

INSPECTION REPORT

CAMBRIDGE NURSERY SCHOOL

BOOTLE

LEA area: SEFTON

Unique reference number: 104847

Headteacher: Mrs S. Thomas

**Reporting inspector: Michael Hewlett
1569**

Dates of inspection: Monday 30th April – Wednesday 2nd May 2001

Inspection number: 198461

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:	Cambridge Road Bootle Merseyside
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Appropriate authority:	Sefton
LEA officer:	Mr A. Holland
Date of previous inspection:	November 1997

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			Mathematical development	How well are pupils taught?
			Knowledge and Understanding of the World	How well is the school led and managed?
			English as an additional language	What should the school do to improve further?
OIN 11084	JANE HUGHES	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?
OIN 11321	JUNE HUNTER	Team inspector	Physical development	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
			Creative development	
			Personal, Social and Emotional development	
			Special educational needs	
			Equal opportunities	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Cambridge Nursery is an average sized nursery school situated in Bootle. This forms part of the Sefton area of Merseyside. There are 79 children on roll of whom 46 are girls and 34 are boys. They all attend part time. Most children live in the immediate area of the school and there are high levels of deprivation within the local community. The children are taught by two teachers, including the headteacher, and two nursery nurses. They all work full time. In addition, a nursery nurse is currently employed part time to provide additional classroom support for children who have special educational needs. The class teacher joined the staff five days before the inspection started. Twelve children have been identified as having special educational needs (17%). This is a higher figure than when the school was last inspected. A very small percentage of children (1%) do not have English as their first language. Children's attainment on entry to school varies considerably but is below average overall. More children are arriving in school with poor language skills and delays in their personal, social and emotional development than previously.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Cambridge is an effective nursery school. The majority of children are on line to achieve the national standards by the time they reach the end of the Foundation Stage (this is when they leave Reception class) This represents good achievement and they make good progress. The quality of teaching, management and leadership is satisfactory overall with some good aspects. Children enjoy coming to school with most working hard.

What the school does well

- Ensures children make good progress
- Promotes good relationships
- Provides good support for children who have special educational needs and who are learning English as an additional language
- Maintains effective links with parents
- Takes good care of the children and regularly checks on their progress

What could be improved

- Consistency of the way children's behaviour is managed
- Planning and teaching of physical development outdoors
- Pace of some of the lessons
- Provision for information and communications technology

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in November 1997. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection, despite the fact that more children are arriving in school with special educational needs. The quality of the teaching is better and more emphasis is placed on literacy and numeracy. Planning of lessons is more detailed, most activities set for the children are more purposeful and staff regularly assess how well children are doing. However, there are still some weaknesses in the planning and

teaching of lessons outdoors. Governors are more actively involved in the work of the school now that they receive regular information from the headteacher. The school is suitably placed to build on the satisfactory progress it has made so far.

STANDARDS

By the time children leave nursery the majority are making good progress towards achieving national standards, known as the Early Learning Goals, which they are expected to reach at the end of the Foundation Stage. This represents good achievement because most children arrive in nursery with levels of attainment that are below average. They make slower progress in improving their skills in information and communication technology (ICT). This is because they have too few opportunities to practise and consolidate what they have learnt. Children who have special educational needs make good progress when their achievements are compared to what they managed previously. The smaller number who are learning English as an additional language make similarly good progress.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Children like school and have a positive approach to their learning. They participate eagerly in activities and really enjoy chatting to visitors, staff and classmates.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is satisfactory overall and most children are sensible during sessions. A significant minority misbehave when teachers' expectations are too low and when rules are not consistently upheld.
Personal development and relationships	Warm relationships are evident throughout the school community. Children accept some responsibility for their learning environment but do not always tidy away.
Attendance	Levels of attendance are good and have improved since the last inspection. Children are brought to school on time.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	
Lessons seen overall	Satisfactory

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

Nine per cent of the teaching is very good, eighteen per cent is good and the remainder, fifty three per cent, is satisfactory. The quality of teaching has been improved since the last inspection with a greater proportion of high quality lessons. Staff plan most lessons well and make good use of the resources available. They know the children's individual needs well and generally set them tasks at the right level. The quality of the teaching is consistent across most areas of the curriculum but there are some weaknesses. Some learning opportunities are missed when children are given too much support or when activities last too long. This causes the pace of some lessons to slow. Most adults manage the children well but there are occasions when the boisterous behaviour of a few can slow the progress that others make.

Teaching of literacy and numeracy is successful. Staff use a good range of strategies which meet the needs of nursery age children. A good example of this was seen when an adult began a session by practising counting the number of children who were in the group, adding and subtracting as they moved around. She then followed up the activity by encouraging children to apply what they had learnt

about numbers in everyday situations. Children who have special educational needs are well taught. Staff provide good opportunities for these children to work towards the targets set for them within their individual plans. A similarly high standard of teaching is provided for children who are learning English as an additional language. Lessons are well organised and staff ensure that all members of the group, whatever their needs, can get full access to the nursery curriculum.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The quality of the curriculum is good with equal attention given to all aspects with the exception of ICT. Most of the planning is good but greater detail is needed in teachers' planning for physical skill development outdoors.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good provision. Children's individual needs are carefully assessed and planned for. Effective support and good teaching enable the children to achieve well. They make good progress in relation to their prior attainment.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. The children make good progress. They are encouraged and carefully supported by all staff to make sure they experience the full range of curriculum activities on offer.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Satisfactory overall with good provision for their spiritual development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Procedures for ensuring children's welfare, health and safety are good. Staff keep detailed records of what each child can do; this ensures children can make good progress.

