

INSPECTION REPORT

CHESTNUT AVENUE NURSERY SCHOOL

Exeter

LEA area: Devon

Unique reference number: 113050

Headteacher: Mrs S Jarvis

Reporting inspector: Mrs A Coyle
20603

Dates of inspection: 4 - 5 June 2001

Inspection number: 198263

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 to 5 years |
| Gender of pupils: | Mixed |
| School address: | Magnolia Avenue Exeter Devon |
| Postcode: | EX2 6DJ |
| Telephone number: | 01392 255128 |
| Fax number: | N/A |
| Appropriate authority: | Governing body |
| Name of chair of governors: | Mrs P Tidball |
| Date of previous inspection: | October 1997 |

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Team members | | | Area of learning responsibilities | Aspect responsibilities |
|--------------|-----------|----------------------|--|--|
| 2060 3 | A Coyle | Registered inspector | Communication, language and literacy Creative development Physical development English as an additional language | How high are the standards? How well are children taught? How well is the centre led and managed? |
| 9880 | A Comer | Lay inspector | | How well does the centre care for the children? How well does the centre work in partnership with parents and carers? |
| 2185 2 | J Forward | Team inspector | Personal, social and emotional development Mathematical development Knowledge and understanding of the world Special educational needs Equal opportunities | How good are the curricular, and other opportunities, offered to children? |

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Chestnut Avenue Nursery School is situated on the outskirts of the city of Exeter, in Devon. It serves the surrounding catchment area, which mainly consists of families from local authority owned properties. The number of children on roll is similar to that at the time of the last inspection; there is currently a full-time equivalent of 60 girls and boys, all of whom are between the ages of three and five years. Children are admitted on a part-time basis when they are three years old and stay until after their fourth birthday, when they transfer to one of the local first schools. Attainment on entry varies, but it is well below average overall, because children enter with poorly developed language and social skills. Fourteen children are known to be eligible for free school meals, which is a similar proportion to the national average, and 29 children are on the register of special educational needs, which is a higher than average proportion, but none have statements for their needs or learn English as an additional language.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an effective learning environment in which the children make sound progress overall. It provides a warm, welcoming ethos in which the quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and the management is effective. Sound value for money is provided.

What the school does well

- Children have good relationships with each other and with the adults who teach them.
- The nursery provides well for children's social development.
- The atmosphere is warm and welcoming. All adults work together well as a team and make good use of praise to encourage children.
- There are plenty of good, colourful displays of children's work.
- Links with the family centre and local schools are good.
- Resources for learning are good; they are easily accessible and well organised.
- Parents are pleased with the provision offered by the nursery.

What could be improved

- Standards are not as high as they might be in the basic skills of literacy and numeracy.
- Teachers' planning is not sufficiently linked to the assessment information collected.
- The monitoring of teaching and learning is not formally in place.
- Governors' roles are not fully developed.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The nursery was last inspected in October 1997. Since then, it has successfully addressed the three key issues identified. The procedures for assessment have been improved to a satisfactory level. Staff keep appropriate portfolios of samples of children's work and plenty of photographic evidence of children at work and at play. Planning has been improved satisfactorily and now links effectively to the Early Learning Goals¹. However, the

¹ ON EARLY LEARNING GOALS

From September 2000, QCA (Qualifications and Curriculum Authority), have introduced a set of 'Early Learning Goals for children's learning'. These goals are a set of skills, knowledge and understanding that children might be expected to achieve by the end of the reception year in the areas of learning: communication, language and

assessment information gathered is not yet used sufficiently by the teachers to help them plan their work, especially for the most capable children, and this is still an area for development. The nursery has improved its information to parents, which now includes all that is required.

STANDARDS

The nursery has maintained the standards reported at the last inspection. Children in the Foundation Stage² currently achieve appropriate standards in most areas of learning, although the majority do not reach the goals expected in communication, language, literacy and numeracy because many enter the nursery with well below average skills in these areas and they have much to learn. All children achieve satisfactorily in personal, social and emotional development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development.

