of children was working with different shapes. Some found the task very challenging at first and the adult's attention focused on offering advice and suggestions but making sure that each child was able to make a contribution. She knew all group members well. Some higher attaining children found the work quite easy and so the adult replaced the shapes with much more complicated ones and then gave these children her attention as they discussed strategies for completing them. Children of all ability levels made very good progress during this activity, they concentrated for long periods and were able to think for themselves. The high quality of the teaching on occasions such as this ensured that each group member had acquired new knowledge and could explain how their work could be improved.

31. Throughout the day, teachers work hard to ensure that no time is wasted. They set high standards in what they expect children to achieve and the children respond accordingly by moving sensibly between activities, tidying up when asked to and completing tasks before trying something else.

32. Good teaching is found in all the areas of children's learning. This degree of consistency improves children's learning opportunities because it means there is always a wide range of interesting and worthwhile activities available for them to choose from. This aspect of the teaching has improved since the last inspection when learning opportunities were missed.

33. The way in which all adults manage children in the nursery is a particular strength. They insist on consistently high standards of behaviour and children are very clear about these high expectations as they are constantly reinforced throughout the school day. Good behaviour is regularly praised and children know exactly what is expected of them. For example, they know they are not allowed to run and remind one another of this if anyone forgets. On the rare occasions when children demonstrate challenging behaviour, all staff are gently insistent and stress that this is unacceptable. They manage potentially difficult situations very well, ensuring that the learning of other group members is not affected. Consistent approaches to behaviour management such as this, ensure children feel secure in a very positive and familiar learning environment. It also means that teaching can be effective and children learn consistently well.

34. Staff regularly monitor the work that children undertake and use these assessments to improve their teaching. For example, they record the progress made by children on a skills' checklist. Information from this record is used effectively to ensure that the correct levels of questions are asked in subsequent lessons.

35. When the monitoring of children's work and progress is used successfully in this way it has a positive effect on the quality of the teaching. This is because it enables staff to adjust the emphasis of some of their work to match individual children's needs.

36. Staff make good use of the available resources to support their teaching. For example, the outside play area which has been successfully redeveloped, is now used to teach a number of curriculum areas. Children using the climbing frame pretended it was Noah's Ark and set about repainting it and reorganising the furniture so that it would be suitable to receive the animals when they arrived. The quality of the work improved because staff became actively involved in the play, kept it purposeful and adapted the resources to meet the needs of the children.

37. Staff make very good use of their links with parents to extend children's learning at home. Children and parents are encouraged to borrow story sacks from the school library to initiate a love of books among the children.

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

38. The school has made good progress in addressing the curriculum issues raised by the previous inspection and maintaining the strengths that were identified.

39. The school continues to provide a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum for all children with a wide range of stimulating activities, both indoors and out. There is an appropriate and effective emphasis on personal and social development, language and literacy and mathematics. The curriculum prepares children well for the next stage of education and for early work in the National Curriculum.

40. Much work has been undertaken since the previous inspection in improving curriculum policies and planning. Policies for language and literacy and mathematics have been reviewed and improved. Both are now relevant to the current literacy and numeracy strategies.

41. The quality of the planning has improved. Long term planning which covers a two year cycle has been improved to ensure continuity and progression for the children who attend the nursery for four or five terms. A high priority is given to the teaching of early reading, writing and mathematical skills and these are carefully planned so that they are included throughout the activities the children undertake. However, the planning for the more able children is not always sufficiently detailed to assist the teaching. Although staff use their skills and their good understanding of children's achievements and ability to provide a range of appropriate and challenging experiences for the more able children, these are not sufficiently founded upon detailed planning.

42. All staff are involved in planning the curriculum and the daily and weekly evaluation of children's learning. Although the evaluation is still at an informal stage, this does affect the next stage of planning for most of the children. Staff make good use of detailed assessments and records of skills to plan for the next stage of development.

43. The curriculum provides a broad range of worthwhile opportunities which meet the interests and needs of all children. Every child has full and free access to the activities and resources provided for each session. Boys and girls have the same choices and show similar interests in all activities. Care is taken to ensure that the children are involved in all opportunities and activities provided in the nursery. For example, children are monitored as they use the computer so that their progress is recorded and their information and communication technology skills are improved.

