

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **BRIDLINGTON NURSERY SCHOOL**

Bridlington

LEA area: East Riding of Yorkshire

Unique reference number: 117695

Headteacher: Mrs Joyce French

Reporting inspector: Mrs J Randall  
1471

Dates of inspection: 19<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> March 2001

Inspection number: 197894

Full 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:	Butts Close Bridlington East Riding of Yorkshire
Postcode:	YO16 7BS
Telephone number:	01262 678485
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Appropriate authority:	Local Education Authority
Name of chair of governors:	Mr John Potter
Date of previous inspection:	6 <sup>th</sup> October 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Area of learning responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
1471	Mrs J Randall	Registered inspector	The Foundation Stage	What sort of school is it? The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught?
19741	Mr T Smith	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
4926	Mrs T Aspin	Team inspector	Equal opportunities Special educational needs	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils? How well is the school led and managed?

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

The school is a nursery school catering for children aged three to four. There are 120 children attending part-time for five mornings or afternoons per week. Most children are aged three. The school is situated on a large local authority housing estate on the outskirts of the seaside town of Bridlington but children attend the school from the whole town and its outskirts. Some children only live in the town in winter when rented accommodation is cheap. The school is part of the 'Sure Start' initiative. Priority for entry is given to a significant number of children with social needs. Although a wide variety of prior attainment is represented on entry to the nursery the majority of children have skills that are below average and some well below average, particularly in personal and social skills and communication, language and literacy skills. No children come from ethnic minority backgrounds or speak English as an additional language. Two children are on the register of special educational needs but many children have not been in school long enough for needs to be fully assessed.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

This is a very good school with many strengths. There are outstanding strengths in the quality of teaching, the assessment of and planning for the needs of individuals, the relationships within the school, the quality of leadership provided by the head teacher and the effective teamwork of all those connected with the running of the school. All these ensure that the quality of education provided helps children to make very good progress. Given that the attainment of children on entry is below average and the subsequent very good progress that children make, the school gives very good value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- The quality of teaching is very good.
- Assessment of children's development and its influence on planning are excellent.
- The leadership of the head teacher and the teamwork of the staff are excellent and lead to the very good learning that takes place.
- Personal development and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are excellent.
- The range and quality of the curriculum and the resources to support this are excellent.
- The school has excellent links with parents and these support children's development well.

#### **What could be improved**

- There are no major areas for improvement.

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

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

The school has made excellent improvement since it was last inspected in October 1997. Since then the quality of teaching has improved to very good. Standards in personal development, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development are now above those expected for children aged around four years old. Provision for children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is now excellent. Much thought and work has gone into the schools response to the 'key issues for action' identified in the previous report. High quality, detailed documentation has been produced to identify the key experiences to which children will have access and the skills that they will encounter and be taught. These are carefully linked to the most recent government guidelines for the education of young children. The quality of planning indicates that much work has been done by all staff to ensure that all requirements are fully met. The progress of each child is carefully monitored and attainment recorded by a designated member of staff. Areas of learning needing focused attention for each individual child are identified and followed up. This also ensures that all children have a wide range of experiences.

## STANDARDS

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:		<b>Key</b>  well above average      A above average            B average                      C below average              D well below average        E
Language and literacy	C	
Mathematics	C	
personal and social development	B	
other areas of the curriculum	B	

Children transfer to full time schooling from the nursery around the age of four. Children enter the school with a wide variety of prior attainment but the many have skills below those expected for their age and some are well below, particularly in social skills and communication, language and literacy. Children make very good progress and by the time of transfer to other schools most have reached the nationally expected levels for four-year-olds in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and physical development. Most children have attained levels above those normally expected in personal and social development, creative development and knowledge and understanding of the world. They achieve very well in relation to their prior attainment. This very good achievement is due to the very high quality of assessment that leads to planning that allows teachers to focus on each individual child's needs. Children succeed and are proud of their work in all aspects of learning. They show particularly quick gains in social and language skills due to the high level of priority that the school places on these aspects. They become confident and very keen to explore all that the nursery has to offer.

## CHILDREN'S ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Children enjoy school and are inquisitive and keen to explore the range of opportunities offered to them.
Behaviour	Behaviour is very good. Children clearly understand nursery rules and follow them well. They know daily routines and respond well to adults.
Personal development and relationships	Personal development is excellent. Children rapidly gain confidence and good work habits. They select activities and equipment sensibly and concentrate well for their age.
Attendance	Attendance is satisfactory and punctuality is good.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	
Sessions seen overall	Very good