CHILDREN'S ATTITUDES AND VALUES

| Aspect | Comment |
|--|---|
| Attitudes to the school | Satisfactory. Children enjoy coming to school and are generally interested and involved in activities. |
| Behaviour | Satisfactory. Children respect each other's feelings and play happily together in the outdoor area. |
| Personal development and relationships | Satisfactory. Relationships between children, and between children and adults, are good. |
| Attendance | Satisfactory. Children's attendance is satisfactory, most arrive punctually and sessions begin on time. |

Children's relationships with each other, and with adults, are a strength of the nursery.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

| | |
|-----------------------|--------------|
| Teaching of pupils: | 3 – 5 years |
| Sessions seen overall | Satisfactory |

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

The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. In the sessions observed, 89 per cent of teaching was satisfactory, or better. Teaching was good in 11 per cent of sessions, although it was unsatisfactory in 11 per cent. Teachers and nursery nurses have secure knowledge of the six areas of learning. A particular strength of teaching is that all adults

literacy; mathematics; knowledge and understanding of the world; creative development; physical development and personal, social and emotional development.

²ON FOUNDATION STAGE

The Foundation Stage begins when children reach the age of three and ends at the end of the reception year. It is a distinct stage in preparing children for later schooling.

work together well as a team. Teachers make good use of praise and employ useful questioning techniques. Practical activities are often purposeful. Teachers' expectations are appropriate for most children, although they are not high enough for the most capable children. A few more structured, planned opportunities for children to use their literacy and numeracy skills would benefit the oldest and most capable children in preparation for their transfer to school. All teachers and nursery nurses provide good displays of children's colourful artwork and the classrooms are bright and cheerful places, with plenty of exciting photographs of children at work and at play.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

| Aspect | Comment |
|--|--|
| The quality and range of the curriculum | Satisfactory. The curriculum is broad and balanced. It reflects the recommended Early Learning Goals appropriately. |
| Provision for children with special educational needs | Satisfactory. Children are supported effectively by the co-ordinator and other members of staff. |
| Provision for children's personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | The nursery makes sound provision for children's spiritual, moral and cultural development. The provision for social development is particularly good. |
| How well the school cares for its children | Satisfactory. Children are cared for appropriately in a warm and welcoming environment. |

The nursery's provision for promoting children's social development is a strength.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

| Aspect | Comment |
|--|---|
| Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff | Satisfactory. The nursery is effectively led and managed by the headteacher who is supported well by her staff. |
| How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities | Satisfactory. The governors are fully supportive of the nursery, although their roles as critical friends are not fully developed. |
| The school's evaluation of its performance | Satisfactory. The nursery evaluates much of its work effectively, but the monitoring of teaching and learning is not yet formally in place. |
| The strategic use of resources | Satisfactory. All resources are deployed appropriately and sound value for money is achieved. |

The nursery is effectively led and managed overall, but the governors' roles and monitoring procedures are not as well developed as they might be.

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 coming to the nursery.• The staff are helpful and approachable. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• No significant concerns. |

The inspection findings support the above views expressed by parents.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

The children's achievements

1. Since the last inspection, the nursery has maintained the standards achieved by children. The satisfactory provision for children aged between three and five years enables them to make sound progress. Entry assessments, conducted when the children first start, indicate that their competency and confidence with language are well below those expected for their age because many have only limited skills. The children are provided with a sound start to their learning and most develop their skills effectively in the areas of learning.
2. All children make satisfactory progress in personal, social and emotional development because teachers and nursery nurses have appropriate expectations and place a strong emphasis on developing children's skills. Since the previous inspection, the nursery has made improvements in promoting children's development by extending the resources for the outdoor areas to facilitate children's social skills through play.
3. Standards in communication, language and literacy are well below the expectations for children's age, because the majority enter the school with very limited skills. They make reasonable progress because teachers focus effectively on promoting this area, but there are too few planned opportunities to extend the oldest and most capable four year olds. Children pay satisfactory attention to adults and listen when being given instructions and guidance on their activities. However, speaking skills are limited; a significant number of children often play silently and do not progress as well as they might in their language development.
4. Children make satisfactory progress in mathematical development. However, by the time they leave the nursery, children still lack confidence and few attain the expectations for their age. They enjoy the regular opportunities provided for learning number rhymes and songs such as '*Once I caught a fish alive*', and they make sound progress in counting in sequence to five, and sometimes beyond. With help, they can identify simple shapes, such as circles and squares. However, few children understand fully the value of numbers, and the most capable are not achieving as well as they could in this aspect because there are only limited planned opportunities for them to use numbers in daily activities.
5. Overall, children achieve the standards expected for their age in knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development and physical development. They investigate objects and materials using all their senses and show delight in touching newly-hatched chicks. They find out about tadpoles and frogs, and many opportunities are provided for them to build and construct models, pedal tricycles, and climb and slide on the outdoor play frame, with increasing control. They make sound progress in artistic activities and achieve the standards expected. For example, they enjoy painting and three-dimensional work, and are able to mix primary colours together successfully, showing great delight at their imaginative and highly colourful results.

