

INSPECTION REPORT

LARK HILL NURSERY SCHOOL

Stockport

LEA area: Stockport

Unique reference number: 106016

Headteacher: Mrs L Foster

Reporting inspector: Mr M Greenhalgh
10422

Dates of inspection: 2nd – 3rd October 2000

Inspection number: 224086

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Nursery
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 4 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Northgate Road Edgeley Stockport Cheshire
Postcode:	SK3 9PH
Telephone number:	0161 480 0867
Fax number:	-
Appropriate authority:	Stockport Local Education Authority
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs K Fletcher
Date of previous inspection:	28 th April 1997

© Crown copyright 2000

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	
Mr M Greenhalgh (10422)	Registered inspector
Mr T Heavey (19342)	Lay inspector

The inspection contractor was:

Bench Marque Limited
National Westminster Bank Chambers
Victoria Street
Burnham-on-Sea
Somerset
TA8 1AN

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Registrar
Inspection Quality Division
The Office for Standards in Education
Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	5
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL	9
WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED	14
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	15
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	16

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is a nursery school for children aged between three and four years old. In this present year, eight children attend full-time and 64 attend for half of a full week. Part-time children either attend for five mornings, five afternoons or for two-and-a-half consecutive days. The school draws children from a wide range of social backgrounds but overall children's home backgrounds are less favourable than is usual. The majority of children have below to average attainment on entry to the school. A few are of above average attainment. A significant number of children is identified as having special educational needs. At present, three children are on the later stages of the special needs register, with several other children receiving speech therapy. Overall, attainment on entry is below average.

At present, there are two children on roll from ethnic minority backgrounds.

The inspection took place when a third of the children had been in the nursery for a week or less than a week. This is because there was a staggered intake over a three week period.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a very effective school providing high quality provision for all the children that attend. Parents and other members of the community are very complimentary about the quality of the school's leadership and management and the efforts made to improve what is already of a high standard. The inspection team agrees with the local community's perceptions. The school provides well for the needs of a wide range of children from varying social backgrounds and of varying levels of ability. The success in meeting these individual needs across all aspects of learning is a significant factor in the overall success of the school. The quality of teaching in the school is very good and this leads to the very good progress made by children in all aspects of their learning. The school provides very good value for money.

What the school does well

- The school provides a wide variety of high quality opportunities for children across all aspects of learning and, as a result, children of all abilities make very good progress towards achieving the expected standards and beyond.
- The very good teamwork between the headteacher and staff ensures high quality curricular provision.
- The quality of teaching is of a very good standard across all areas of the curriculum.
- The high value the school places on the role of the parent results in the very successful partnership established with them.

What could be improved

- The governors' involvement in analysing school performance.
- The use of the school's detailed and very useful assessment and recording systems to help analyse the rates of progress made by individual children.
- Security arrangements to reduce the levels of vandalism and theft that occur outside school hours.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school is constantly aiming to improve on the very good standards of education it already provides. All issues for improvement identified in the last inspection report in April 1997 have been addressed successfully. These include improving the school's accommodation by the installation of a shower and non-slip surface in the children's bathroom to ensure the health and safety of the children, developing outdoor facilities so that they are more physically challenging, and having good links between the priorities identified for school improvement and spending commitments. Since the last inspection the school has also made good improvements in the achievements of children in literacy, numeracy and

information and communication technology. Good improvement is also noted in the very successful involvement of parents in their children's learning.

STANDARDS

The children make very good progress towards achieving expected standards across all aspects of their learning. At the time of the inspection, the children had been in school for only a very short period of time but children of all abilities had already begun to make very good progress in the key areas of personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, and mathematical development. From observations of lessons during the inspection and the detailed records kept on children from last year, it is clear that children achieve very well in these areas throughout the year and in the areas of knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development. These achievements are mainly due to the richness of the activities provided by the school and the very good quality of teaching and support given by the teachers, nursery nurses and other staff in the school.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Children settle in to school very quickly and are keen and happy to follow activities directed by the teachers as well as to choose activities independently.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. The vast majority of children behave extremely well towards adults and other children and follows the codes of behaviour set by the school.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Although in school for only a very short period of time children are already developing good relationships with each other. They show a keenness to work and play alongside each other and are beginning to show respect for each other's well being.
Attendance	Satisfactory. The large majority of children, even at this early stage of the school year, attends regularly and does not miss sessions.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Under five
Lessons seen overall	Very good