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

The quality of teaching is very good. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Teaching was very good in 79 per cent of lessons seen and excellent in 21 per cent. There is a very good mix of teacher-directed and child-initiated tasks. All staff have a very good knowledge and understanding of the way in which young children learn and develop and the value of educational play. Teachers and other staff take every opportunity to interact with children both to develop skills, extend understanding and to assess progress. Skilful and sensitive questioning skills are used to encourage children to think about what they are doing and what might happen. Teamwork is a very significant feature of the very high quality of work in the nursery. The excellent quality of the day-to-day assessment of the small steps of development that young children make is used to plan the variety of activities each session to maximise learning. The quality of this daily planning is excellent and all staff discuss what should be done and how it should be presented at the end of each half-day session. By doing this they meet the needs of all children well. The quality of teaching of personal and social development, language and literacy and mathematical development is very good. The development of communication, language and literacy skills and mathematical understanding permeates the whole curriculum. A very high priority is given to developing children's speaking and listening and social skills, particularly in the early weeks of nursery attendance as assessment shows that these skills are the weakest. Staff extend vocabulary and teach carefully the names, for example, of colours or everyday objects. Counting takes place at every opportunity. For example 9 blocks were counted when making towers and candles counted at a birthday celebration. The length of a train of blocks was estimated and measured. Children quickly gain independence and self-esteem due to the very high quality of organisation of the curriculum and the management of pupils. They concentrate well on their chosen work and staff are quick to spot children who are not engaged in purposeful activity and gently draw them into a group or help them to make a choice. This strategy is also used well to ensure that any children identified as not taking part in the full range of opportunities do not miss out on important parts of learning and development. Children are specifically invited to take part in activities to develop areas of learning where the careful assessment of progress identifies a need for extra attention.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	A very wide variety of experiences are planned to help young children develop skills and extend their awareness in all the required areas of learning. The excellent curriculum provided gives children confidence and a very secure foundation prior to their early entry into primary schools.
Provision for children with special educational needs	Children with special educational needs and those with areas of learning needing particular attention are identified early and supported extremely well. As much as possible is done to help them learn.
Provision for children's personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for spiritual, moral social and cultural development is excellent, and is a considerable improvement since the previous inspection. Staff work hard to provide a secure, stimulating and happy environment where children learn much about themselves, the lives of others and the world around them.
How well the school cares for its children	Children's welfare is a high priority in the school. The procedures for monitoring and assessing personal and academic development are excellent and a significant strength of the school. Links with parents are excellent.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The excellent management of the school has a considerable effect on the standards achieved by the children and the progress they make.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors competently support the head teacher and staff. They take their roles seriously although they do not have delegated powers. They do not often hold office for long due to the short time children have in the school. They share a commitment to improvement with all the staff and take an appropriate role in shaping future developments.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Assessment of the quality of teaching and provision is a continuous process. The head teacher and all staff are actively involved in supporting each other and this is very effective in improving the quality of teaching. The governors have made suitable arrangements to monitor performance.
The strategic use of resources	There is an excellent range of high quality resources that are used very well. The accommodation is clean and used well. There are sufficient teachers and other staff to meet the needs of the school. They are efficiently deployed and work very well as a team. The use of income within the control of the school is linked to educational priorities and used effectively, taking into account principles of best value.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parents expressed very positive views about all aspects of the school.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No issues for improvement were raised.</li> </ul>

The inspection team agrees fully with the positive views of parents.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and pupils' achievements**

1. Children enter the nursery shortly after their third birthday and usually attend for one year. A wide variety of prior attainment is represented on entry but, because of the need to give priority to a proportion of children with social or educational needs, the average level of prior attainment is below that normally found. Personal, social and emotional development and communication, language and literacy skills are often well below average.
2. During their time in the nursery, children make very good progress in all areas of learning. By the time they leave for early admission to full time education in reception classes they meet the expected levels for their age in relation to the national 'Early Learning Goals' of communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and physical development. In the areas of learning of personal, social and emotional development, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development they achieve levels above those expected for their age.
3. Children demonstrate self-confidence, relate well to others and are mature in choosing and planning their work. They talk and listen in large and small groups and understand well the routines of the nursery.
4. The school gives a high priority to the development of communication, language and literacy skills and by the time they are four most children enjoy books by themselves and with an adult. They make attempts at writing and write some letters. They recognise their name and copy it. Some children can write their name independently. They talk about what they do, for example when working in the 'small world' area or creative activity. Their speech patterns become increasingly mature and they begin to use a wider range of vocabulary and more complex sentence structure.
5. Attainment in mathematical development meets that expected of children of this age in number work and measure and children achieve beyond this level in spatial awareness. By the age of four most children count to at least four and often beyond 10. Those with higher attainment make groups of four and five unaided. They understand the meaning of words associated with measure such as 'heavy' or 'light' and some associated with shape and capacity. The above average development in awareness of space and sense of proportion is due to the excellent range of art and construction activities provided that make good use of shape and form.
6. Knowledge and understanding of the world is above age expectations due to very wide range of opportunities to stimulate curiosity, feed children's imagination and the discussions that adults have with children. Talk is part of all activity. Children learn about nature through observing growing plants and watching worms in a wormery. They talk about what they see on the way to school and role-play in the different areas of the classroom. They learn about other cultures and taste different foods. They discuss dinosaurs and other creatures and know which live today. Through growing cress and making sandwiches they learn to cut and spread. The quality of resources and experiences offered to children is excellent.

7. Because of the very high quality and range of resources and experiences for creative development children achieve higher standards than expected for their age. They are justifiably proud of their work and concentrate and persevere well. They learn about the properties of different kinds of paint and mix colours. They join materials to make models. They listen to music, accompany it with instruments with some children able to keep the rhythm well. They dance and sing, remembering the words of favourite songs well. They create stories and act out these out in the role-play areas and talk well about the play with trains, animals or space stations for example.
8. Physical development is in line with age expectations and children develop an awareness of space and how to use their body through the very good quality and range of outside play activities where they climb, crawl and pedal wheeled toys. They use bats, balls and other small apparatus developing an increasing skill in co-ordination of feet, hands and eyes. They are taught to hold pencils, brushes and scissors correctly and develop an increasing skill in joining together pieces of construction kits.
9. The careful attention to the assessment and planning for each individual child's needs means that children with all levels of prior attainment, including those children with special educational needs, make very good progress and achieve well in relation to their prior attainment. There are no differences between the attainment and progress of boys and girls.
10. The very high quality of teaching, assessment, planning and resources are the significant features of the quality of learning and achievement.

#### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

11. Children's attitudes to learning, their behaviour and personal development have improved since the previous inspection and are now major strengths of the nursery.
12. Children enjoy coming to the nursery. They are inquisitive and very keen to explore the full range of activities provided for them, showing strong interest in whatever they are doing. They are fully aware of the daily routines and respond well to all adults supervising them.
13. Behaviour is now very good. This confirms the views expressed by parents. Children clearly understand the simple nursery rules and follow them well. Equipment and resources are handled carefully and sensibly. Bullying is not a problem and no incidents were observed, or reported, during the inspection.
14. Children's personal development is now excellent. They are all fully settled into nursery life, growing rapidly in confidence and are developing good work habits. They select activities for themselves, pursue them purposefully without constant supervision and tidy up quickly and without fuss at the end of sessions. Relationships are also excellent and make a significant contribution to the quality of education provided. Children share and take turns sensibly, are polite and helpful and show genuine care and consideration for others.
15. There are no statutory requirements for attendance at nursery schools. Attendance remains satisfactory and punctuality is good. Most children arrive on time with their parents or carers and are collected promptly at the end of sessions.

## HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

16. The quality of teaching is very good. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Teaching was very good in 79 per cent of the lessons seen and excellent in 21 per cent. All staff have a very good knowledge and understanding of the way in which young children learn and develop and the value of educational play. There is a very good mix of teacher-directed tasks such as making cheese and cress sandwiches and child-initiated activities where they develop their own ideas and creativity. On appropriate occasions children sit together as a whole class, to celebrate birthdays for example. Teachers and other staff take every opportunity to interact with children develop skills, extend understanding and to assess progress. For example, in the 'small world' area the full names of dinosaurs were used and the children's responses fully developed. A conversation, which began about a hippopotamus, ranged through discussion on swimming, the use of armbands to keep afloat, to why is the sea salty. Skilful and sensitive questioning skills are used to encourage children to think about what they are doing and what might happen. At the water tray the teaching assistant skilfully introduced the words 'pouring' and 'trickling out' and encouraged thinking about "What do you think might happen if...?"
17. The excellent quality of the day-to-day assessment of the small steps of development that young children make is used to plan the variety of activities in each session to maximise learning. The quality of this daily planning is excellent and all staff discuss what should be done and how it should be presented at the end of each half-day session. A good example of assessment influencing planning in this way was the decision to have available a football goal based on the previous day's discussion about a number of children needing to develop foot/eye co-ordination.
18. Teamwork between all staff is a significant feature of the very high quality of work in the nursery and all work together in a highly organised and effective manner. All staff are very caring and committed and are keen to continue to develop their own skills through attendance at courses and through advanced qualifications. They provide good role models for children and take care to involve parents as far as possible in understanding how their children learn and how they can help.
19. The development of communication, language and literacy skills and mathematical understanding permeates the whole curriculum. A very high priority is given to developing children's speaking and listening and social skills, particularly in the early weeks of nursery attendance as assessment shows that these skills are the weakest. Staff extend vocabulary and teach carefully the names, for example, of colours or everyday objects. They use words to describe experiences such as 'rolling' and 'squeezing' the play dough or what it feels like to spread coloured foam in a picture or pattern on an easel. Counting takes place at every opportunity. For example blocks were counted when making towers and candles counted at a birthday celebration. The length of a train of blocks was estimated and measured. Children quickly gain independence and self-esteem due to the very high quality of organisation of the curriculum and the management of pupils. They concentrate well on their chosen work and staff are quick to spot children who are not engaged in purposeful activity and gently draw them into a group or help them to make a choice. This strategy is also used well to ensure that any children identified as not taking part in the full range of opportunities do not miss out on important parts of learning and development. Children are specifically invited to take part in activities to develop areas of learning where the careful assessment of progress identifies a need for extra attention. Teachers give good explanations and give good direct instruction when required, for example, in the correct way to hold a pencil. Children with special educational needs are particularly

well integrated by the clear focus that all staff have on their particular needs and development. For example, in a music session an adult was very quick to show a child how to hold an instrument and danced with him to ensure enjoyment and participation. He then attempted to shake a set of bells to accompany the music.

20. The excellent range and quality of resources has been very well chosen to match every aspect of young children's development and these resources are used very well. For example, the excellent range and quality of the materials for artwork provides a very wide variety of interesting and exciting opportunities. Children concentrate on their work and are proud of their efforts. Praise is constantly used to encourage and support. They develop a very good range of skills and understanding for their age. Many toys, models and other objects of interest are used very creatively to encourage good listening skills and attention in story telling sessions. The use of information and communication technology is developing as a learning tool. At present it is mainly used to practise and assess skills such as matching shapes and colours. The staff are keen to extend this use and their attendance at special training is imminent.