44. The school makes good provision for children with special educational needs. Staff support them well, seeking them out as they engage in activities of their choice. They carefully ensure they have equal opportunities. As a result, children make very good progress towards the targets set in their individual education plans. Parents are kept well informed of their child's progress through dialogue books and regular contact with the nursery. They are involved with their individual educational plans, attend reviews and contribute to the evaluation of their child's progress.

45. The school curriculum is enhanced through very good links with the community. The community garden and play area is a shared resource, providing very good facilities for the development of physical skills and other areas of the curriculum. The school uses the surrounding countryside well to support the children's knowledge of the natural world. For example, children visit local farms to put the frogs that have developed from tadpoles back into the pond. Visitors to the school, including an artist who showed children her collection of paintings, are used effectively to broaden the curriculum and develop children's skills.

46. The school has well established, close links with the primary schools to which the children will transfer. An invitation to visit the children in the nursery is sent to each school and there is a good response from them all. The nursery sends a comprehensive record for each child to the transfer school which helps the move go smoothly.

47. A strength of the school is its provision for the children's personal development, especially for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This is in line with the findings of the previous inspection.

48. Provision for children's spiritual development is good. It is carefully promoted through a wide range of planned activities. There are many opportunities for children to reflect on the beauty and wonder of the natural world. Children plant seeds of sunflowers and vegetables in pots in the nursery and take responsibility for giving them water. They study them each day, looking at the growth of the shoots and leaves.

49. The school provides well for children's moral and social development. There is a welcoming atmosphere in the nursery and children work and play well together. They learn about sharing and caring and are keen to help if someone needs it. For example, a child who was playing on a favourite tricycle fell and hurt her leg. Her friends alerted an adult and then looked after her tricycle until she rejoined the activity. Children are taught the difference between right and wrong by example, through discussion and in the every day life of the nursery. Whenever a child makes a misjudgement, they are gently asked to consider how they should have acted and make amends.

50. Members of staff are good role models, treating every one with respect. Their own politeness, courtesy and their willingness to accept the opinions of others have a positive impact on the children. For example, children are interested and courteous to all visitors wanting them to be part of the school community. They point out the makes of passing tractors and name the type of machinery being pulled behind.

51. All children are encouraged to take responsibility and show initiative. Children select their own learning activities and choose appropriate resources to complete the task. They tidy away after themselves as a matter of course.

52. Provision for the children's cultural development is good. The curriculum provides opportunities for children to learn about their own culture. They listen to traditional stories such as, "The Three Bears" and "Red Riding Hood" and sing and recite nursery rhymes. Children celebrate special days. On May Day, for example, children dance around the maypole. They collect fruit and vegetable at Harvest time and go next door to visit the Chapel to see the fruit and flowers. At Christmas, children perform the story of the Nativity for parents and friends.

53. Children are encouraged to learn about the culture of others. They celebrate Divali and the Chinese New Year. Parents come to school to cook Chinese food for the children so they can experience a variety of different foods. All children visit a nursery in a neighbouring town. They work alongside the children for a session and then they are taken to visit a Mosque. Parents attend this visit so they can discuss the similarities and differences of other cultures with their children. The school has a good selection of multicultural resources to extend children's understanding of the diversity of other cultures.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

54. The headteacher and all the adults working in the school take very good care of the children. They know them extremely well and are able to offer very good support for their personal and educational

development. Parents are very appreciative of this support and are particularly fulsome in their praise of the care given to children with special educational needs. The school meets their individual needs.

55. Arrangements for assessing children's knowledge and skills on entry to the nursery are carried out carefully with both headteacher and parent contributing together. More detailed assessments are completed during the first half term and together, they form a useful baseline. Assessment of children's progress within the nursery is systematically undertaken and their progress is measured over time and carefully recorded. These useful documents highlight the needs of different groups and the strengths and weaknesses of individual children. Although staff have detailed knowledge of each child's ability and progress from these documents, the monitoring of the whole year group has yet to take place.