The school works well in partnership with parents and they are very appreciative of the work the school is doing.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory overall with some strong features. The headteacher and staff have created a positive ethos and work well as a team. The headteacher is effective in her role, leads by example and is very supportive of her colleagues. Monitoring of the teaching and the way children's behaviour is managed is a weakness.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body fulfils all its statutory responsibilities. It works well with the headteacher and staff to promote and support the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Useful systems are in place which collect detailed information about the progress of individual children. The school has started to use this information and sets itself targets for improvement which it then measures. As a result, children make good progress overall.
The strategic use of	Good use is made of the available resources. The school does not have

resources	a delegated budget but looks for value for money when making spending decisions.
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Staffing is adequate to meet the needs of the children. Accommodation is adequate for the numbers of pupils on roll and the outdoor area is a valuable resource. Resources for learning are satisfactory and are well organised. This helps children to select equipment for themselves.

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 enjoy school. • They behave well. • They make good progress. • Good support is offered to all children. • Staff are approachable and friendly. Parents would feel confident about approaching the school with questions or problems. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No negative comments were received

The inspection findings confirm most of the parents' positive views about the school. Children enjoy coming and they make good progress when they are there. Whilst the majority of children do behave well, a boisterous minority can affect the learning of others. Good quality support is offered to all children and the school keeps parents well informed about their progress. It does this through regular feedback, written reports and parents' meetings. The school is successful in this area and it has established a good partnership with parents.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. Children arrive in nursery with a wide range of pre-school experiences. The majority enter with standards that are below average when compared to children of a similar age. This is particularly true in their personal, social and emotional development and in their linguistic skills. Standards on entry to school are lower than those found during the last inspection.

2. All children, including those with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs, make good gains in their learning during their time at Cambridge nursery. In all the areas of learning, children are well on line to achieve the Early Learning Goals which are the standard they are expected to reach by the end of the Foundation Stage. This represents good levels of achievement.

3. Improvements have come about because teachers' planning is more detailed and makes it clear what they want children to learn. More emphasis is now placed on checking how successful the teaching has been, assessing children's progress and then making changes where necessary.

4. The majority of the children's attainment in personal, social and emotional development is in line with the expected national standard. They make good progress in this area during their time in nursery. Children become confident and are eager to try new activities and experiences. They are friendly and speak readily to both adults and other children. Some seek out their special friends to play with and sit next to them at group time. The majority of the children behave appropriately and understand the rules of the nursery. They work and play happily together, taking turns on the computer and sharing the tricycles and other wheeled vehicles fairly. However, there is a small group of children who have difficulty sharing equipment and behaving with self control. At times they are boisterous and restless when working in large groups. Most children have positive attitudes to their learning and work with a sense of purpose, handling equipment and materials with care. They make choices such as when to eat their snack and choosing which activity to join. Many children are responsible for their coats and hang them up carefully on their peg. However, they do not always clear away after activities or hang their aprons up following a painting activity.

5. Improving children's language and literacy skills is given a very high priority within the nursery because gaps were identified here during the last inspection. Most children listen well and respond positively when asked to do something as, for example, when they pass on a message to another group or tell their friends to tidy up the home corner. They gradually extend their vocabularies as a result of the good support they receive. For example, most are able to retell a story they have heard and explain what features of the story they particularly enjoyed. Children like reading, often choosing books spontaneously and taking them to read in the well equipped library area. They treat them properly and turn the pages carefully. Some higher attainers make good attempts at writing their own names, while the majority are able to make marks on the thank you letters they have "written" for a recent visitor. Many are able to identify some of the letters from their name in words they find around the nursery.

6. Numeracy work features prominently and is introduced in many of the curriculum areas. Children's skills are developing well with most of the children able to count to ten and a few counting much higher than this. They are given regular opportunities to reinforce their skills in this area. A feature of their work is the way in which they can apply their knowledge in practical situations. An example of this was seen in the way one group of children was able to discuss the different shapes they had

constructed using wooden blocks. Some have a good understanding of mathematical language and are happy to talk about position, shape, size and quantity.

7. Children's attainment in knowledge and understanding of the world is on line to reach the expected standard by the time they reach the end of the Foundation Stage. They have a good understanding of their local area and can talk about many of its features. They use tools safely and know how to design and construct models. Teachers plan activities which ensure that children are introduced to simple scientific processes. They can observe living things and talk about what they have seen, picking out similarities and differences. Children's attainment in information technology is satisfactory. They are confident when they use the computer but have limited access to it.

8. Standards in physical development are in line with the expected level. Children are skilful at using tools such as pencils, paintbrushes, scissors and felt pens to make models and collage pictures. Some children can control the cursor on the computer, activating objects around the screen. Outdoors, they push and pull trucks and ride tricycles around the paths, showing an awareness of space and care for others. The majority can throw and catch a large ball when supported by an adult. Others can kick balls successfully to each other and a few can aim and score a 'goal'.

9. Standards in creative skills are in line with the expected level. Children explore and make good use of their imagination by using a variety of materials such as paint, crayons, felt pens and collage. All play in the role play areas with great enthusiasm, for example, as family members getting home from work and preparing and eating a meal. Others use their imagination when playing outdoors and become police officers and fire fighters attending a road accident. They enjoy music, singing tunefully and with enthusiasm the well-known songs they are taught. All can use a range of percussion instruments successfully to beat time to taped music.

10. A large proportion of children have special educational needs. They learn at a good pace when compared to their previous achievements. Some of them have complex needs and challenging behaviour. They receive good support from all the staff who work with them. They are given a wide range of interesting and challenging tasks that meet their individual needs and requirements. Children learning English as an additional language are making progress at a similar rate. Staff make good provision by ensuring they are able to take part in the full curriculum range. Every opportunity is taken to practise their language skills.

11. A small proportion of children are higher achievers. They are similarly well supported. In most lessons, staff think carefully about the questions they ask and make sure each child is given work that is hard enough.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

12. Children's attitudes to learning are positive and reflect their eagerness to participate in all the activities in the nursery. They are keen to come to school and the nursery is a cheerful place as a result. Most children show confidence as they say "Goodbye" to their parents; they settle quickly to an activity at the start of each session and this helps them to make the most of their time in school. Children persevere well with each activity; they usually finish one task before moving to another and this helps them to gain in knowledge and understanding as a result. They are generally willing helpers in class and the majority listen carefully to instructions. Children respond best during adult-directed activities that really capture their interest and when teachers make very clear what it is that they want children to do and how they should behave. For example, a small group of children were captivated by the story of a bear and his problems. The teacher ensured they were all seated and listening before she began the story and warned them that this was a sad story and that "they might need the tissue

box". During the story, the little bear accidentally fell from his chair. Several of the children gasped in horror and rushed to pick him up and make sure he was alright. They demonstrated concern for his well-being and ensured he was unhurt before the story could continue.