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

21. A very wide variety of experiences are planned to help young children develop skills and extend their awareness in all the required areas of learning. The development of personal and social, communication, language and literacy and numeracy skills rightly permeate all the activities provided. A suitable emphasis is placed on increased awareness of the world, creative and physical development. Areas of learning are carefully linked together to make efficient use of time. Children work towards the most recent national targets – 'Early Learning Goals', at a level which takes into account previous experience, home background and level of maturity. The excellent curriculum provided gives children confidence and a very secure foundation prior to their early entry into primary schools.
22. Planning is excellent and has improved since the previous inspection. Detailed and high quality schemes of work for all areas of learning greatly expand the national guidance. Parents are well informed of current themes. Daily planning rightly takes the highest priority. Activities are modified from one day to the next by the whole team of teachers and assistants to meet both the general needs of all children and specific individual needs of children identified in daily staff meetings.
23. Each child belongs to a pastoral group, led by one member of staff. The children begin and end the day with their 'key worker' who has a particular responsibility for assessing progress and recording attainment. For most of each half-day session children are given the opportunity to select what they want to do from a range of extremely well prepared and very high quality activities. The emphasis on self-selection meets the needs of these young children, most of whom are three years old and will move on to their next school as soon as they are four. Direct teaching takes place within the different activities as appropriate. Staff are aware of children's visits to different areas and their achievements. This information is used very effectively to plan further activities. Children who do not voluntarily access the full range of activities are identified and gradually persuaded to become more fully involved and get a balance of experiences. Teaching staff and nursery nurses are well deployed throughout the school day. They work together as a team. Their considerable expertise is used very effectively to ensure that all children have equal opportunity to learn.
24. Children with special educational needs and those with areas of learning needing

particular attention are identified early and supported extremely well. As much as possible is done to help them learn. Their needs are re-assessed every week so that all staff are aware how to help the children learn. Very good links are maintained with other organisations to ensure that there is a smooth transition for all children when they move from one school to another.

25. The curriculum is enriched wherever possible with first hand experiences. Visitors are frequently used to extend the children's knowledge of the world about them. For example farm animals and animals from pet shops have been used to teach children about animal welfare and a ballet dancer demonstrated different dance steps.
26. Provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent, a considerable improvement since the previous inspection. Staff work hard to provide a secure, stimulating and happy environment. Children are taught to listen to each other and to understand that everybody's contribution is valuable. Teachers make the children's own birthdays into special events to help them realise that everyone is important as an individual. They learn to care for plants and animals. Many opportunities are provided for children to talk about their feelings and express opinions. The extensive range of equipment and books used is carefully selected to make learning exciting and to ensure that children enjoy what they learn about the world about them. They learn to sit quietly as a whole school to express their thanks for everything they have in a simple prayer they have created themselves. The education provided develops children's self-confidence and parents appreciate this.
27. Children quickly learn what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. They are taught to respect each other and take care of equipment. When infantile behaviour such as biting and kicking does occur, the effects are discussed with the children at their level, and parents are involved to help resolve the problem. Parents are pleased with the speed at which children learn to take turns and share, and lose the urge to hold onto something tightly as 'mine'. Good use is made of well-chosen stories such as 'The Little Red Hen' to help children appreciate the importance of helping others. Issues such as bullying and racism are dealt with at a level appropriate for young children. For example children not only learn that different people wear different clothes and eat different food, they dress up in costumes from other cultures, taste food and role-play with dolls with different coloured skin. Clearing up time is a very important part of the school day when children are taught to prepare the area for the next session and set of children. Good role models relating to gender issues are provided through books, stories and songs where care is taken to encourage the idea that daddy can look after a baby or the doctor is referred to as 'she', for example.
28. Provision for social development is excellent. The teachers and nursery nurses constantly provide very good role models. This is strengthened through their excellent relationships and very evident teamwork. A very strong emphasis is placed on children making their own decisions. Children are encouraged to work together in role-play areas, outdoor activity and using construction equipment. Opportunities are provided for the children to participate in small group, large group and individual activities. They are taught about the needs of others less fortunate than themselves and participate in events to raise money, for example on Red Nose Day. Many books reflect the special needs of people, for example those who cannot see very well, to help children understand and accept people with differences. Visitors such as the police and firemen help children understand the world around them and how to be safe.
29. Excellent provision is made for cultural development. Children discuss routes to school and what they pass. Much effort has gone into making sure that posters and

resources reflect a range of cultures and traditions. Books are carefully selected to expand children's awareness that different people act in different ways, often connected to what they believe. They listen to stories from other countries and know through dual language books, that writing can take different forms that relate to languages that people speak. They are given many opportunities to enjoy art for its own sake, and listen and dance to music from other countries and cultures, for example Spanish and Indian.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

30. Children's welfare remains a high priority and continues to be well promoted since the previous inspection. The daily working practices adopted by all members of staff are good, and levels of supervision are very high. Child protection arrangements reflect local authority guidelines and are used effectively.
31. Procedures for monitoring children's personal development are now excellent. From the time they enter the nursery, their progress and achievements are documented comprehensively and, furthermore, parents are kept fully informed about all developments throughout the year. Procedures for supporting children's personal development are also excellent. All staff know the children very well, have excellent relationships with them and respond positively to their needs. They work very well as a team and place strong emphasis on building confidence and raising levels of self-esteem. They take great care to ensure that children fully understand the rules and routines of the nursery and successfully promote very high standards of behaviour. Arrangements for receiving new starters remain effective and ensure that children settle quickly into nursery life. Home visits have restarted but, owing to the volume of new entrants, are only available to those commencing in the spring and summer terms. The nursery does what it can to promote regular attendance. Registers are maintained carefully and unexplained absences are followed up promptly.
32. Procedures for the assessment and recording of children's academic development are excellent. The process begins with an initial record sheet completed by parent and teacher together before entry. This is followed by a settling-in assessment, which is shared with parents and comments from parents welcomed. An observation diary is kept for each child that is linked to each of the six 'Early Learning Goals'. These are broken down into the very small steps of learning and development a child makes daily. These observations are very detailed and form a comprehensive record of what each child knows, can do, and understands. Termly pieces of work are added to show progress. All records are shared with parents and parents and children contribute to the final Leaver's Record. The daily observations of learning recorded by staff are shared with all staff and form the basis of an individual strategy for each child's learning. Children with special educational needs are monitored very closely and their learning planned in relation to this.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