6. Children with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in all areas of learning and achieve appropriate standards for their capabilities. They are developing their ability to concentrate for reasonable periods of time, but this is an area for improvement.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

7. The children's attitudes to school are satisfactory. They enjoy coming to school and are generally interested and involved in lessons.
8. Children's behaviour is also satisfactory and there is no evidence of oppressive behaviour. They respect each other's feelings and play happily together in the playground.
9. Relationships between children, and between children and adults, are good. There is an adequate range of opportunities for children to develop personal and social skills, including visits to a local store, at meal and snack times during the school day, and the encouragement that they are given to make choices about activities.
10. Overall, the attitudes, behaviour and personal development of the children have a beneficial effect on learning. Parents believe that the children like school and that behaviour is good. They agree that children are expected to work hard and that the school helps them to become mature and responsible. Generally, the inspection evidence supports these views.
11. Children's attendance is satisfactory, most arrive punctually and lessons start on time.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

12. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. In the sessions observed, 89 per cent of teaching was satisfactory, or better. Teaching was good in 11 per cent of sessions, but unsatisfactory in 11 per cent. This finding shows that the centre has improved the quality of teaching since the previous inspection.
13. Teachers and nursery nurses have secure knowledge of the six areas of learning. Their expectations are appropriate for most children, including those with special educational needs, although they are not high enough for the most capable children. Daily planning is sound and activities are organised effectively to promote children's skills. This has a positive effect on the sound progress made by children when learning is clearly targeted. A few more structured opportunities for children to use their literacy and numeracy skills would benefit the oldest and most capable children in preparation for their transfer to school. All teachers and nursery nurses provide good displays of children's colourful artwork to stimulate the imagination on themes such as, '*Chickens*' and the '*Jack and the Beanstalk*'. Classrooms are bright and cheerful places, with plenty of exciting photographs of children at work and at play.
14. The management of children during activities is sound. A particular strength of the teaching is that all adults work together well as a team. Teachers make good use of praise and they employ useful questioning techniques. Practical activities are often purposeful. During group times, teachers and nursery nurses divide children into small

'Pastoral groups' so that careful attention can be given to individuals. This helps children to feel secure and enables them to concentrate for brief periods.

15. Day-to-day assessment procedures are sound. They have been improved since the last inspection. For example, teachers now keep careful records of children's successes, including details of those with special educational needs. They make good observations of individual children to help them support those who require guidance for the development of their social skills. However, the useful information gathered is not used effectively to guide teaching and learning, or help staff plan activities. This adversely affects the progress of the potentially highest attaining children, who are capable of more challenging work than they are given.
16. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. All adults know the children well and they have appropriate expectations of behaviour. Individual education plans are used effectively to help teachers and nursery nurses support children closely.