13. Standards of behaviour are satisfactory overall. Most children behave sensibly and interact well with their classmates and teachers. They know how they should behave and respond well to any suggestions from adults. Occasionally, some children do not listen attentively enough; they become distracted and stop other children from listening properly. These instances occur when teachers do not set high enough expectations of children's behaviour or are inconsistent in the way they manage certain situations. At these times, children stop listening and chat among themselves or begin moving around the room, disrupting the learning of others. This slows the rate of learning for the whole class as the teacher is unable to continue uninterrupted. No instances of unacceptable behaviour such as bullying were seen during the inspection and there have been no exclusions from school.

14. Relationships between staff and children and between classmates are good and make a strong contribution to the positive working environment. Children know that staff always listen carefully to what they say and this helps to build their confidence and self-esteem. Children respond readily to the interest staff show in their lives and most chat happily to adults and visitors about their work and what they like to do.

15. Children's personal development is satisfactory. The majority are able to look after their own personal needs and tell adults when they have a problem. Most, however, could regularly undertake more independent tasks. For example, children sometimes leave work areas untidy and this deters others from taking up that activity. Staff do not insist that everything is put away properly as the session continues and, during tidy up time at the end of the session, children are still uncertain about what to tidy away and where things are stored. They are over-reliant on adults telling them how to do it and where to put things.

16. Levels of attendance are good. Children are brought to school regularly and on time by parents and carers and this helps them to make good progress in their learning. Attendance has improved since the previous inspection, mainly because the school contacts parents very quickly if a child is absent.

HOW WELL ARE THE PUPILS TAUGHT?

17. Overall, the quality of the teaching is satisfactory. Nine per cent of the lessons observed were judged to be very good, thirty eight per cent of lessons were good and the remainder, fifty three per cent, were satisfactory. This is a better picture than when the school was last inspected. On that occasion, two per cent of the teaching was found to be unsatisfactory and fewer good or better lessons were observed. Teaching has improved for a number of reasons. Tasks set for the children are well organised and most of the planning is more detailed. For example, what teachers want children to learn is more clearly stated and there are more activities organised by adults. This makes it easier to focus on children's work.

18. Staff have a good knowledge and understanding of the needs of young children and, quite rightly, focus their attention on developing language skills which they achieve successfully. They do this by skilful questioning and by introducing new words linked to what the children are doing. For example, they use "Big Books" to share stories and start most sessions with simple number games or rhymes to reinforce children's learning in these areas. Most activities are well organised and the teaching caters for children of all levels of attainment. As a result, children learn faster and most sessions move at a brisk pace. An example of this was seen during a practical activity when children were preparing

ingredients for a cake they were making. Children were expected to measure out ingredients carefully and, through good questioning, were able to make good predictions about what would happen to the ingredients when they were heated. The adult's planning made it clear what she wanted children to know as a result of the lesson but she was confident enough to engage in discussions about other food children enjoyed. Some found the measuring task very challenging at first and the teacher's attention focussed on these, offering advice and suggestions but making sure that each child was able to make a contribution. She then turned her attention to the higher attainers, asking them questions that made them think harder as they measured out flour and water. Good teaching such as this made sure that each group member had acquired new knowledge and could explain how their work could be improved.

19. Most teachers manage the children well but there are some inconsistencies in the way adults handle some very challenging behaviour. During most lessons, children respond well and staff set high standards in how they expect children to conduct themselves. The children respond accordingly by listening carefully, moving sensibly between activities and completing tasks before moving on. However, on a few occasions children do not listen carefully enough and move about instead of staying in their group. This makes it difficult for the rest of the group to concentrate as they try to listen to a story. As a result, their rate of learning is slower.

20. Examples of good quality teaching are found in most areas of children's learning. This degree of consistency improves children's learning opportunities because it means there is always a wide range of interesting and worthwhile activities available for them to choose from. It is only on a few occasions that the quality of the teaching does not meet these high standards, although it is still satisfactory. Teaching for the outside area is not always successful because teachers' planning is not as detailed. As a result, children get fewer chances to practise and improve their skills in physical development and this slows their progress. In some lessons, adults give children more support than they need and the pace of lessons is too slow as the adult waits for everyone to finish. An example of this was seen when children were playing a game with dice. It lasted too long as the adult and children waited for everyone to take several turns. As a result, some children lost interest and moved away. On occasions such as these, learning opportunities are missed.

21. Staff generally make good use of available resources to support their teaching. The home corner, in particular, is very well used to improve children's language skills. Adults regularly organise the equipment in such a way that it provides a very good stimulus for children's play. For example, the wide range of household furniture was well used to recreate a family atmosphere. This allowed adults to initiate conversations about family and friends. The use of the school's computer is less successful because it is not always available or accessible to children.

22. Children who have special educational needs are well taught. They have a detailed plan that sets out targets for them to work towards. Staff use these plans when organising activities and skilfully ensure that no one is left out. They set tasks that build children's confidence and encourage them to take on new challenges. For example, during a language activity, one boy found difficulty in expressing what he wanted to say. The adult working with him showed great patience and supported his attempts to find the right word. She offered ideas and suggestions but did not offer a solution. The boy knew that his contribution was being valued and persevered until he managed to convey his views.

23. The small proportion of children learning English as an additional language are equally well supported, have full access to all lessons and make good progress during their time in nursery.

24. Staff made good use of links with parents to support and extend children's learning. They are kept informed about the topics being covered and these good relationships help children to consolidate their learning at home.