33. The nursery continues to enjoy very strong support from its parents, and links with them are now excellent. Parents feel that their children make good progress and are well prepared for mainstream schooling. Teachers maintain close daily contact with parents at the start and end of sessions and ensure that they are kept fully informed about all aspects of their child's development. Parents also receive comprehensive end-of-year reports as well as regular information about current nursery themes and other information through regular newsletters. Parents of children with special educational needs are kept well informed and favourable comments were made on this aspect at the parents' meeting.
34. Many parents help their children to develop an interest in books at home through the nursery's library lending system. They also give good support for fund-raising activities, and a few of them regularly help with classroom activities. The programme for receiving new children into the nursery is well structured and includes a full settling in report shortly after entry. The inspection team fully agrees with the parents' very positive views of the school.

## **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

35. The excellent management of the school has a considerable effect on the standards achieved by the children and the progress they make. The head teacher has retained the confidence of the staff, governors, and parents since the previous inspection. She has maintained her excellent understanding of child development and uses this extremely well to provide very strong educational leadership. The aims and values promoted by the school support the education of young children. Such is the quality of provision that it is difficult to appreciate that in the previous year there were major problems with staff illness and a fire which destroyed or damaged much of the fabric of the school and resources.
36. Much thought and work has gone into the school's response to the 'key issues for action' identified in the previous report. High quality, detailed documentation has been produced to identify the key experiences to which children will have access and the skills that they will encounter and be taught. These are carefully linked to the most recent government guidelines for the education of young children. The quality of planning indicates that much work has been done by all staff to ensure that all requirements are fully met. The progress of each child is carefully monitored and attainment recorded by a designated member of staff. Areas of learning needing focused attention for each individual child are identified and followed up. This also ensures that all children have a wide range of experiences.
37. Governors competently support the head teacher and staff. They take their roles seriously although they do not have delegated powers. They do not often hold office for long due to the short time children have in the school. They share a commitment to improvement with all the staff and take an appropriate role in shaping future developments. The school fully meets all statutory requirements.
38. The development plan negotiated by head teacher, staff and governors is focused on one year. Is appropriate for a school without full budget control, with children who only attend for one year, and in view of the possible re-siting of the school. The plan identifies appropriate priorities. It clearly indicates roles and responsibilities, time scales, and costs, and what targets must be achieved to be successful. It not only deals with issues in the direct control of the head teacher and governors, but also

raises priorities for negotiation with the Local Education Authority. The head teacher has clear vision for future developments beyond one year although these are not recorded on an action plan.

39. All the staff have a very good understanding of child development. They work together as a team to maintain and improve the very good quality of provision in the nursery. Both long-term and daily responsibilities are shared appropriately. Assessing provision and standards attained is an integral part of the school day for all members of staff. Twice daily staff meetings and regular meetings throughout the year to discuss specific issues are very successful in identifying where improvements can be made in the curriculum provided. Assessment of the quality of teaching is also a continuous process. Through this the head teacher and staff are actively involved in supporting each other to improve the quality of education. Suitable progress has been made to meet the most recent requirements for governors to assess the performance of the head teacher and to set suitable targets for improvement. The well-documented staff training programme is linked to the school development plan, but also takes into account personal needs. The school provides a very good service for those beginning their training as teachers, nursery nurses or older pupils from local schools who wish to experience work in a nursery. Also many opportunities are provided for those in other professions such as social services to extend their understanding of working with young children. There are sufficient teaching staff and nursery nurses to meet the needs of the school and they are efficiently deployed at all times.
40. Provision for children with special educational needs is very well managed. There are very good procedures for identifying specific needs early and providing for them, whether short-term or those requiring sustained support. The school is committed to and is successful in supporting all children well, regardless of social or cultural background, gender or ability.
41. Despite a major fire in the past year, there is an excellent range of very high quality resources, including books, appropriate to the needs of young children. They are well organised and easily accessible to all. Good use is made of computers and other information and communication technology resources to support children's learning. Excellent use is made of all other practical resources. These have been carefully selected to cover all areas of the required curriculum and to reflect cultural diversity. The quality and range of resources constantly in use provide children with first hand experiences that extend their key skills and understanding of the world around them. The accommodation is sufficient to meet the demands of the curriculum. It is clean and used very well. Displays of children's work make the school a cheerful and welcoming place and stimulate discussion. Major repairs needed on the fabric of the building have been suspended while the re-siting of the unit is being considered.
42. The school secretary makes a good contribution to the smooth running of the school. School routines are well established and efficiently managed, and records are carefully maintained although the use of information and communication technology does not take a high profile in the management of everyday accounts. Governors are suitably informed of financial changes. The small budget allowance and the use of other income in the control of the school is linked to educational priorities and used effectively, taking account of the principles of best value.