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

17. The curriculum is broad, balanced and appropriately organised. It gives children opportunities for learning in all of the Early Learning Goals. There are appropriate policies in place for literacy, mathematics and information and communication technology. The curriculum guidelines are being revised effectively to meet the requirements of the Early Learning Goals in the Foundation Curriculum. Files containing photographs and information are available and helpful for parents and visitors in understanding the curriculum activities and developments in the nursery. These aspects are an improvement since the last inspection. The quality and range of learning opportunities for children are satisfactory overall, including the provision for children with special educational needs. There is equal access to all the curriculum activities for all the children. However, the more capable children are not always given challenging tasks sufficiently matched to their needs. This was also found at the last inspection.
18. The nursery follows the Code of Practice³ and has clear procedures in place for the identification and assessment of children and a detailed special educational needs register. Children with special educational needs receive good support. The individual educational plan for each child on the register states clear targets for their development. There is appropriate use of this information by staff when planning for the children's learning experiences, particularly the planning of speech-development activities at 'special group time'. The co-ordinator for special educational needs provides satisfactory support to staff, parents and children and, as appropriate, works with outside agencies and staff at the Family Centre to develop and monitor each child's progress. There are no children with statements for their needs or with English as an additional language.
19. There is limited detailed planning within the topic themes for developing children's skills in language, literacy and mathematics. This is affecting standards in literacy

³ CODE OF PRACTICE

The Code of Practice for special educational needs gives practical advice to schools and local education authorities about their responsibilities and tasks to ensure that pupils who have special educational needs receive the most appropriate help to further their learning and personal development. This is a statutory duty under the 1993 Education Act.

- and mathematics, which are below those expected for children of this age. In these areas, planning is less focused than for creative development, and for the development of skills, knowledge, and understanding about the world around them and technology. Nevertheless, appropriate activities are provided for children to develop an understanding of how to manage their own personal requirements and their understanding of how to keep healthy and work and play sensibly together.
20. Many interesting activities within the community are arranged and undertaken to support the children's learning. Children visit the local supermarket for shopping, Exeter Cathedral, a farm and the nearby park for nature walks and picnics. Parents and people from the local community make a sound contribution to the nursery activities. They help on the local visits and come to cook, garden and make things with the children. The nursery has good links with the Family Centre that is on the same site, including the sharing of a member of staff. There are constructive links with other schools in the area to make the movement of children between schools as easy as possible for them and their parents. Students from the nearby teacher training institutions and community schools visit the nursery for work experience.
 21. The nursery makes sound provision for the spiritual, moral and cultural development of the children. Provision for their social development is good. This is similar to the situation found at the time of the last inspection. Children experience a satisfactory range of spiritual experiences through music, art and dance, and when exploring the world of nature through growing seeds and observing insects, pets and chicks that are brought into the nursery. The multi-sensory room for science and the quiet story area also provide interesting places for the children to experience and develop the spiritual sides of their personality. The singing of a short prayer before lunch provides the children with an awareness of religious beliefs.
 22. Children are developing a sound understanding of right and wrong through participating in play and games activities. The staff are aware of the need to develop this understanding in a sensitive and realistic way. They generally talk to the children and give reasons for their instructions and expectations, particularly about behaviour and sharing. As a result, children usually respond well to the staff instructions, take turns and play together appropriately. During weekly meetings staff talk about the management of any antisocial behaviour and decide on specific actions to modify the behaviour or understanding of individual children.
 23. Children are developing a sound understanding of other cultures. They listen to stories about children and ways of life in other countries. They participate in role play after learning about traditional clothes from other cultures, such as the sari, and celebrate traditional festivals such as the Chinese New Year through cooking, design and art activities.
 24. Good relationships between the children and all adults in the nursery make it a secure, caring place for learning. Staff are constantly emphasising the need for children to care, share, make some of their own decisions, take some responsibilities and work effectively together. This is being achieved. At the end of sessions, children help tidy up the garden tools and the outside play equipment; they brush up sand and help wash paint aprons and brushes. Several children were seen to share equipment as they bathed the dolls and used staplers and a hole-punch at the 'make and do' table. Children choose when to have their snack and milk and most are able to pour milk into their cups and spread butter on their crackers.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