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

25. The school has a good curriculum that covers all areas of learning. It prepares children well for the next stage of education. It is better now than it was at the time of the last inspection because a higher priority is given to the teaching of all early reading and writing skills and mathematical skills. These are carefully planned so that they are included throughout the activities the children undertake. Links between assessment and curriculum planning have been improved. This is because all learning activities are now well grounded on detailed information about each child. The school regularly assesses what children know, understand and can do, and uses this information to plan future work at the right level.

26. Curriculum planning is good. The school has reviewed all stages of curriculum planning and it is now linked to the Early Learning Goals which are the national standards children are expected to reach by the end of the Foundation Stage. All staff are involved in planning the curriculum which provides a clear structure for the organisation and management of the nursery. Most areas of the curriculum are planned in detail identifying, for example, picking out what they want children to learn and who will be helping them. However, the planning for physical skill development outdoors contains less detail and does not always identify the skills to be taught. Planning here is not as helpful to the teaching and learning as it is for other curriculum areas.

27. The school takes considerable care over how learning activities are presented to the children. The daily organisation and school routines have been improved. There are now regular opportunities for teacher initiated and directed activities in both small groups as well as large group situations. Good opportunities are also provided for children to select and organise their own activities. This helps them to develop their independence.

28. All children have equal access to the curriculum. Frequent opportunities are provided for the children to make choices, take decisions and develop as independent learners. Children are treated as individuals and boys and girls have the same choices, showing similar interests in all activities. Following the last inspection, children are regularly monitored as they move around the activities so that their involvement and progress in all areas is recorded. This careful recording ensures that boys as well as girls are involved in writing activities and other adult directed activities. All the children benefit from each of the activities, being guided by an adult to any areas they have missed.

29. Good provision is made for all the children with special educational needs. Some children's special needs are already identified before they start at the nursery through the good links the school has developed with local agencies. Adults know the children well and any giving cause for concern are quickly identified. Appropriate work is planned for them and the sensitive support the children receive from the nursery staff and from the support nursery nurse ensures they can all take part in their chosen activities. They make good progress towards the identified skills and experiences outlined in their individual educational plans.

30. The provision for children learning English as an additional language is good. Staff are aware of these children and help them gain confidence to communicate with both adults and other children. Good support by the staff, for example, in explaining instructions carefully and giving the children plenty of time to answer questions, ensures the children can take part in their chosen activities and have equal opportunities throughout the nursery.

31. Educational visits and a wide range of visitors make a good contribution to children's learning. Visitors are invited to the nursery to widen children's experiences and support the planned topics. Recent visitors included a 'Bug Man' who brought a series of insects and worms for the children to observe. Following his visit an artist also came into school to help the children to make models of caterpillars, ladybirds, snails and spiders. These visits broadened and enriched the curriculum and extended children's learning through practical, first hand experiences.

32. The school is successful in establishing good links with partner schools and colleges. Links with other nurseries and reception classes are also good. Through shared courses and working parties, colleagues meet together to improve and develop their work with young children. For example, staff of a group of schools meet regularly to work on curriculum planning using the Early Learning Goals. Links with the schools to which the children transfer are good. The links with the neighbouring school, for example, are well established. Children are taken frequently to visit the school both by staff and family members. This helps them to settle more quickly.

33. Overall, the school makes satisfactory provision for children's personal development. Provision for children's spiritual development is good. The nursery provides many planned opportunities for children to reflect and value the world around them. They discuss how to treat animals and bugs and collect worms found in the school grounds with great care. Adults use spontaneous moments well to develop a sense of awe and wonder. For example, children watching snails move across a piece of black paper were given time to observe the delicate pattern on the shells and marvel at the silvery trail they left behind. Children are encouraged in small group time to discuss their feelings at significant events in their lives, such as weddings, christenings and funerals. Opportunities are also provided for children to reflect as they lie on the floor and relax as they listen to classical music such as 'Morning'.

34. The provision for children's moral and social development is satisfactory. Children are taught the difference between right and wrong through clear explanations and discussion. However, not all members of staff are consistent in their support and at times some misjudgements and misdemeanours by children go unchecked. For example, when children deliberately knocked over water pots outside some adults took them to one side and explained how such behaviour was unacceptable. On other occasions the same behaviour was accepted. School routines give children responsibilities. They choose activities inside or outdoors, organise when to have their snack, register themselves and are responsible for their coats and hats. However, children are not regularly expected to clear away following activities or to hang their aprons on pegs following a painting activity. Children are taught to be tolerant of the difficulties of others and many children play sensitively with those less fortunate than themselves, taking them as passengers on some of the wheeled vehicles, for example.

35. The provision for children's cultural development is satisfactory. The school successfully teaches all the children to appreciate the cultural traditions of the children attending the nursery. They listen to traditional stories and have opportunities to learn and participate in traditional rhymes and action songs such as 'One finger one thumb keep moving' and 'Twinkle twinkle little star'. Children celebrate Christmas, the Chinese New Year and Easter. However, children are not given the opportunity to appreciate the diversity and richness of a wide range of cultures. The school has recognised the need for improvements in this area.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

36. There is good provision to ensure the health, safety, general well-being and protection of children. Effective procedures are also in place to monitor children's academic progress, educational and personal development.

37. Secure child protection procedures are in place and the headteacher and staff are conscientious in their duty of care. The school works effectively with outside support agencies to ensure children with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress. The school offers good levels of support to the small number of children who have a mother tongue other than English. They soon become familiar with the English language, even interpreting for their parents. Their needs are carefully met by the school and staff pay close attention to ensuring that these children hear any new vocabulary very clearly – turning towards them and repeating a word several times, for example.

38. Effective health and safety procedures ensure a safe learning environment for children. Trained first aiders are on site and staff are familiar with the regular emergency drills.

39. Attendance registers are well maintained and the school deals promptly with any unexplained absence. This encourages parents and carers to bring their children to school regularly and children learn good attendance habits and this helps them to make good progress.

40. The school functions as a calm and orderly community and both children and parents are aware of the simple behaviour codes. Occasionally, staff do not enforce these rules with sufficient rigour and, at these times, the behaviour of some children deteriorates as they lose concentration and interest in an activity. This inconsistency does not, however, prevent the school from being a warm and effective learning environment.