43. The school has many strengths. There are outstanding strengths in the quality of teaching, the assessment of and planning for the needs of individuals, the relationships within the school, the quality of leadership provided by the head teacher and the effective teamwork of all those connected with the running of the school. This ensures that the quality of education provided helps children to make very good progress. Given that the attainment of children on entry is below average and the subsequent very good progress that children make, the school gives very good value for money.

#### **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

44. There are no major areas of improvement for the school to address.

#### **Other issues which should be considered by the school**

Implement the plans to raise the already good quality of the use of information and communication technology to the very high standards of all other aspects.  
(paragraphs 20,57)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of sessions observed	28
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	23

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
21%	79%	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 pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	60
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/A

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	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	7
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	7

### **Teachers and classes**

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	97.5

Number of pupils per FTE adult	10
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*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Financial information**

Financial year	2000/2001
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	£
Total income	167,858
Total expenditure	170,671
Expenditure per pupil	2,844
Balance brought forward from previous year	0
Balance carried forward to next year	0

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	120
Number of questionnaires returned	42

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	81	19	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	62	33	2	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	52	48	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	17	26	0	2	55
The teaching is good.	79	19	0	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	64	29	5	0	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	81	17	2	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	48	43	0	0	10
The school works closely with parents.	67	31	0	0	2
The school is well led and managed.	76	24	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	69	26	0	0	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	45	21	0	0	33

## **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, social and emotional development**

45. Provision for personal, social and emotional development is excellent. Many children come into the school with levels of development that are low for their age because of the policy to take those with greatest need. Children with all levels of prior attainment are represented. All children make very good progress due to the high priority given to this area of learning. This means that children are well prepared for learning in other areas of the curriculum and for their transfer to their next school. By the time they leave the nursery, the standards attained by almost all children in decision making, in their ability to interact with others and in taking responsibility for their own actions are above those expected for their age. No direct comparison can be made with the previous report as this aspect was not reported on at that time.
46. Opportunities are provided for children learn to work independently, and in small and large groups. A very wide range of activities is made available to children in any one session. Special activities are carefully explained to help the children make decisions about what to do. Resources associated with each activity are of very high quality and stimulate children's interest. Within any one activity the range of material and equipment provided is excellent, providing plenty of opportunity for children to make their own choices of what to use and encourage them to persist at the activity. School routines are well established and adhered to so children quickly learn what to expect during their session. They each have one 'key person' to whom they relate, although all staff have very good relationships with all children. They develop self-confidence and know that they are as important as everyone else is. Opportunities for social interaction and the development of relationships are extensive and planned for in both the selection and purchase of resources and the activities provided. For example, two or more children can use many of the wheeled vehicles at the same time, such as the three-seater tricycle. Children are given, and are expected to respond to responsibility, such as clearing up and preparing the rooms for the next session. The areas are well organised and maintained so children know where things go. They watch and imitate the very good examples set by all staff, for example sweeping up sand under the sand tray.
47. The quality of teaching and provision in this area is consistently very good. A key feature of the development of personal and social skills is the teachers' very good knowledge of the individual needs of the children and of child development, supported by detailed record keeping. The personal and social development of children permeates all activities. For example, when children were making cheese and cress sandwiches to taste the cress they had grown themselves, they made enough sandwiches to offer to others. They reinforced their knowledge about the importance of washing their hands and that the lack of cleanliness might make someone 'poorly'. Staff have high expectations of the children listening in large group activities or working with only light supervision in different areas of the room. For example they look at a book or make an imaginary phone call using a real phone independently or participate in dance and music making with others. Children quickly develop an understanding that people have different needs, skills, views, cultures and beliefs, through stories, activities and the use of well-chosen resources.
48. Co-ordination of this area of learning is excellent. Planning is supported by a detailed scheme of work carefully linked to the latest guidelines for young children.

## Communication, language and literacy

49. Many children enter the nursery with levels of speech and language that are below average. Some children have skills that are well below. The school gives a high priority to the development of communication, language and literacy skills and children make very good progress. By the time they leave the nursery most children achieve at an appropriate level for their age. At the time of the inspection the oldest children were just reaching their fourth birthday. Higher attainers use early writing to express ideas. They read and write their name independently, write some letters and know that letters have sounds. They retell a story, relate a sequence of events and predict what might happen. They discuss their work, offer ideas and opinions and listen and talk in large and small groups. Their attainment is above that expected for their age. Average attainers talk about books and offer ideas. They tell stories using pictures. They recognise their name and are beginning to write this independently. They attempt some letters. Their attainment meets the expectations for their age. A small minority of lower attaining children look at books and know how to hold them the right way round and how to turn the pages. They use a variety of mark makers to 'draw' and 'write', sometimes needing help. They begin to copy their name. They listen to stories and begin to join in with familiar words. These children have made very good progress but are not yet meeting the expectations for their age.
50. The quality of teaching is very good and shows an improvement since the previous inspection. Language learning permeates the whole curriculum. All adults miss no opportunity to talk with children and extend their vocabulary and language structure. For example, when children were making miniature gardens the teacher discussed the names of flowers and seeds. When working with dough words such as 'roll' or 'cut' were emphasised. Adults use very good questioning skills to extend and develop language and thinking. One child who had covered a large sheet of paper with many dark colours explained that it was "a storm ruining everything". She was able to explain that rain was spoiling things and the wind was getting under things. During the inspection children were fascinated by telephones. They used the 'telephone box' and the old mobile telephones constantly. All adults were drawn into extensive conversations and some children sent 'text' messages. Carefully chosen books are displayed near each activity area, for example, books about dinosaurs near the small world area where the model dinosaurs are kept. Mark making equipment is also near at hand in every area for children to use as part of the role-play, to make notices and to 'record' telephone numbers and messages. Letters are written, placed in envelopes and posted in the class letterbox. During the inspection a number of children used the clipboards and pretended to be 'important visitors'.
51. More direct teaching also takes place. Children share books in small groups or individually with adults and adults adjust this to the needs of the children. Children work at a writing table where there is an excellent variety of mark making equipment including thick triangular or hexagonal pencils to ensure correct pencil grip. Children are taught to hold scissors and pencils correctly. They are encouraged to listen to the sounds at the beginnings of words, particularly their own name and learn to write the letters. They play games such as 'sound lotto' to reinforce learning. Story time involves an excellent variety of supporting resources and very well chosen stories. For example, the story of 'The Owl Babies' was accompanied by a piece of tree trunk, on which were placed the three toy owls at appropriate times to illustrate the story. Masks, role-play and real wheat and bread accompanied the story of the 'Little Red Hen'. All the children in the group tasted the bread. Because of the excellent way in which stories are told, children listen with great attention and fascination and gain a love of