56. Child protection arrangements are appropriate and well known to staff. The headteacher is conscientious in her duty of care and maintains effective links with outside support agencies. Health and safety issues are very well addressed by staff and the school provides a safe and secure learning environment. All adults have a consistently good overview of the children during the day and are attentive to their physical and emotional needs. Staff draw children's attention to the need for hygiene as when, for example, they were making jam sandwiches for snack. The adult supporting the activity ensured children learned not to cough over the food and that they washed their hands before preparing their sandwich. Photographic evidence shows children visiting a classmate in hospital. One of the nurses they met then came back to school with the children and helped them to set up a hospital role play area where they learned more about caring for sick people.

57. Attendance registers are well maintained and parents are clear about informing the school of reasons for absence. When they arrive at school, children self register by taking their name card from the set hanging on the cupboard. This helps them to become more independent and also helps them to recognise their own name.

58. Staff manage children's behaviour extremely well and the school is a very orderly and calm community. Children respond extremely well to the familiar routines and consistently meet the high expectations of the staff. Parents are complimentary about how staff deal with specific problems and feel their children benefit from the caring and happy environment created by the staff.

59. The school has maintained the high standards reported at the time of its last inspection.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

60. The school is very successful in forming strong partnership with parents. Parents are very happy with the relationships established between home and school; they feel involved in school life and find staff very approachable. Almost all parents feel well informed about the progress their children are making.

61. The headteacher makes very good use of parental expertise to support children's learning. Many parents attend the curriculum workshops organised by the headteacher and they also willingly provide additional resources as required. Parents bring many practical skills into nursery and these all contribute to the positive learning environment experienced by their children.

62. Good quality information on children's progress is provided for parents. Regular newsletters are sent home and the headteacher and staff are available to talk informally to parents at the start and end of sessions. The headteacher is very conscious that, with her full time teaching commitment, she does not have as much time as other headteachers to talk to parents. However, parents are encouraged to stay with their children at the start of a session and she also speaks to parents on the telephone, out of school hours, if she has something of particular importance to discuss. Detailed, end of year written

reports are provided for parents and for receiving primary schools and these clearly show parents how their children have progressed during the year. The school helps parents to support their children's learning at home and this helps to improve the standards they achieve. Information the school provides on reading and how to encourage a love of books is particularly helpful. Parents are involved in creating Story Sacks for the children which is an ongoing project and the headteacher provides careful guidance for parents on how to use these with their children in order to gain the maximum benefit from them.

63. Parental involvement has a considerable impact on children's learning and the work of the school. Very good links are established between the school, parents and the wider community and the three work well on behalf of the children. This very effective partnership between school and home is similar to that reported at the last inspection.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

64. The headteacher provides very good leadership and has successfully addressed the key issues raised during the last inspection. Working with colleagues and governors, she has set a clear educational direction for the school and has established an excellent ethos. This has been achieved through strong teamwork and the way in which all staff are able to contribute to the decision making process. For example, the school development plan, which was criticised during the last inspection because priorities were not clear enough, is much better. It has contributions from all partners within the school and this helps to make it a much more useful document. It sets out detailed targets for improvement over a longer timescale than before and decides on priorities. These are suitable and realistic. For example, targets have been linked to national priorities such the literacy and numeracy initiatives. The plan also has much closer links with finance so that planned action is more carefully costed.

65. The school's aims and values are regularly reviewed and are evident in its life and work. Good examples of these aims being delivered into practice are found in the high expectations of good behaviour set by all staff and the impressive working atmosphere. The contribution of the governing body is good. It takes a full part in the life of the school and individual governors have taken responsibility for certain areas such as numeracy, literacy and health and safety. Governors are well informed and operate very effectively on behalf of the school. They fulfil all their statutory responsibilities. The school is involved in a process of self review. It receives a good level of support from the local education authority link adviser who checks on progress towards meeting agreed targets.

66. Good use is made of information collected from parents when children start school. It enables staff to offer extra support to those children who require it and monitor the progress they make during the year. Not enough use is made of the data to check on the progress of the overall year group or to compare the performance of different year groups. This is an area for improvement. Systems for monitoring the planning have improved considerably since the last inspection. All staff are involved in appraising performance and there is a commitment to improving the quality of the teaching and children's learning.