41. Methods for checking children's achievements are good and provide staff with a range of useful information about what children can do. This helps teachers to plan what children need to learn next in order to make progress across the different areas of learning. A variety of methods are used to track children's progress and the current systems provide the school with an accurate measure of how much progress each child makes during their time in school. Recently, teachers have begun to set targets for the oldest children's learning and these are shared with parents who have welcomed this development. By the time children transfer to full time education, the school has built up a comprehensive record of what they can do and staff are able to discuss the needs of individual children with their new schools. The school has continued to develop its assessment and monitoring procedures since the last inspection and the information it now generates helps teachers to prepare suitably challenging activities for all children.

42. Standards of pastoral care are similar to those reported at the last inspection.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

43. Parents and carers express a high level of satisfaction with the school. They appreciate what the school provides for their children and ensure that they attend regularly. Parental opinion is very similar to that reported at the time of the last inspection.

44. The school maintains good links with parents who feel well informed about the curriculum and daily events. They find staff very approachable and are happy to come into school to discuss any concerns about their children. The noticeboard displays the current topics for the term and parents receive regular newsletters about what their children are learning and future events. The prospectus provides

all the necessary information for new parents and although staff do not make routine home visits before a child starts at the school, the headteacher is always prepared to arrange a visit if required. A significant number of families do receive visits from a team of outreach workers attached to a Bootle primary school. They work with families to raise literacy standards and this scheme is proving very popular with parents who feel better able to support their children's learning through inclusion in the scheme. Their participation is often assured by the positive encouragement of the headteacher who recommends this support wholeheartedly to parents.

45. Most parents want to be involved in the life of the school and make a satisfactory contribution to their children's learning. They support any fundraising events and are extremely responsive whenever the school asks for their help with special celebrations. For example, a recent request to send children into school with Easter bonnets was exceptionally well supported by parents. Subsequently, parents and children enjoyed admiring the colourful collage of photographs and looked for their own picture on display in the entrance hall. Many parents come into school at the start of the session with their children and share a book with them before they leave. One parent runs the library loan scheme and parents are making more use of the library facility now than in the past. Some attended a Family Literacy course last year that has led to further study and job opportunities for at least one parent. A similar family numeracy course is planned for later in the year.

46. Most parents attend the regular parents' meetings held to discuss children's achievements and progress. Parents of older children are now consulted about targets set by teachers for their children and feel these help them to focus on particular areas of support at home. Parents have a clear understanding of what the targets mean. They also look at their children's achievement folders and the written assessments teachers have compiled. Parents of children with special educational needs are also familiar with the individual education plans drawn up for their children and find the support systems provided by the school to be very successful. They know how they can help their children at home and complement the activities undertaken in school.

47. Home school links are very effective and the involvement of parents in the life of the school is similar to those reported previously.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

48. The overall leadership and management are satisfactory with a number of good features. These include the setting of clear aims for the school that are seen in practice and the effective organisation and deployment of resources. The headteacher has responded well to most of the weaknesses identified when the school was last inspected and introduced the necessary changes. For example, she ensures that governors are now kept well informed about the work of the school. She is hardworking and very supportive of all staff members, ensuring that everyone is able to make a contribution to decisions. An example of this is seen in the way in which everyone is able to contribute to decisions on the school's current priorities. These then feature within the school development plan which is a much stronger document than when the school was last inspected. Priorities are costed and a sensible timescale is agreed.

49. There is a positive ethos within the school that is geared towards providing good educational opportunities for the children and offering them a safe and secure environment. Greater emphasis is placed on improving standards and, as a result, more time is spent teaching literacy and numeracy. Work in these areas was criticised during the last inspection but the difficulties have been addressed within teachers' planning and organisation.

50. The school's aims and values are regularly reviewed and can be seen in its life and work. Good examples of these aims, seen in practice, are the way in which staff and children show care and consideration for one another. Most children show great concern if any of their classmates are upset.

51. Systems for monitoring the planning and teaching have improved but more work is still needed in this area. The headteacher is actively involved with planning and delivering the curriculum. This produces a greater consistency of approach on most occasions. She works alongside colleagues and offers guidance which helps to ensure that agreed procedures are put into practice. She also monitors the teaching and provides colleagues with valuable feedback. However, the monitoring has not picked up some inconsistencies in the way behaviour is managed and this weakness needs to be addressed.

52. The governing body fulfils all its statutory responsibilities and most of the relevant criticisms made following the last inspection have been remedied. For example, individual members of the governors visit regularly and the group has more input into the school development plan.

53. Communication systems within the school are very good. It works hard to respond to local needs, consulting parents, listening to their views and responding to suggestions. Staff are friendly and approachable, confirming the very positive views expressed by parents at their meeting with inspectors. The school operates very efficiently with responsibility for the administration shared between the school secretary and the headteacher. The school does not have a delegated budget and most financial resources are allocated by the local authority. Nevertheless, it makes good use of information and communication technology systems to order goods and equipment and then monitor expenditure.

54. There are suitable numbers of well qualified and experienced staff to teach the children. Funds allocated to special needs are well used. Children receive a good level of support that allows them to access the full curriculum range. Similarly, children learning English as an additional language are equally well supported although, currently, no additional resources are made available and so any help is offered by school based staff. The inspection found that staff working with these groups of children focused accurately on their specific needs and made sure that they were working successfully towards the targets set for them.