books. The repetition in the story of 'I know an Old Lady who swallowed a Fly' extended children's use of sentence structure and sequencing. The children wanted the story again and again.

52. Co-ordination and planning for this area of learning is excellent and is an improvement since the previous inspection. Teachers are full of creative ideas and enthusiasm. The school recognises that the computers have further use in extending opportunities for writing and are eagerly awaiting further training although the use of information and communication technology is already good. Assessment is used constantly and rigorously to plan learning for each individual child and all staff are very aware of each child's level of development and what he or she needs to practise or learn next.

### **Mathematical development**

53. The standards that children attain in mathematical development by the time they leave school are those expected for four-year-olds in number work and measure, and beyond that expected in spatial awareness. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection. Children make very good progress towards the targets in the most recent guidelines for the education of young children throughout their short time in the school. The quality of teaching is very good and has improved since the previous inspection.
54. By the age of four children understand that number names relate to fixed quantities. They willingly count to at least four and often beyond ten using objects that can be moved. Those with higher attainment make groups of four or five unaided. Children recognise and name some of the figures associated with counting. They understand the meaning of some of the words associated with measure such as 'heavy' and 'light'. They know and use some words associated with shape such as 'straight line', 'circle' and 'square'. They understand words associated with capacity such as 'full' and 'empty', by working in the water and sand tray areas. Children have very well developed spatial awareness and a sense of proportion. This is due to the excellent range of art and construction activities provided which make use of shape and form. It is clearly evident in children's free painting when they confidently make good use of a whole page and in how they fit construction materials together quickly. They persevere in problem solving activities. For example one child placed a quarter circular block on a tower and persisted working round the block to make the tower taller. The next time he built the tower he put the quarter circles to one side.
55. The range of activities provided include those that are especially designed to develop mathematical skills. For example, mathematical games help children match shapes or match figures to quantities. However most activities contain a mathematical element. A key feature of the provision is the way teachers miss no opportunity to develop mathematical skills and associated language in all their work with the children. For example in an activity to make cress sandwiches careful attention was given to putting one piece of bread on top of the other to reinforce the language of position. The children learned to cut their sandwiches in half and in half again and counted the separate pieces they made. In birthday assemblies they regularly count the candles on the cake and see what happens when one is taken away. Using the large construction blocks they are encouraged to build tall towers and try to measure lengths, using real measuring equipment. Pegboard and painting activities provide opportunities to experiment with pattern. A computer program is used well to develop hand-eye co-ordination, to see a shape of one size and relate it to one of the same colour elsewhere on the screen. The staff lose no opportunities in story time to increase mathematical awareness. For example in 'The Old Lady Who Swallowed a Fly' those with the lowest

attainment compared size, looked at the possibility of swallowing a whole horse and counted all the creatures the old lady swallowed.

56. The scheme of work and associated assessment materials is carefully written to ensure that all stages of child development are covered. Assessment is used rigorously to inform planning for individual and whole class needs, by the whole teaching team. The provision is very well co-ordinated. The excellent, planned use made of a very wide range of very high quality resources is a key feature of the very good progress that children make.

### **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

57. Provision for children to develop their knowledge and understanding of the world is excellent. Teaching is at least very good and improved since the previous inspection. By the age of four children have participated in an exceptionally wide breadth of experiences. All children, including those with special educational needs, have a good understanding of the world about them and are extremely well prepared for the next stage of education. Children achieve standards above those expected for their age and this is better than at the time of the previous inspection. The extensive range of very good quality resources provides experiences in every aspect of this area of learning. The development of the use of information and communication technology, although good, is not yet as strong as other areas.
58. Very many opportunities are provided to stimulate curiosity, for example in an activity to find and dig up vegetables in the garden. Children investigate living things such as plants. They grow a lot of different vegetables and flowers from seeds, and learn what is needed to make them grow. They observe the different plants, carefully using a magnifying glass. They learn about worms in the soil and how they live through setting up a wormery. They learn about different animals, past and present and their preferred environment. For example one child learned that a hippopotamus loved to swim while others discussed differences between dinosaurs. Children use large and small construction kits and explore ways of fitting shapes together. They use glue and sticky tape confidently to make models and collages, selecting their own materials. They learn skills such as how to make sandwiches and use a knife correctly and safely to spread and cut. They taste different foods such as cress and noodles. They are taught to manipulate a mouse when using the computer, and start, stop and rewind when using a tape-recorder and earphones. They talk about what they see on the way to school and about the differences in the weather. Children meet people with different jobs in the local community, such as a fireman and have plenty of opportunity to act out the role using dressing up clothes and models. They learn that there are times during the day when events happen, for example, that birthday assemblies happen after tidy up time, and that days of the week have different names. Many opportunities are provided for children to learn about different cultures and beliefs, including their own, both in everyday activities and through celebrations such as those at Christmas and Eid.