67. Communication systems used within the school are good. New technology is used to good effect. For example, office systems are computerised and the school secretary operates very efficiently during the short time that she is in school. There has not been an audit visit to the school recently but accounts are checked annually and found to be in order. The school does not have a delegated budget and most financial resources are allocated by the local authority. Nevertheless, it tries to achieve value for money in any purchases that are made. For example, there is wide consultation undertaken when financial decisions are made and governors stay actively involved.

68. There are suitable numbers of well qualified and experienced staff to teach the children. Resources are good for each area of learning and they are well used and thoughtfully organised to help children become more independent. The literacy environment of the school is less effective than in other areas such as creative work. This is because written work does not feature in many of the displays around the nursery and opportunities to demonstrate the importance of the written word are missed.

69. The accommodation indoors is satisfactory and outside it is good. The climbing equipment is imaginatively used to support many curriculum areas. For example, the base of the frame became “Noah’s Ark” during the school topic and children used it well to develop their imaginative play.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- (1) Increase the level of detail included in teachers’ planning so that the needs of higher attaining children are fully met.
This will involve:
Ensuring that enough detail is included in the daily and weekly plans so that they support the teaching and contribute to the consistency of approach.
(paragraphs 6, 12, 28, 41, 84)

- (2) Improve the quality of the literacy environment within the school so that the printed word is better represented.
This will involve:
Making sure that children’s own writing is included within displays of work and that labels used are presented consistently.
(paragraphs 85, 114)

OTHER ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL

- (1) Measure the attainment and progress of the whole year group so that year by year comparisons can be made and the school’s performance evaluated.
(paragraphs 55, 66)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	28
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	15

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
	20	76	4			

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	20
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	NA

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	2

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	0
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	0

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and support staff

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1.0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	45

Number of pupils per FTE adult	8
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1998/99
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	£
Total income	76643
Total expenditure	76704
Expenditure per pupil	3835
Balance brought forward from previous year	585
Balance carried forward to next year	523

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	45
Number of questionnaires returned	34

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	85	12	3		
My child is making good progress in school.	74	20	3		3
Behaviour in the school is good.	68	29			3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	65	35			
The teaching is good.	82	18			
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	62	20	9	9	
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	82	15	3		
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	76	24			
The school works closely with parents.	68	20	9	3	
The school is well led and managed.	82	15			3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	79	20			
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	59	26	3	3	3

n.b. Not all categories received a response therefore some rows do not total 100%

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

70. By the age of five, children's attainment in personal and social skills is likely to be above the expected standard. This is similar to that found during the school's last inspection. All children, including those with special educational needs, make very good progress in all aspects of personal and social development. Children are confident in the daily routines of the nursery and many are willing to explain to visitors what will happen next and when to tidy up. Most children come into school eager to get on with the day's activities and are happy to say goodbye to their parents and carers. Children quickly develop friendly relationships with other children and all adults in the nursery. Some have special friends and all welcome others into their group. They enjoy each other's company and play well together. An example of this was seen in the imaginative play area where children pretended to be Noah and his wife allowing animals into the Ark two by two. All children in the group willingly waited their turn and shared the important roles fairly.

71. Children work contentedly individually, in pairs and in large or small groups. They are happy to work with or without adult supervision and are willing to join in all adult initiated activities. They are independent and put on aprons as a matter of course, for example, when playing with water or painting. Children are eager to explore new learning and their enthusiasm is clear to see. All play and work purposefully. They make choices for themselves throughout the session, taking the initiative to select activities to follow their interests. For example, children using spades filled wheelbarrows with bark chippings and then spread them around the base of the trees, copying similar activities they had seen on their farm.

72. They are beginning to understand the difference between right and wrong and carefully remind others of the school rules. For example, children planting seeds reminded another child to walk on the stepping stones in the garden and not stand on the tulips. All are beginning to understand how to behave with consideration for the feelings of others. During a music and movement lesson, for example, children danced with their friends. A child noticed a timid child on the edge of the activity and without any prompting by an adult, offered to be her partner.