25. The support and guidance which children receive, both formal and informal are satisfactory. Parents appreciate the openness and approachability of staff in dealing with questions and problems. The teaching and support staff know the children well and respond to their needs. Overall, the care that children receive has a beneficial effect on their progress and personal development.
26. The school's procedures for finding out what children can do and for checking their progress are satisfactory. The children's individual files provide a range of valuable information about their achievements. However, this information is not used by the teachers to plan the curriculum effectively and to set targets for children's future learning.
27. The procedures for recording and reporting children's personal development are satisfactory. Those with special educational needs receive adequate support. The role of the family liaison teacher and the school's very close working relationship with the adjacent Family Centre provide an additional and beneficial means of supporting children and their families. There are also regular and effective 'Pastoral' meetings between the headteachers of the nursery, first and middle schools, health visitors and the school nurse.
28. The school policies and procedures promote discipline, good behaviour and health and safety. However, a number of potential health and safety risks were witnessed during the inspection and reported to the headteacher; for example, teachers taking hot drinks into the classrooms and children not washing hands after handling chicks and animal feed.
29. Procedures for child protection are sound and those for recording and monitoring attendance are satisfactory. The registration periods are used effectively as a means of starting lessons calmly and as an opportunity to communicate with parents.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

30. Overall, the school's partnership with parents is satisfactory and parents believe that the school works closely with them. Parents agree that they are well informed about children's progress and are happy with what the school provides and achieves.
31. Parents' contribution to, and involvement with, their children's learning at school and at home is satisfactory. The school encourages this support through the loan of reading books, providing information on the curriculum and arranging workshops for parents after school.
32. There is effective communication between the school and parents, with information provided through informal discussion, newsletters, the school notice board, parents' meetings, annual reports and home visits. The children's individual records give parents a clear indication of their progress and personal development.
33. The school makes significant efforts to encourage parental involvement in the life of the school. A small number of parents provide help in the classroom and on school trips, and fundraising events are well supported. The adjacent Family Centre is a

focal point for many parents and provides a good additional link between them and the school.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

34. The leadership and management of the nursery are effective. The headteacher provides clear educational direction and a sense of purpose. The good pastoral support of children and their parents has been maintained since the previous inspection, and the provision for children's social development is a strength. The aims, to create a safe and secure community in which children are encouraged to show care and concern for others, are fulfilled.
35. The roles of the senior staff are sound. All teachers, nursery nurses and support staff have clear responsibilities for the running of the nursery, which they carry out efficiently. They give useful help and guidance to colleagues. The good teamwork and relationships between staff help to ensure that the nursery is a warm, welcoming environment.
36. A useful development plan is in place. It consists of a detailed plan, which has prioritised targets, with financial implications, short-term goals and success criteria. Appropriate future targets have been identified, together with management procedures. The governing body provides appropriate guidance and support for the staff. Governors meet regularly and receive reports from the headteacher. However, there are no formal monitoring procedures for checking on the quality of teaching and learning, and the roles of the governors are not fully developed in critically analysing the quality of provision.
37. The management of the provision for children with special educational needs is sound. The headteacher oversees provision and provides support for colleagues by making sure that detailed records are kept of children's needs and the guidance they require.
38. The nursery is staffed by trained and experienced teachers, nursery nurses and support staff to meet the needs of the children and the requirements of the foundation curriculum. The ratio of adults to children is appropriate. Where staff are part time they are well integrated and involved in all nursery activities. The staff work effectively as a team in planning and evaluating the weekly lessons and term themes. They work well together and share responsibility for the classroom displays and the outside play area. Satisfactory procedures are in place for the induction of new staff performance management and appraisal. Staff training is arranged to meet the needs of individual professional development and the requirements of the school development plan. All staff have recently focused their training to develop their competence and confidence in information and communication technology and the understanding and application of the Early Learning Goals. The school regularly provides placements for student work experience and for initial teacher training practice.
39. Appropriate use is made of the spacious indoor accommodation and the outside covered terrace, grassed area, garden and grounds. The outside facilities are identified by the governors as an area for development, as is the extension of the corridor, if funding and grants recently applied for are successful. The indoor accommodation, including the bathrooms, is clean, light and well maintained. The walls are decorated with colourful murals and in the open plan classrooms the

children's work is attractively displayed to stimulate their interest. The two quiet areas attached to the classrooms are used well for individual and group story times. There is a welcoming parents' room and a large entrance hall arranged for parents to find school information while waiting to collect their children.