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

It is full credit to the sympathetic understanding of individual children's needs demonstrated by all members of the staff that children settle very quickly into the life of the school. The initial focus on teaching the basics of personal, social and emotional development is a key factor in enabling the children to settle well to other tasks that involve the development of the children's skills of communication, language, literacy and numeracy. The planning and organisation of this open-plan nursery is also of a high standard and enables a smooth transition for the children from one activity to another. This process achieves a minimal of disruption and this makes a significant contribution to the daily lives of the children and their achievements.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Excellent. The planning and organisation of the curriculum ensures that all children, whether part-time or full-time, receive a rich and well balanced mixture of activities. All areas of learning are very well covered and meet statutory requirements.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Excellent. Accurate early assessments made by the staff ensure that outside specialists are brought in as early as possible to assess the needs of individual children. Very good records are kept and these enable activities and expectations to be effectively matched to each child's needs.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Excellent. The school quickly assesses the needs of these children to enable support to be provided. This term, a bilingual assistant has already been secured to help language development and to ensure the children achieve maximum benefit from the full range of activities.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Excellent. The school provides a wealth of opportunities for children to develop a spiritual understanding of the world around them. There is a particular emphasis during all teaching times on the moral and social development of the children. Throughout the course of the year the school provides a good variety of activities to enhance the children's understanding of different cultures.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good. All members of staff in school demonstrate a high level of caring for each and every child in the school. They know the children extremely well and support their needs effectively at all times. The school emphasises the need to encourage parental support and develops excellent relationships with them to ensure appropriate support is given. All child protection procedures are in place.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher and staff are extremely dedicated to providing as high a quality of provision for children as possible. The enthusiasm and team spirit amongst the staff is very high and there is a determination to improve further. The planning and organisation of day-to-day activities ensures the school is run smoothly.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. The governors are very supportive of the school. They carry out their present duties effectively and fulfil their expected role. Governors do not, at present, have in place systems that will enable them to take on new responsibilities to assess the school's performance.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. The school's analysis of its own performance is very evaluative. As a result, the school is able to prioritise a manageable number of areas for further improvement. These focus effectively on the key aspects of literacy, numeracy and parental involvement.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. Financial resources are used effectively to support educational priorities identified by the school. Staff and learning resources are extremely well deployed to ensure a wide variety of learning opportunities. All corners of the school's available accommodation are extremely well used.

The school is unfortunate in that security arrangements are not sufficient enough to stop a high level of vandalism and theft. The most recent break-in has left the school without a computer and has caused considerable disruption to administrative procedures. This undermines the work of the school immeasurably and reduces the effectiveness with which resources are used.

The school has good systems in place to ensure it achieves best value. The school is taking on board the latest assessment procedures to help analyse the rates of progress made by individual children and to identify how well it is doing in comparison to similar schools. The opportunities it provides are constantly under review. The school also seeks the views of parents and responds effectively to initiatives to help meet their needs. When spending takes place the school seeks to establish what the best deals are to ensure maximum benefit from the amounts spent.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They are kept well informed about the progress their children make and of events in the school. • All members of the school's staff are always available to offer advice and support and are very approachable. • The school is well led and managed. • All members of staff give a great deal of their time to get it right for the children. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents had no suggestions as to how the school could be improved, but did express concern about the levels of vandalism.