73. The quality of the teaching is good. Staff have a very good understanding of how young children learn. They are good role models and have excellent relationships with the children and understand their needs. All are patient and kind with the children, giving them plenty of time to answer questions and develop confidence. This is particularly evident at picnic time outdoors, when adults give ready praise and encouragement as children try out their ideas and recall interesting things they have done in the nursery and at home. All staff constantly encourage consideration for others, praising children enthusiastically for playing together successfully and co-operating with others. This has a positive effect on children's self esteem and encourages excellent behaviour.

74. Good planning, organization and the range of stimulating activities all combine successfully to give children opportunities to develop social and personal skills.

LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

75. Children enter nursery with language skills that are average. By the time they are five, most children's attainment in language and literacy is likely to be above the expected standard. Standards

have improved considerably since the last inspection when weaknesses in reading and writing were identified.

76. This area of the curriculum is given a suitably high priority within the nursery and good opportunities are provided to develop and practise the four elements of speaking, listening, reading and writing.

77. Children listen well. In most groups they listen attentively to stories, to their friends' contributions or to the instructions that they have been given. Their ability to listen and respond, given the normal distractions of nursery life in a small classroom area, is particularly impressive. When they come together for group time these skills are reinforced and practised. For example, they listen carefully as the adult describes what activities they will be undertaking during the session and they respond well when asked a question. They listen well to their classmates when they describe what they have achieved. Their ability to listen so well is due to the consistent approach used by all staff who take time to value the individual contributions. This makes a positive contribution to the standards children achieve.

78. Children express themselves confidently, they take an active part in imaginative play and this is a very successful feature of the school's provision. They are able to adopt roles and this contributes to the above average standards in this area of learning. For example, as some children pretend to work in an office which had been created in their home corner, they arrange their stationery, talk to visitors and handle enquiries on their imaginary telephone. Their language skills improve on these occasions, especially when the adult working with them is able offer good ideas on how the role play should develop. This helps to keep the activities purposeful and increases children's confidence.

79. Children enjoy using books and they know how to handle them carefully. They understand from their own attempts at writing that the words and pictures in the book convey a meaning to the reader. Most children can recognise their own names and many know the names of letters and simple words they come across. They are able to talk about books they have enjoyed listening to and can retell their favourite stories. Many choose to select their own Story Sacks with their parents and this has improved the provision in this area. Parents are given good support as they use the Story Sacks at home and this helps to ensure that the good work of the school is built upon.

80. Children are confident when making marks and developing early writing skills. Some make good attempts at writing their own names unaided when they complete a piece of work. Many are confident writers who can copy accurately what is written for them and can make good attempts at writing independently. On one occasion, children were writing about their favourite animals and were asked to complete a sentence. The majority of the group achieved this successfully and referred to the farm animals that were so familiar to them. Writing features across the curriculum and children are keen to talk about its many purposes, often including writing in their imaginative play. One group, for example, started to make their own books which they knew would convey meaning to their classmates who might be asked to read them. They could also explain that the letters they used in their writing had to be placed in the correct order if they were to make any sense.

81. Children respond positively to the school's provision in language and literacy. They concentrate well and stay on a task until it has been completed. This is an important factor in their success.

82. Children learn very well. This is primarily because of the high expectations set by staff for the children. They know the children well and set them work which is at the right level and suitably demanding. Staff organise activities for them in such a way that children build on what they already know and they have regular opportunities to consolidate their learning. An example of this was seen during a lesson dealing with letter sounds that the children knew. They were able to remember some

words that began with the same letter and this helped to build their confidence before they moved on to more difficult work.

83. The small number of children who are identified as having special educational needs receive additional support and have detailed programmes of work. These set targets for future improvement which are known to all staff.

84. The quality of the teaching is good overall. Six out of ten lessons observed were very good with three out of ten judged to be good. None was unsatisfactory. Teachers' planning has improved since the last inspection. It sets out more clearly what the teacher expects children to achieve during an activity and this supports the teachers' work. The planning also sets out work for children of different levels of prior attainment. However, the level of detail included in planning for higher attainers is not sufficient to adequately support the teaching. The school has recognised the need to make improvements in this area. Staff are enthusiastic and keep children's interest, making sure their work proceeds at a fast pace. They ensure no time is wasted and a strength of the teaching is the way in which all children, regardless of gender or prior attainment, learn well and make good progress.