40. Resources to support the curriculum are good. There is a wide range of play equipment, games, materials for design and creative activities and a computer in each classroom. These are in good condition, well organised and easily accessible to the children. There is a good range of picture books, big storybooks for group reading and school library books that can be borrowed to share at home. Sound use is made of the local area to support the curriculum.
41. The nursery manages its budget effectively and provides sound value for money. Educational priorities are appropriately supported through careful financial planning. Financial systems are secure. Designated funds within the overall budget, such as the finances for children with special educational needs, are properly managed and used effectively. The nursery has a small and appropriate surplus in its budget. The headteacher takes satisfactory account of best value when purchasing supplies and services. The nursery receives helpful support from the governors in managing its budget.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

42. The headteacher, staff and governors should:
 - (1) raise the standards in communication, language, literacy, and mathematical development by:
 - planning more structured opportunities for children to use their literacy and numeracy skills in daily activities;
 - focusing learning objectives more clearly so that the oldest children and the most capable are sufficiently challenged;
 - using assessment information to guide curriculum planning.
(paragraphs 4, 13, 15 and 19)
 - (2) improve the management of the nursery by:
 - formally monitoring the quality of teaching and learning, and using the information gathered to develop teaching further;
 - strengthening and developing the role of the governing body as a critical friend
(paragraph 36)

There are a few minor areas for improvement indicated in paragraph 28. They refer to a few health and safety issues that require attention.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

| | |
|--|----|
| Number of sessions observed | 18 |
| Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils | 10 |

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

| Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|-----------|-----------|------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| 0 | 0 | 11 | 78 | 11 | 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 | 14 |

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 | 29 |

| 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 | 11 |

Attendance

Authorised absence

| | % |
|-------------|-----|
| School data | N/A |

Unauthorised absence

| | % |
|-------------|-----|
| School data | N/A |

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and support staff

| | |
|--|-----|
| Total number of qualified teachers (FTE) | 2.4 |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher | 25 |

| | |
|---|-----|
| Total number of education support staff | 5.5 |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week | 172 |

| | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Number of pupils per FTE adult | 8 |
|--------------------------------|---|

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

| | |
|----------------|-----------|
| Financial year | 1999/2000 |
|----------------|-----------|

| | |
|--|---------|
| | £ |
| Total income | 173,170 |
| Total expenditure | 176,811 |
| Expenditure per pupil | 2,563 |
| Balance brought forward from previous year | 14,410 |
| Balance carried forward to next year | 10,769 |

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

| | |
|-----------------------------------|----|
| Number of questionnaires sent out | 95 |
| Number of questionnaires returned | 26 |

Percentage of responses in each category

| | Strongly agree | Tend to agree | Tend to disagree | Strongly disagree | Don't know |
|--|----------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|------------|
| My child likes school. | 81 | 15 | 0 | 0 | 4 |
| My child is making good progress in school. | 77 | 19 | 0 | 0 | 4 |
| Behaviour in the school is good. | 65 | 31 | 0 | 0 | 4 |
| My child gets the right amount of work to do at home. | 31 | 19 | 12 | 0 | 38 |
| The teaching is good. | 77 | 19 | 0 | 0 | 4 |
| I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on. | 73 | 19 | 8 | 0 | 0 |
| I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem. | 85 | 15 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best. | 46 | 42 | 4 | 0 | 8 |
| The school works closely with parents. | 58 | 31 | 8 | 0 | 4 |
| The school is well led and managed. | 69 | 27 | 0 | 0 | 4 |
| The school is helping my child become mature and responsible. | 62 | 27 | 0 | 0 | 12 |
| The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons. | 38 | 27 | 8 | 0 | 27 |

NB: Not all parents responded to all questions; therefore totals may not add up to 100.

Other issues raised by parents

Six parents attended a meeting held at the school, and two wrote to the Registered Inspector. Parents expressed their satisfaction with the school and there were no significant concerns.