55. Resources are adequate for most areas of learning. They are generally well used and thoughtfully organised so that children can choose for themselves, helping them to become more independent. An exception is the computer which is not used often enough and, when it is based in the story room, is not easily accessible to children. Accommodation indoors is adequate. The outdoor area is attractive and spacious. It not been developed fully because of problems encountered with vandalism. As a result, there is no fixed play or climbing equipment and resources have to be carried outside each day. The school works hard to improve the learning environment through displays that celebrate children's work and achievements.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

(1) Improve the standards of behaviour, particularly of the boisterous minority by:

- Agreeing behaviour management strategies and expectations with all adults who work in the nursery so that there is a consistency of approach
- Monitoring children's behaviour as part of the school's evaluation procedures
(*paragraphs 4, 13, 19, 40, 51, 64*)

(2) Improve the teaching and organisation of physical development outdoors by:

- Planning in more detail
 - Ensuring that adults working with children focus on improving their skills
(*paragraphs 20, 26, 97*)
- (3) Increase the pace of learning in some lessons by
- Checking that adults do not provide too much support
(*paragraphs 4, 15, 20, 76, 83, 92, 105*)
- (4) Make better use of the computer that is available in school by:
- Ensuring it is available for children to use throughout the sessions
 - Locating it in a part of the nursery that makes it easily accessible
(*paragraphs 7, 21, 55, 89*)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

32

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

20

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	9	38	53	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)	40
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	Na

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	12

English as an additional language

No of pupils

Number of pupils with English as an additional language	1
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Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	0
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	0

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and support staff

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	2.0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20

Total number of education support staff	2.5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	80

Number of pupils per FTE adult	9
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	105580
Total expenditure	105580
Expenditure per pupil	2640
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	79
Number of questionnaires returned	17

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	100				
My child is making good progress in school.	82	18			
Behaviour in the school is good.	71	29			
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	6	18	6		6
The teaching is good.	94	6			
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	76	24			
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	76	24			
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	59	35			6
The school works closely with parents.	71	24			
The school is well led and managed.	100				
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	88				6
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	47	24			6

Parental comments:

- ❖ Staff take an interest in each child as an individual
- ❖ They help to boost children's confidence
- ❖ Children like school and the activities provided
- ❖ The school involves parents very well
- ❖ Children make really good progress
- ❖ The teachers are excellent

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

56. The children's attainment in personal, social and emotional development is on course to reach the level expected by the end of the Foundation Stage.

57. Children's attainment levels vary when they enter school. Some are confident and outgoing and others have had few experiences outside their own families. Children of all abilities make good progress in all aspects of personal and social development. Children learning English as an additional language and those with special educational needs also make good progress. This is due to the good support they receive from adults within the nursery.

58. Children come into school eager to get on with the activities and are happy to wave goodbye to parents and carers. They are keen to explore new learning, for example, baking cheese straws or looking at the snails. Children are confident in the daily routines of the nursery and many are eager to explain to visitors that when the music starts to play, every one must come to the carpet. Most children develop positive attitudes to their learning and persevere and concentrate on their work. They work contentedly individually, in pairs and in small or large groups for activities and stories. However, there is a small group of children who need the constant support of adults to help them concentrate and cooperate. They find it difficult to sit and listen to the adult in large group time or to the contribution of other children.

59. Children quickly develop friendly relationships with other children and adults in the nursery. Some have special friends and welcome others to come in the home corner to play. They enjoy each others company and the majority of children play well together, taking turns fairly on all the wheeled vehicles.

60. School routines give children responsibilities. They choose activities inside or outdoors, organise when to have their snack, register themselves and are responsible for their coats and hats. However, children are not regularly expected to clear away following craft work or to hang their aprons on pegs following painting activities.

61. Children are sensitively taught to be tolerant of the difficulties of others. Adults encourage them to be courteous and polite to everyone in the nursery. Most say "please" and "thank you" readily whilst others need constant prompting by staff.

62. The teaching of personal, social and emotional development was satisfactory in three quarters of the lessons seen and the rest was good.

63. Where the teaching is good, teachers and nursery nurses have a very good understanding of how young children learn. They have good relationships with the children and understand their needs. All are patient and kind with the children, giving them plenty of time to answer questions and develop confidence. A good example of this was seen when an adult reading a story about strawberries, gave children strawberries to eat. She supported each child's contribution, giving ready praise and encouragement as they tried to describe the taste.

64. Where the teaching is less successful, teachers' expectations of acceptable behaviour are inconsistent. For example, at the beginning of a story time children were expected to sit on the floor around the teacher. The majority did. However, as the story progressed, some children left the group,

lay on the floor or looked out of the window. This inappropriate behaviour affected the learning of others.

65. The provision for children's personal, social and emotional development is incorporated into the activities planned for all areas of learning. Staff provide a good range of activities that develop children's decision making skills and opportunities to work either by themselves, or in collaboration with others. Careful assessments note children's progress so individual needs for support are not overlooked.

Communication, Language and Literacy

66. Children's attainment in language and literacy is on line to reach the standard expected by the end of the Foundation Stage. This represents good achievement because many of the children start nursery with limited language development. Standards are similar to those found at the time of the last inspection but there are more children in the school who have special educational needs.

67. This area of the curriculum was identified as one that needed more emphasis. It is now given a high priority and staff provide good opportunities to consolidate and practise what children have learned.

68. Most children are able to listen well. In all groups they listen attentively to stories, to their classmates' contributions or to the instructions that they have been given. Their ability to listen and respond, given the normal distractions of nursery life, is good. When they come together for group time, these skills are reinforced and practised. For example, they listen carefully as their friends describe what activities they have undertaken during a session and they respond well when asked a question.

69. Despite many of the children arriving in school with low levels of language development, most try to express themselves and they enjoy taking an active part in imaginative play. This increases their spoken language skills. For example, a group of children played in the role play area recreating a family meal. They sustained their play for a long time, involved each member of their group, shared resources and took turns. Their language skills improved on these occasions because the adult working with them was able offer valuable ideas on how their role play might develop. She also made sure the activities stayed purposeful and built in links with other curriculum areas. An example of this was the way in which children talked about the cake they were making in a previous activity. They were encouraged to describe the process and explain why it was so important to measure out the ingredients carefully.

70. Children enjoy using books and they know how to handle them carefully. Many will choose books spontaneously and take them into the library area to read. The school provides an interesting and stimulating literary environment which encourages children to enjoy and value books. They understand that the words and pictures in the book can convey a meaning to the reader. Most children can recognise their own names and a few can identify some of the letters of their name in writing and displays around the nursery. They are able to talk about books they have enjoyed listening to and can retell their favourite stories.