85. Resources for language and literacy are good and they reflect the careful selection and good deployment made by staff. At present, the literacy environment does not reflect the high quality of work in this area. There are few examples of children's writing on display and there is little labelling or printed words for children to use as models for their own writing. This makes it difficult for them to see the written word in the context of their classroom environment and learning opportunities are missed.

MATHEMATICS

86. By the age of five, children's attainment in mathematics is likely to be above the expected standard. This is a big improvement on the standards found during the last inspection when it was judged that children's attainment in number did not meet the national expectations. The reasons for this improvement include the greater emphasis the school now places on number skills and on introducing simple number operations. The curriculum is better organised and opportunities are taken to extend children's awareness of numbers in practical activities. For example, as different groups meet the postman each day to collect the mail, they share the letters between them and then work out how many have been delivered altogether. Their ability to apply their number skills in this way is a particular strength of the numeracy work within the school. As with literacy, numeracy is given a high priority throughout the school and many children are able to apply their mathematical knowledge in other areas of learning. Most of the children can count to ten and many can count much higher than this. Some of the higher attainers are able to find the correct answers to number operations which involve simple addition and subtraction. They can use their knowledge of number rhymes and counting games to reinforce this learning. The school has been successful in introducing elements of the national numeracy strategy, for example, regular mental arithmetic sessions.

87. Most children are able to sort objects and put them in order. They are good at making comparisons and can recognise bigger and smaller objects around the nursery as well as shapes and colours. For example, during one practical activity, children were able to identify shapes such as squares, rectangles, circles and semi circles. They were able to talk with great confidence and used appropriate mathematical language to describe the properties of each shape and what made them different. One boy extended his understanding of shape when he used a computer to draw squares and rectangles. He persevered until each side of the square was of equal length and he was able to explain why that was so important.

88. All children, including those with special educational needs, learn well and they make good progress in their mathematics. Staff know their individual needs and requirements and make sure they are given regular opportunities to build on and consolidate what they have learnt before.

89. Children's records indicate that the progress they make is consistently good and is carefully recorded. Children behave extremely well and are keen to succeed. They have positive attitudes towards their work and concentrate very well. Their keenness and cooperation is a significant factor in making sure that levels of attainment are high.

90. The quality of teaching in mathematics is very good in a third of lessons and good in the rest. In the most successful lessons, adults make good use of everyday opportunities to reinforce mathematical skills. For example, a teacher working with a group of children outside asked them to count out the beanbags and coloured mats they were using. It became clear that there were too few to be shared with the number who wanted to use them. The adult seized the opportunity to ask them simple addition and subtraction questions. She introduced mathematical language slowly and sensitively, making sure each group member was able to answer questions at their own level. They were then able to apply their new found knowledge in other practical situations, recognising number patterns around the nursery. They learn more quickly when they are given opportunities such as these.

91. Planning is better than when the school was last inspected, although there is not enough detail in the activities planned for higher attaining children. This means the teaching for these children is less well supported. Teachers are enthusiastic and skilled in teaching children of this age. They regularly monitor how effective their teaching has been by checking on what children have learnt by the end of an activity. A useful skills' checklist is well used to record how well they have done. This enables staff to plan the next phase of work more accurately and to keep children's learning moving at a brisk pace.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

92. Children's attainment in knowledge and understanding of the world is likely to be above that expected by the time they are five. The standards are higher than those achieved during the last inspection. Staff provide many opportunities for children to talk confidently about their family, friends and the world around them. They are very knowledgeable about the natural world and, living in a rural community, talk animatedly and confidently about events that have taken place on their farms or in their villages. Most can talk about some aspects of their local community and how their journey to school differs so much from children in an inner city school in Derby with which they have strong links. Their ability to make comparisons with other lifestyles through such practical links is very well developed.