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

43. Children make satisfactory progress in their personal, social and emotional development during their time in the nursery as they develop towards achieving the Early Learning Goals. Most children on entry to the nursery are shy and prefer to play and work by themselves. They now work sensibly alongside each other, share resources and toys, and show excitement and interest in the many nursery activities. They are kind to one another and take turns when playing with the trolleys in the garden and with the toy tigers and dolls during the '*Tiger tea party*'. Most children are becoming independent; they put on their own jumpers and manage their own needs. They choose many of their activities and help to tidy away equipment and materials at the end of each session. They know the class routines and most sit quietly for a reasonable amount of time when listening to stories. Most children follow the instructions and requests of the staff and their behaviour is satisfactory at all times.
44. The quality of teaching and learning is sound and teachers' expectations for children's personal, social and emotional development are appropriate. Staff are good role models for the children and they managed them sensitively, encouraging them to join in all activities. There is a caring ethos throughout the nursery and good relationships between all adults and between adults and children. Children with special educational needs receive close support and make sound progress in their personal and social development. They are fully integrated into all activities, within a small group or with the individual support of an adult.

Communication, language and literacy

45. Most children are unlikely to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the time they reach the end of the Foundation Stage. This is because many have limited language skills on entry and most children concentrate only for a short spell. Careful choice of attractive story books help to motivate children and all enjoy listening to stories. Children enjoy browsing through books and know that the printed word communicates meaning. They know how to handle books and show respect, handling them with care. The higher attaining children show reasonable recall and understanding of the story of, '*Goldilocks*' and with adult support, they help to tell the story, using the pictures as prompts. However, they are not confident speakers and their vocabulary is poor. They usually listen attentively to their teacher, but less well to each other. A few children recognise some letters of the alphabet, but they do not always have the appropriate vocabulary or experience to make links significantly. Children are given lots of opportunities to make marks on paper. The youngest children confidently write marks and shapes, but many of the oldest children are unable to write their own name independently. They overwrite letters and words, but their letter formation is often weak. A few of the oldest children make sound attempts at writing the initial letter of words. These children are on course to achieve the expectations of the Early Learning Goals by the time they reach the end of the Foundation Stage, but the majority are unlikely to do so in oral language skills and written work.

46. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Experiences in language and literacy are planned and taught effectively. Appropriate opportunities for speaking and talking to each other are provided for children in the role-play areas of the nursery. A strength in teaching is the good team work between adults who support children effectively through the pastoral worker system. However, many children are often silent when they first enter the school and not enough is done to encourage them to talk about their experiences and join in with conversations. The potentially higher attaining children are not given enough challenging activities.

Mathematical development

47. By the end of the nursery, children's mathematical skills are below the expectations of the Early Learning Goals for children of their age. Many children count up to five and a few count on to ten confidently. Plenty of games and action songs, such as counting chicks, beads and pegs give children opportunities to count. However, the older and more capable children do not sufficiently consolidate and develop these activities into matching and writing numbers when counting, understanding number value and recognising domino number patterns. They do not easily count on and back in sequence or talk about and recognise regular patterns. However, they can match objects together in pairs, such as a cup and saucer for a tea party. Most children do not recognise and name simple two- and three-dimensional shapes like circles, squares and triangles, although they often use '*round*' when talking to each other during an activity. They are developing a sound understanding of measures through practical activities of weighing when cooking, and capacity when using a variety of containers for water, dry sand and when pouring milk for their own snack. Most children have a limited mathematical vocabulary that restricts their understanding. They do not use sufficient mathematical language in their play, such as '*biggest*', '*smaller*', '*heavier*' and '*lightest*', and they do not appear to understand '*more than*' and '*less than*'. A few children use words appropriately to describe the position of things when playing outside in a group and talking about where they kick a ball.
48. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall in this area. However, the planning of mathematics activities is not in sufficient detail and does not always build on what children know and can do, particularly the more capable children. Staff generally ask relevant questions and give appropriate emphasis to developing the children's understanding of number through stories, singing and participation in action games and counting objects. However, the practical experience of estimating and problem solving with shapes and measures is limited. The computer is used to support the teaching and learning of mathematics and there is a satisfactory range of programs for these young children.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