71. For most children, their writing skills are at a very early stage of development. Nevertheless, they are confident enough to make attempts at writing their own names unaided and a small number manage to do this whenever they complete a piece of work. Some higher attainers are able to make a good attempt at "writing" a letter of thanks to a visitor who had worked with them the previous week. Writing features across the curriculum and children are keen to talk about their writing in their imaginative play, as they produce lists and write numbers.

72. Most children's progress is good. This is primarily because of the good work of the staff. Many of the activities come from children's own interests but staff organise them in such a way that children build on what they already know and they have regular opportunities to consolidate their learning.

73. Children who are identified as having special educational needs receive a good level of skilled, adult support. They have individual programmes of work which give them the opportunity to make consistently good progress. They enjoy their work because staff make it interesting and children experience success in what they do. An example of this was seen when a small group were pretending to write letters of thanks. One boy found difficulty in holding the pencil correctly and making marks on the paper. The adult working with him showed great patience, offered advice and support but allowed him to complete the task. His successes were celebrated by the rest of his group. This helped to build his confidence and his contribution was valued.

74. The small number of children who are learning English as an additional language are also very well supported. At present, only one pupil falls into this category and, with regular support, he has made such progress that his work in literacy reaches the standard found with the majority of children of a similar age. As a result he is able to successfully access all subject areas

75. The quality of the teaching is good overall. Forty three per cent of the teaching observed was very good with the remainder, fifty seven per cent satisfactory. The quality of teaching is better than when the school was last inspected. On that occasion, fewer lessons were judged to be very good. Teachers' planning has improved. It sets out more clearly what the teacher expects children to achieve during an activity and all staff contribute to it. The best lessons are characterised by all group members being stimulated and everyone making good gains in their learning. This was seen during a story session when an adult read a story about a bear and a "scary night". Such was the skill and expertise of the teacher that she held the whole group spellbound, including some children who had misbehaved during other activities. They listened well, took turns to answer and made good attempts to predict what might happen next in the story. Part of the success of the lesson was due to the high expectations of good behaviour and of the good gains in learning to be made by all the group. The teacher also kept a check on what children had learned and used this information well to organise what work would come next.

76. Not all the teaching was as good as this, although none seen was judged to be unsatisfactory. In the more ordinary lessons, activities move more slowly and learning opportunities can be missed. An example of this was seen during a lesson where children tried to recognise sounds they heard on a tape. The adult working with them asked a suitable range of questions but the activity lasted too long and children became fed up as they waited their turn. As a result, some children lost interest and their rate of learning slowed.

Mathematical Development

77. Overall, children make good progress and most are on course to meet the expected standard by the time they reach the end of the Foundation Stage. This represents good achievement because many children arrive in nursery with attainment levels that are below average. Standards are better than when the school was last inspected. On that occasion, there were not enough planned activities in mathematics where children could improve their knowledge by taking part in practical activities. Staff now concentrate on making sure children learn to count and recognise figures and include many opportunities within the topics they choose. They are successful because they practise these skills regularly, helping children to consolidate what they have just learned.

78. Many of the children can count to ten and some can count much higher than this. They use their knowledge of number rhymes and counting games to reinforce this learning. The school has been successful in introducing elements of the national numeracy strategy, such as regular mental arithmetic sessions. This was seen during story when children were asked to work out how many of their friends were present and how many were absent. Most could count accurately and then recognise the figures that the adult wrote. Some higher attainers were able to work out simple sums using these same figures and then apply their knowledge in other situations. For example, working out how many aprons were available for children to use when they played with water.

79. Children are developing a good understanding of shape, space and measure. They can make comparisons and can recognise bigger and smaller objects around the nursery. Some are beginning to use simple mathematical language as when, for example, they describe the amount of sand they have poured into similar containers. "This one is full, put it behind the empty one over there". They can also identify patterns and recreate some for themselves. For example, in one group the adult gave children jigsaws to complete. They were able to spot the repeating patterns and explain why the blocks would only fit in one way.

80. Children learn well and they make good progress in their mathematics. Those who are identified as having special educational needs and those who are learning English as an additional language make particularly good progress. This is because they receive a high level of skilled support and most achieve the targets set out in their individual education plans. Their work is very closely monitored and adapted to their needs when necessary. Individual records are very detailed and much better than when the school was last inspected. These indicate that the progress children make is consistently good throughout their time in nursery.

81. Most children behave well and are keen to succeed. A small number find it difficult to settle to tasks but when they do, they generally work well together, share and take turns. When they are required to work together to complete their tasks, most do so sensibly.

82. The quality of teaching in mathematics is good in fifty per cent of lessons and satisfactory in the rest. In the most successful lessons, adults make good links with other activities, such as role play in the imaginative area. This was set up as a kitchen in a family home. Children played sensibly, counting out the number of plates they would need so that all their friends could join them at the table. The adult working with them made sure that the play was purposeful and that when mathematical language was introduced each group member was able to answer questions at their own level. This increased children's confidence and made sure that they picked up ideas quickly.

83. In the more ordinary lessons, children work productively but some of the tasks last too long and this slows their rate of learning. An example of this was seen when a group were playing a board game. They were able to talk about the shapes and sizes of the figures they were using but the discussion lasted too long and the adult gave the children many of the answers. They were given too much support.

Knowledge and Understanding of the World

84. The majority of children are on course to reach the expected standard by the time they reach the end of the Foundation Stage. They are provided with many good opportunities for learning through well organised classroom activities. They respond well to these. Standards are similar to those found during the last inspection.

85. Children are beginning to understand simple scientific processes. They learn to observe carefully and describe accurately what they see. For example, in one activity they studied snails that had been brought into school as part of a topic on minibeasts. They used magnifiers to look more closely and made good attempts at describing what kind of environment the snails would need if they were to flourish.

86. Most children can select construction materials sensibly and safely. They are good at planning what they want to make and know how different materials can be joined, showing good manipulative skills. A good example of this was seen when a small group of children worked hard to build towers with wooden blocks and then joining them with planks as a bridge. They showed good cooperative skills as they shared the workload and discussed why a solid foundation was so important if their building was to survive.