59. The area is co-ordinated excellently. Since the previous inspection the school has developed a high quality scheme of work that provides an excellent framework for progression of children's skills and ideas. Attainment and achievement of all children is carefully assessed and recorded which leads to further whole team planning to develop the knowledge and understanding of both individuals and the whole class.

### **Physical development**

60. Physical development is in line with that expected of children of this age. Teaching in this aspect of learning is very good and shows an improvement since the previous inspection. The excellent quality of planning linked with very detailed assessment of children's development is a significant feature of this. During the inspection all teaching of physical development took place outside. This outside area is spacious, secure and well thought out. There are grassed and hard areas and a special safety surface where climbing and crawling apparatus can be placed. Playground markings provide opportunity for children to create games and there is small hut with seats, which becomes various imaginary features such as a 'bus station'. Children ride wheeled toys of various kinds. Some children ride three wheeled toys and others, who have gained in skill and confidence, ride bikes with two wheels and stabilisers. Teachers know the children very well indeed and a child's daily attempts to learn to ride the two-wheeled bike were applauded and recorded when she finally succeeded. The variety of equipment is extensive and different pieces are well chosen each day or week to fit various stages of development. Children crawl through tunnels and climb on various structures. They run and jump and develop an awareness of their body in space. They learn to use space safely. During the inspection children were observed finding different ways of going up or down the four steps of a climbing structure. Some of these were very creative indeed. More confident children used the side of the structure with foot and hand holds like a climbing wall. Children gain skills with, and are taught to use correctly, bats, different types of balls and other small apparatus. During the inspection a football net was provided as some of the children had been assessed as needing to develop foot/eye skills. Many children can aim a ball through a small basketball net; some still found this difficult and were gently shown how to hold the ball to aim.
61. Children learn to use and develop increasing skill with pencils, pens, brushes and scissors. Children are taught to hold pencils properly and a variety of thick, triangular and hexagonal pencils are provided to encourage this. They gain increasing skills in fitting together pieces of puzzles and construction kits and staff are very aware of which children need extra support to learn these skills.
62. The quality of co-ordination and planning of this aspect of learning is excellent and has a very significant effect on the quality of learning and achievement.

### **Creative development**

63. The quality of teaching and children's progress is very good. Children achieve higher standards than normally expected for their age and this is an improvement since the previous inspection. This is because the quality and range of materials, equipment and interesting opportunities are excellent. Teachers have a particularly good knowledge of the stages of learning and development of young children in this aspect of learning. The daily tasks and opportunities both for child-initiated work and adult-focused work are very skilfully planned to allow experiment and development to take place rapidly. Children thrive on the praise and encouragement and become mature in using resources, making choices and improving their own skills. All possible opportunities are taken to extend language and communication skills and mathematical skills.

Children use a variety of kinds of paint and brushes and learn to mix colours. They learn that red and white makes pink, for example. They know that to use a roller or to print with objects you need to have very thick paint. They gain an awareness of space on paper by printing patterns and count how many of each shape or colour. They use paper of different shapes and learn the name of the shape. One child was observed using a brush with different colour paint in each hand to mix colour on the paper. They create pictures and patterns with a different feel and texture using coloured foam, for example. By the time children are aged around four, they can make recognisable representations on paper, talk about their work and select appropriate materials and equipment for a purpose. They learn to roll dough and clay and cut and model. The table where children make models and collage from a huge variety of materials such as card, boxes, coloured paper, pasta, dried flowers gives rise to many creative ideas. Children learn to experiment with various means of joining materials together and dealing with the problem of how to paint a large model.

64. Musical skills develop very well through listening to music, playing very good quality percussion instruments, singing favourite songs and dancing. During the inspection children demonstrated an enthusiasm for singing a wide variety of songs from memory and could make a sensible choice to fit a particular situation. A request for a song about a cow produced the suggestion of 'Hey Diddle, Diddle'. Music from different cultures was presented very well to children through a themed session in the 'home area'. Dolls, children and a nursery nurse dressed in Asian dress and listened to and accompanied Indian music. They then dressed up and danced to various other music such as Spanish and Scottish, attempting to follow the different rhythms.
65. When using the 'small world' equipment children use their creative imagination well to make up stories and scenes and enact these individually and in groups. This work was well demonstrated in the 'home area' where children 'cooked' meals, laid the table and 'ate food'. Dolls were dressed and placed in beds and prams. Train tracks were laid, garages and space stations created and sets of small people and animals became part of farms and other scenes. Adults interact very well in these areas to extend and encourage the children and near each area are displays of books giving ideas or stories that support the activity. The creative play has a significant effect on language development and this aspect is very carefully and skilfully developed.
66. Co-ordination of this aspect of learning is excellent and the planning and recording of learning is a key strength of the school and an improvement since the previous inspection.