The inspection team agrees with all the positive views expressed by the parents. The team also shares the concerns expressed by the parents on the level of disruption caused through vandalism and theft.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

The school provides a wide variety of high quality opportunities for children across all aspects of learning and, as a result, children of all abilities make very good progress towards achieving the expected standards and beyond

1. A great deal of time and effort is put in by staff to plan curricular opportunities. These opportunities do not only cover all aspects of the Foundation Curriculum, but also meet the needs of individual children effectively. For children with special educational needs this means that individual learning programmes are developed successfully to help ensure that the learning targets are met. For more able children, learning objectives in the National Curriculum are used effectively to ensure they are sufficiently challenged within the Foundation Stage.
2. During the time of the inspection, a wide range of activities was available for children to complete and to develop interest, excitement and motivation enabling them to make very good progress. The school ensures that the activities are balanced effectively across personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development. At this early part of the year the focus is on the personal, social and emotional development and, as a result, children settle in to school very quickly. There is also keenness on the part of the school to focus on literacy and numeracy skills so that early assessments of the children's capabilities in these areas are made. This ensures that the teachers know the children extremely well and can provide activities that challenge individual children and enable them to make very good progress.
3. The emphasis on the personal, social and emotional aspect of the children's learning ensures that there are plenty of opportunities available for children to settle in to routines, develop relationships with other children, to learn what is right and wrong and to understand the consequences of their own actions. On entry to the school at the start of each session, all children go to their small teaching groups. This enables them to build up a relationship with one particular adult, and also helps them to concentrate on instructions being given by the teacher about the day. This practice is effective in creating a structure to the day and building up confidences in the children quickly. This, in turn, enables members of the teaching team to ensure that all children feel secure and are ready to try out one of the activities available to them. It also enables the identification of those who may be feeling less secure in their learning after a long weekend. This is particularly important for those children who attend 2½ consecutive days and will not have attended the school for 4½ days in total. The school has already identified this as a significant issue for those settling in to school under this new option. Throughout the day members of the teaching team observe children carefully to ensure they remain alert to the needs of individuals. On more than one occasion during the inspection, this alertness enabled staff to spot toiletry needs very quickly and to support children on activities when specific needs were identified. In one instance, an unsettled child decided to wander from a teaching group. The assistant immediately went to support the child enabling the teacher to calmly finish off that part of the activity before attending to the individual child's needs. Both acts ensured that the one child who was unsettled did not affect other children in any way. This was a fine example of the excellent team work taking place in the school.

4. At other times of the day children are constantly encouraged to share and show respect for each other whilst they are sharing the wide variety of resources available to them. During snack times, children are encouraged to pass the milk and bananas out to others, rather than drinking and eating first themselves, and to take turns. This develops respect for the needs of the others and reinforces the importance of taking turns. Another good example of this was at the birthday party, when the two birthday children were asked to take around the plates with birthday cake on them so that all the other children received theirs before they could indulge themselves.
5. The school provides a great deal of opportunity for children to interact with each other and to take turns in conversation. The settling in session with their teacher is a good example of this as are group reading times when children are asked, in turn, to explain what is happening in the story, or to try to predict what happens next. This enables very good progress to be made in the children's language, literacy and communication skills. Music times are also used effectively to promote the taking of turns and to follow instructions carefully. These times also encourage children to listen attentively to stories and songs for a sustained period of time and to learn sequences. During group times and when staff work alongside children on their own chosen activities there is a consistent encouragement for children to speak clearly and with confidence and to show good manners, particularly 'please' and 'thank you'. The home corner is used effectively to develop language related to their home circumstances and this gives the children good opportunities to act out their own experiences. The children's names are displayed at several locations on tags and on cards that the children have to pick up each morning to show that they have arrived. Within this context there are many occasions during a session when children make very good progress in recognising their own name and for the more able to sound out letters.
6. Very good progress is made in the children's mathematical development as a result of the many opportunities provided for children to say and use number names in order up to and beyond ten. These occur during specific mathematical development time but also across other areas of learning. Songs are often used to promote counting on and back, such as the birthday party song. During physical development time children are encouraged, for example, to count the number of times they throw a ball through a hoop. Members of staff also encourage children, particularly the most able at this time of the year, to add on and subtract one from numbers to ten. Children also make very good progress in the way they compare and measure. A good example of this was during a session on developing recognition of two-dimensional shapes such as square, circle and triangle, when children were asked to point to the 'biggest' and 'smallest'.
7. Teachers provide children with a wide range of opportunities to use different materials enabling children to make very good progress in their physical and creative development. Cornflour and playdough is used effectively to enable children to appreciate the texture of different materials. Children are also asked to help to mix the ingredients for the birthday cake thus providing them with the opportunity to see how some materials can change form. As part of their creative development activities children look at sunflowers and leaves to help them to appreciate the detail within living things and how they appear similar and yet are different. Different types of construction materials are provided for the children to give them opportunities to assemble and construct objects such as vehicles and buildings. The school also has six computers enabling children to make very good progress in the way they control movement on the screen using a 'mouse'. A wide range of opportunities is provided