49. By the end of the nursery, most children make sound progress to achieve the Early Learning Goals and are in line with expectations for their age. Children talk, although with limited vocabulary and confidence in speaking, about their family and pets in a discussion about caring for babies, whilst they bath and dress dolls. They understand about directions, and all know their way around the nursery building and grounds and are happy to take toys and books to any part of the nursery classrooms and garden. Children are developing a satisfactory understanding and knowledge of growing things by planting sweet corn, pumpkins, herbs and runner beans. They understand that plants need water and sunshine to make them grow

and most children enjoy looking after the plants. They are developing a sensitive awareness of animals, birds and insects by observing and caring for stick insects, snails and chicks in the nursery. They also visit a farm park. Children enjoy and successfully build walls, towers and constructions with a wide range of commercial construction kits and wooden blocks. They use a variety of recycled materials, glue, sticky tape and tools to make interesting models and pictures. They are beginning to find out the best tools to use for joining and fixing things together. Children are familiar with the computer and use the mouse to drag and click the cursor. Computers are used to support learning with a variety of interesting programmes, such as colour matching and simple music making.

50. Teaching and learning in this area are satisfactory, including the support given to the children with special educational needs. Teachers provide a wide variety of interesting practical experiences and opportunities to stimulate the children's interest, enabling them to make satisfactory progress. All staff work alongside the children using the computer and support them in developing their computer skills. Themes for topics are adequately planned with plenty of appropriate activities. However, there is no specific planning for the more capable and older children, and this is an area to develop.

Physical development

51. Children's physical development is sound and they are likely to achieve the expected goals by the end of the Foundation Stage. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection. Children can run, pedal tricycles, climb and slide without assistance. They can join pieces of logo to construct models and hold pencils and crayons with increasing control. They are also beginning to undo their coat buttons and zips without help. They use pencils, brushes and crayons accurately, and they can use scissors for cutting and thread beads with perseverance. All children participate fully in the outdoor activities.
52. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff emphasise cleanliness and good hygiene and ensure that children wash their hands and understand the importance of keeping clean. All adults work hard to ensure that the outdoor area is used imaginatively and encourage learning. The good ratio of adults in the outdoor play area and the range of good quality apparatus result in the three and four year old children developing good skills of co-ordination and control. They move backwards and forwards on the model horse, and spring, jump, slide and balance on equipment. Children move imaginatively in, through and over the apparatus. Small apparatus, such as different textured balls, is provided by staff outdoors and used well to develop skills of throwing and catching. The improvements to the outdoor space since the last inspection have enabled children to have access to a wide variety of sensory experiences. For example, the good use of the adventure play area has helped to increase the skills of children in using apparatus with confidence and enthusiasm for learning through play. There are many photographs that record previous physical activities that have taken place. Overall, the daily routine provides sound opportunities for all children to enhance their physical development.

Creative development

53. All children make sound progress, building on their social skills through practice and interaction with teachers and other adults. By the time they are four years old, they

achieve sound standards in artistic and musical activities. Children find enjoyment in expressing their feelings and ideas through a range of experiences in artistic, musical and imaginative play. For example, they enjoy painting at the easels and making prints, showing excitement and wonder at the end product, especially when mixing primary colours together with their hands and when using mirrors to study their own reflections. They know the primary colours well and also a few secondary colours like orange and green. The youngest children enjoy the discovery of play dough shapes when using the cutters. They work happily with a wide range of media. All children enjoy singing and making music and do so tunefully, using actions enthusiastically in their rhymes and songs. They use the resources effectively to aid their imaginative play in the home corner and are beginning to show confident social skills when playing with each other. Resources are good and the role-play areas are easily adaptable to a variety of themes during the year.

54. The quality of teaching and learning is sound. All adults support children in their learning and ensure that they gain from the activities through discussion as they work. There is a good sense of fun encouraged in practical tasks, such as painting beanstalks, printing with shapes and hand printing. Activities are organised well and always suitably matched to the children's needs. There is always a well-planned choice of materials in artistic activities and the children make sound progress in developing their imaginative skills. Good displays of children's work help to create a vibrant and colourful environment in which all children are valued as individuals.