93. Children are beginning to understand simple scientific processes. They learn to observe carefully and describe accurately what they see. They can talk about the similarities and differences between materials with which they are working. For example, most know that the play dough they are rolling will change, becoming softer and more workable, the longer they roll it. Similarly, when they plant the bulbs in the nursery garden, they can talk about why this need to be in soil and how water is needed if they are to grow. Children make accurate observations and are keen to share their knowledge with their classmates. They use this knowledge well and can see how the needs of the plants they care for in nursery are similar to those growing in the fields around them.

94. The majority are able to select tools independently and handle them safely. They know how different materials can be joined and show good skills when, for example, they use scissors and glue to create their own models. Children show very good levels of concentration during such activities and are well behaved and positive in all that they do. In one example, three children constructed a walkway to join apparatus in the outdoor area. They planned their route carefully and chose only those blocks they

knew would be stable, adjusting them where necessary to make sure they were safe. They learn very effectively during such activities because they have to think independently and solve their own problems.

95. Children are very confident in their use of information technology. When working at the computer, they know how to use the mouse and enjoy working on the programs available. They demonstrate high levels of independence and many are able to select software and choose from a menu on the screen. All children, including those with special educational needs, learn well and make good progress due to the high standards set for them and the good organisation that is evident within the school. A broad and balanced curriculum, which is appropriate to the interests of the children, helps to consolidate and then build on their previous experiences.

96. The quality of teaching was good in all the lessons observed. Staff plan the curriculum in much more detail than when the school was last inspected and this has helped to improve the teaching because the aims of each activity are clearly set out before it starts. Classrooms are well organised, children behave well and staff make sure that the work proceeds at a brisk pace. Children stay actively involved in practical lessons, concentrating for long periods and this helps them to learn more quickly. There is a consistency of approach, which means that children know what is expected of them and this helps them to become independent. One of the reasons for the success of the teaching is because staff regularly evaluate how effective they have been. They check that children understood the work and use this information to plan the next stage.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

97. In their physical development, children's attainment is good and they are likely to achieve standards which are above those expected nationally of children by the time they are five years old. The standards attained are similar to those found in the previous inspection.

98. Children move around the school, both indoors and out, with confidence and care. They demonstrate both good co-ordination and an awareness of others, for example, during outdoor play activities as they pedal and steer a wide variety of tricycles and pull and push wheeled vehicles along many different routes and pathways.

99. Children are confident and adventurous when using the large fixed climbing equipment. They climb up the wooden ladders and rope ladders with enthusiasm to reach the raised platform. Most children choose to travel along the high slatted bridge. All balance along it with care and some confident children stop in the middle to wave to their friends. Most children can balance along raised logs of various heights and can jump off, landing safely.

100. Children are enthusiastic and always keen to take part in all activities. They enjoy using the space outside and show good levels of co-ordination and control as they run and chase one another when playing lions and tigers, for example. Most children have good early games' skills and can throw, kick, catch and bounce a variety of sizes of balls. Children show good levels of co-operation as they throw and catch in pairs and as a group.

101. Indoors, children use all the play equipment with increasing control and confidence. They handle construction kits and complicated model train tracks with developing precision. Paintbrushes, tools and other materials such as dough and clay are used competently. Most pencils and crayons are held correctly. Children use scissors carefully as they cut triangles of paper to represent ears on pictures of tigers.

102. Children have very positive attitudes to learning and enjoy the wide range of physical skills that are offered to them. The behaviour is excellent and they co-operate and share equipment and resources very well.

103. The quality of teaching is consistently good in all lessons, both indoors and out. All the staff have a very good understanding of the national expectations for physical education and challenge the children to a wide range of exciting opportunities. Planning for children's physical development is good. Activities are well organised with some equipment outdoors being changed daily to provide fresh challenges for the children. All children make sensible choices of what they will do. Adults are actively involved with the children challenging them to improve their levels of skill and teaching them to use the equipment correctly. This was well demonstrated in an outdoor play session where a number of children were taught to bounce a ball and then transfer this skill to bouncing it on the wall or bouncing it to a friend.