for children to explore simple programs and gain confidence in the use of information and communication technology, many of which are linked to ensuring children make very good gains in their literacy and numeracy skills. On one program for example, children had to count objects, match them to a number and then manoeuvre a person up ladders and down slides using a mouse to arrive at the correct number. The sand tray is used effectively to help children to construct a landscape, and the introduction of dinosaur models enabled staff to encourage conversations about different types of animals that lived in the past or that live in the present.

8. The school provides many opportunities for children to develop physically. The outside area has a demanding cycle track with hills and corners and this ensures children develop their pushing, pulling and pedalling movements. There is also a climbing frame to challenge the children's agility of travelling around, under and over the bars. A wide variety of other activities are organised to enable the children to move with confidence, imagination and in safety. Examples of this are the music and movement activities when children are asked to interpret music and to move in and out of each other without bumping. Good opportunities are provided for children to develop hand/eye co-ordination, such as throwing balls through hoops suspended in the air, and cutting out shapes using scissors.
9. The school is set up well to encourage the children to appreciate the arts and to encourage them to create their own pictures and movements. Members of staff play different types of music to which children are encouraged to move in different ways, for example like giants and fairies, and to use objects such as streamers to interpret the mood of music set at different tempos and from different cultures. Different types of materials are made available for children to create pictures in varying styles, pictures by different artists such as Monet are used to help stimulate the children. Music sessions are also used to enable children to listen to and play different instruments. One member of staff played a clarinet whilst the children listened and then joined in by playing percussion instruments. During the inspection, the children were also introduced to the sound of a xylophone and given the opportunity to play it.

The very good teamwork between the headteacher and staff ensures high quality curricular provision

10. The success of the wide range of opportunities available to the children is very much down to the way the headteacher and staff work together as a team. All sessions are extremely well organised with all members of staff clear about each other's roles and the expectations placed upon them. The interaction and support between staff ensures that the children settle quickly in to school and move smoothly between activities. Each session is seamless and without delay. The time available is used to the full and the care and support given to the children is constantly at a high level. An impressive feature of the teamwork is the way individual children who are having difficulty settling in to the day or to activities available, are handled to minimise disruption to themselves and to the other children. During lunch times, the effective way staff work together is also very evident. The cook not only helps to distribute the food but gives additional support and encouragement to children that are not being attended to by other staff. The effect of staff working together effectively as a unit has a significant effect on the children's own confidence and self-esteem. This, in turn, enables children to work with high levels of motivation on the activities provided.

The quality of teaching is of a very good standard across all areas of the curriculum