87. Children are very keen to talk about their family and friends and this is a very positive feature of children's work in this area. One boy talked excitedly about his mum's visit to hospital and how soon he would be having a baby sister. Many children can recognise features of their local area and know parts of their address. Their work in this area is particularly effective as they are introduced to simple maps which show where they live. Many can make good attempts at drawing their own journeys to school and these are displayed around the classroom. Another positive feature is the way in which they are developing an understanding about their own and other people's cultures and beliefs. An example of this is the way that festivals such as Christmas and Chinese New Year are celebrated.

88. Most children behave well and this has a positive effect on the quality of what they achieve. It is evident in the way they share tools and materials and take turns with equipment. They are comfortable with the routines of the nursery and are keen to talk about their activities with adults.

89. Children are confident in their use of information and communication technology. When working on the computer, they know that moving the mouse will make changes on the screen and many show competence in selecting from different options. However, they get too few opportunities to practise and extend these skills because the one computer is not always available and, when it is based in the story room, it is inaccessible.

90. All children are making good progress in this curriculum area, except in ICT where their progress is satisfactory. The good progress is due to the interesting range of lessons they are offered, which have clear learning objectives and are adapted to meet the needs of individual children. Planning is much more effective than when the school was last inspected.

91. Three quarters of the teaching in this area is good, with the remaining quarter satisfactory. Staff set up activities which are interesting and keep children involved. As a result they learn more quickly and are able to consolidate their learning through a series of related experiences. A good example of this was seen as a group of children recorded their science work by drawing the snails that they were looking at. The adult supported their work well, suggesting possible materials they might use but insisting that the children made the decisions themselves.

92. In the more ordinary lessons, some learning opportunities were missed. During a craft activity, for example, a group of children were building models. The adult working with them concentrated on completing the task and gave children few opportunities to discuss what they were doing or look for alternative approaches.

Physical development

93. Children are on course to meet the expected standards by the time they reach the end of the Foundation Stage.

94. They are given a wide range of activities indoors to develop their manipulative skills and co-ordination. They use pencils, brushes, scissors and tools confidently to make models and collage pictures. Children build towers and platforms with care using large construction blocks and complete a variety of jigsaws with dexterity.

95. Children play outside daily and make good use of the playground and grassed area as they run, jump and hop. They enthusiastically push and pull a variety of outdoor vehicles and ride a range of tricycles around the paths showing growing control of speed and direction. Most children have a good awareness of space and demonstrate care for those around them. The majority of the children can work together successfully with an adult in a small group to improve their skills of throwing and catching large balls. Some children can work successfully as a 'team' kicking the ball to each other and also scoring 'goals'. As a result, most children, including those with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language, make good progress in this area.

96. The teaching to promote physical skill development was satisfactory in over half the lessons and the rest was good. Where the teaching is good, nursery nurses and teachers provide a wide range of opportunities for children to develop hand control and co-ordination. They give clear instructions and sensitively adjust pencil and paintbrush grip to ensure bad habits do not occur.

97. Some of the less successful teaching happens outdoors. Physical skills are not consistently taught by all staff to extend children's learning. This is because the planning for the physical skills to be taught is insufficiently detailed and some adults are unsure of the focus of all the activities. For example, although a group of children throwing balls into a net were initially encouraged by one adult to stand in the right place and aim at the net carefully, when she left the activity and another adult joined them, opportunities for children to practise and extend their skills were missed. There are occasions when adults give the children too many instructions during an activity and the pace of the lesson slows. An example of this was seen when a group of children were given the same instructions many times over before starting to move and jump. After a while some children lost interest and walked away.

98. Children have free choice to access the outside area, and can stay in or go out as they please. The number of children using the outside is carefully monitored and staff respond quickly to ensure adequate levels of supervision.

99. The school has adequate equipment, indoors and out, to develop physical skills.

Creative Development

100. The children's attainment in this area of learning is in line to meet the expected level by the end of the Foundation Stage. All children make good progress in improving their imaginative and creative skills.

101. Children are enthusiastic and keen to become involved in all creative activities, enjoying the freedom to express ideas and feelings. Creative activities are available every day and children have free access to paint and paper at all times. They enjoy painting pictures using a range of colours and children are encouraged to look closely at the snails to make observational drawings using pencils and crayons. Most children use scissors, brushes, spatulas and glue with confidence as they cut and stick assorted paper and straws to make a collage.

102. All children enjoy music. They memorise counting and action songs and sing and complete actions with confidence. Children use a good range of percussion instruments to express rhythms, using techniques such as beating, tapping and shaking. They can accompany taped music and some can accompany their own singing of traditional and popular songs.

103. Children have frequent opportunities for imaginative play. They act out their ideas in a variety of situations. They demonstrate imagination and ingenuity by acting out family life in the home corner, cooking and eating dinner then washing up afterwards. Outdoors, they wear police and fire fighter hats when riding the trucks and tricycles to act out a road accident. All these activities add a great deal to the children's all round creative development.

104. The quality of the teaching in over half of the lessons was satisfactory and the rest was good. Where the teaching was good, for example, the teacher carefully focused the children on the objects they were going to observe and draw. She gave ready praise and encouragement as they drew the shape of a shell and decorated it with patterns. Children developed enthusiasm and confidence as the teacher valued their individual skills and capabilities.

105. However, the teaching is less successful when the adult support is not sustained throughout an activity. A group of children, for example, who were making a collage picture worked very productively when supported by an adult. When she moved to support another activity some became distracted and the pace of their learning slowed.

106. Teachers organise the curriculum effectively. The range of experiences provided are well matched to the needs of the children. All children are confident in selecting materials from a group of resources and in using them independently or as part of a group.

107. All staff place great value on the children's work. The children use a wide range of materials to create pictures, patterns and collage and their success is shown in the bright and colourful displays around the teaching areas which contribute to children's learning by recognising their efforts.