104. Adults have excellent relationships with the children which allow them to set high expectations for behaviour. They give very good individual support as when, for example, in a climbing activity, a child was encouraged to wait patiently and watch his friend climbing to the top of the rope ladder before he started to climb. This ensured that he had the full support of the adult and so achieved some success. Children with special educational needs are well supported and make very good progress. Children's progress and development are regularly observed by all members of staff who have clearly agreed rules for the assessment of physical skills.

105. The outside areas of playground and community garden continue to provide very good accommodation for physical development. They are imaginatively resourced, well maintained, challenging and exciting and provide many opportunities to develop and practise physical skills. This resource continues to improve the physical skill development and attainment for all children in the nursery.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

106. Children's overall attainment in creative development is likely to be in line with the national standards by the time they are five. This is similar to the attainment levels recorded in the previous inspection report.

107. All children, including those with special educational needs, are introduced to a variety of activities and experiences to develop creative skills. They have opportunities to explore and experiment with pencils, paint and felt pens. Many can express themselves well when using a variety of colours of paint. Children use primary colours such as when they paint expressively to depict their current interest in Noah's Ark and all animals. For example, their observational paintings of a snake are realistic. Some children use felt pens and crayons with a good measure of skill to produce detailed drawings of animals on their farm. They include the detail of udders on cows and horns on some sheep. Most children can name the primary colours and recognise secondary colours such as orange and purple. They mix colours carefully, knowing that white and red make various shades of pink.

108. Children select and experiment with a wide variety of attractive paper and material. They are able to use tools, glue and collage materials with confidence for a specific task. Some children, on the completion of painting a picture of a stripy tiger, cut out shapes of black paper and glued them on the painting to add ears and whiskers.

109. All children enjoy experimenting with dough and clay. They are able to mould, roll and shape dough into pretend sweets and make clay models of hedgehogs using cutters and tools to imprint the patterns of spikes.

110. The work on display around the nursery gives good examples of children using a wide range of techniques in order to express their ideas and feelings. Children use a variety of media to make models. Reclaimed and recyclable materials are used to good effect to make models such as space ships and rockets. Wood, cardboard and matchsticks are carefully used to construct models of Noah's Ark.

111. Children can use their imaginations to act out their ideas in different settings. For example, they put on hats and took telescopes, binoculars and magnifying glasses out in the nursery garden. They pretended that they were on safari and hunted for insects and animals. They were very excited to find a ladybird. Experiences such as these develop their vocabulary and creative thoughts well.

112. Children's achievement in music is above the national standards for children of this age. This is in line with the previous inspection report where this aspect of creative development was recorded as exceeding expectations. Music is used to good effect in the nursery. Children sing well and tunefully. They demonstrate a retentive memory for a wide range of songs, rhymes and action songs. Children often sing spontaneously as they work. Children listen carefully to taped music, recognising that the sound of slow, heavy music represents an elephant and lively music represents lions and tigers. They move with great imagination to the music as they pretend to be a variety of animals going to the Ark. They often spontaneously incorporate touches of their own as they move to the music.

113. In all lessons, the teaching is good and this is an improvement from the last inspection. Adults set high expectations in all aspects of creative development and help children to improve their skills. For example, children mixing shades of paint were encouraged to experiment further and make several paler and darker shades of pink. Work is planned carefully, ensuring a good balance of activities between those directed by the teachers and those chosen by the child. Targets for learning are clearly met. The children's positive attitude to all activities is recognised and praised and this contributes to the quality of their work. They listen carefully to instructions and concentrate hard on what they have to do. All staff enjoy teaching creative skills. Their enthusiastic approach transmits to the children who work with great enjoyment and pleasure. When moving to music, for example, all adults joined in the activity following ideas suggested by the children. Adults are very supportive during creative activities, encouraging children to experiment and patiently helping them to develop their ideas further. For example, children working on observational paintings of snakes were encouraged and praised as they recorded what they observed. In all creative activities, adults encourage children to be independent and make appropriate choices. For example, children making a collage of a face of a lion were encouraged to choose attractive material and coloured paper and then make choices about useful tools. They were encouraged to work well together, share resources, finish the task and tidy away carefully. This helped to develop good attitudes to learning.

114. Attractive, good quality displays around the nursery reflect the value staff place on the children's creative efforts but there are too few examples of children's written work in evidence.