11. The teaching staff, including the nursery nurses, has an excellent overall knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Curriculum, the types of activities needed to succeed in stimulating the children's interests and motivation, and of the individual needs of children. The activities, guidance and support provided by the teachers reflect their expertise in that the children apply themselves well and demonstrate very good levels of concentration. This was never more evident than during a music session when children listened attentively to the different sounds of the clarinet. They then showed considerable restraint in response to the teacher's request when handling a wide range of percussion instruments. Afterwards they showed great control when following the teacher's lead to play their instruments in line with the tempo set by the clarinet and to stop playing when the clarinet stopped.
12. Members of staff constantly refer to the basic skills during different activities ensuring a constant reinforcement of the literacy and numeracy concepts being taught at the time. This was very evident in music sessions when the children were learning rhymes. A very good example of this was when the whole school celebrated the birthdays of two children. During the songs that were sung children were encouraged to sing the words of the song clearly and to take away candles as they were blown out one at a time to identify how many were left.
13. All members of staff are effectively involved in assessing the children's capabilities during activities. The assessments are often related to the particular learning objectives set and are made on individual children. Sometimes the assessments are related to general observations during the children's free choice activity times. These assessments are collated together to provide a comprehensive picture of how well each child is achieving. The teachers make effective use of the assessments by planning the forthcoming activities so that they challenge children of all abilities. As part of each day's activities teachers target certain children to cover particular tasks with an aim of reinforcing concepts that some children did not fully understand or to challenge those children that did particularly well. In this way, teachers ensure that tasks are well matched to the individual needs of the children and that the children continue to make effective progress. During the inspection, children were targeted as a result of their level of understanding of shapes. In the reinforcement and extension exercises the teacher was able to cover concepts ranging from colour and size to the recognition of different two-dimensional shapes and the exploration of why they are different. As a result of this focused activity, some of the most able children recognised the difference between a square and a triangle by counting the number of sides and corners the shapes had.
14. The methods the teachers use to ensure the tasks stimulate and interest the children are wide ranging and are based on a very good balance of teacher-directed activities and independent choices for children. During group activities teachers work with their own teaching groups to cover all aspects of the curriculum. In these sessions vital concepts are covered and reinforced. A good example of this is story time when children are encouraged to sit attentively for a sustained period of time and follow a story. Large books are used to help ensure the impact of the book's pictures is at its strongest. Teachers read enthusiastically to ensure the children remain interested. The success of keeping the children's attention enables the teachers to point out key words, to get the children to recall the sequence of the story and to predict what might happen next. Other activities involve targeting children. During this time, other children wanting to join the groups are encouraged to do so. This enables the teachers to make assessments on those identified but also to reinforce and challenge other children who are motivated enough to join the groups. During free choice activities, teachers monitor the movements of children and become involved in the activities as

a support to the children who have made their choices. At these times, teachers constantly encourage the children to learn by asking searching questions about what they are doing or showing them other things they can do with the resources they are working with. There is also a great deal of reference made by the teachers to the children's general behaviour and relationship skills. It is during these times that the rights and wrongs of their actions are positively encouraged or discouraged.

15. From the time the children enter the nursery they are encouraged to take books home. This is particularly so for 'read together' books that relate to the 'big' books in school that the teachers read at group times. This helps to ensure that the children's interest in books is sustained and that they begin to develop basic reading skills such as word recognition and prediction. The children are already familiar with the sequence of events and this makes the reading together for child and parent easier.

The high value the school places on the role of the parent results in the very successful partnership established with them

16. The school is very keen to support the needs of the children through effective links with parents. Parents are very happy about the way the school keeps them informed about starting procedures and school events, and how the school involves parents in their own child's learning.
17. Induction procedures are very supportive of the individual needs of the children. All parents and children have the opportunity to spend time at the school before they start. Parents are also invited to indicate the type of attendance they would like for their children. The school is involved in piloting a consecutive 2½ day attendance aimed at helping those parents who travel long distances to school by foot, would like to work a part week or who would like to attend learning centres. The scheme is proving very popular and the school has spent a considerable amount of time ensuring that the curriculum is organised for the different types of groups attending the school so that they all receive the same opportunities. For those children who are finding the transition from home to school difficult, parents are encouraged to stay in the classroom and to work alongside their children. Special home visits are also arranged to help develop the relationship between the child and teacher. The school also suggests that some children start on the same day as their friends. This is another example of the positive actions taken by the school to ensure children settle in to school life quickly.
18. Members of staff are always at hand during school time and available to talk through any matters concerning the parents. The school always responds positively to parents' observations and suggestions and prompt action is taken if parents have concerns. During the second part of the Autumn term, there are parent/teacher discussions on how well children have settled and to identify key areas to which the parents can support the work of the school. A further meeting about the children's progress takes place in March and then in July, meetings take place to discuss the written report.
19. The school runs regular curriculum workshops for parents, particularly to provide information on the teaching of literacy and numeracy skills. The school also conducts a yearly parenting course. For last year's parents this comprised of a Family Learning Course that took place earlier in the year to give parents a much better understanding of how their children learn. As part of the programme, parents found working with the children during the school's sessions especially valuable. The school encourages parents into the nursery to support teachers and help in other aspects of the running

of the school. During the inspection, one parent repaired handles on a cupboard and another donated carpet squares.

20. The school development plan identifies links with parents as a regular area for improvement. At present, the school is keen to involve the local community more by asking people to come in to school to give talks to the parents. The school is also developing part of the kitchen area in to a parents' room to encourage even greater interaction between the school and parents.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

The governors' involvement in analysing school performance

21. The role of the governors is, at present, a supportive one and meets the expectations identified by the local authority. The school does not have a delegated budget and therefore financial decisions made by the governors are for the approval of the spending decisions made by the headteacher, and for the use of school funds raised by the school and by the parents. There has been a recent increase from two to three governor meetings a year, but there are no committees and therefore no interim meetings to discuss particular aspects of school management. The governing body therefore relies heavily on the informative reports and self-evaluations produced by the headteacher. The two parent governors from the last academic year also provide a valuable insight into the work of the school for the rest of the governors. The structure of two year appointments now means that none of the present governors have children at the school. However, all current parents have been invited to express an interest in joining the governing body and this is being followed through at the parent/teacher meetings.
22. The local authority is intending to change the role of the governing body significantly by making the governing body responsible for ensuring that performance management procedures are carried out effectively and meet the statutory requirements. This role will require the governing body to have a much greater understanding of the school's performance than it has at present. Governors do not have systems in place to enable them to analyse how well the school is doing, particularly against the performance of similar schools.

The use of the school's detailed and very useful assessment and recording systems to help analyse the rates of progress made by individual children

23. The school has very good procedures in place to assess the achievements of individual children. These are directly linked to the school's objectives identified in the planning and match the individual targets identified in the 'Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage' (more commonly identified as the Early Learning Goals). The school conducts an assessment on each child soon after they have entered the school and uses this to identify the children's next learning targets. This system helps to ensure that the school is constantly readjusting the curriculum offered to children and that the children are challenged effectively.
24. The present system does not, however, enable the school to assess the degree of progress made by each child and therefore make accurate comparisons between children of similar ability and between children of different abilities. This is particularly so for those children who achieve expected learning outcomes early on during their time in school.

25. The school is already trying a new entry assessment this year that will enable the school to send off the data to be analysed. The information returned should enable the school to compare the attainment on entry to that of other similar schools. The assessments are repeated at the end of the year, including extension papers for the highest achievers, enabling the school to see how well the children have performed at the school. The information therefore available to the school will be very useful in identifying how well the school has performed over the year. It will not, however, provide interim information on the progress made by children during the year, nor will it identify the progress made by individual children who are achieving beyond the expected outcomes.

Security arrangements to reduce the levels of vandalism and theft that occur outside school hours

26. The school has suffered from considerable damage by vandals and thieves in recent years. Despite efforts to reduce vandalism by the erection of bars across the covered area at the rear of the building, windows are still smashed on a regular basis.
27. The day after the inspection took place the school was broken into and the computer was stolen. This has caused considerable hardship to the school. The loss of a vital piece of equipment makes administration procedures extremely difficult, and also causes considerable increases in the levels of stress felt by all members of the staff in school. This in turn effects the role the headteacher has in the classroom, deflecting her time away from supporting and teaching the children to administrative tasks to help rectify the situation.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

28. To raise the very good standards further:
- The governors should take steps to involve themselves more in analysing school performance by:
 - seeking training from the local education authority;
 - ensuring the headteacher provides information from the new entry assessment procedures and other forms of assessment that will help to identify how well children progress in school compared to children in similar schools.
 - The school should improve the detailed and very useful assessment and recording systems it already has, to help analyse the rates of progress made by individual children by:
 - completing the new entry assessments and analysing the information the school receives to help compare the school's performance to that of other schools;
 - developing procedures based on the Foundation Curriculum and National Curriculum that will help to identify the rate of progress children are making during their time at the school.
 - The school should improve security arrangements to reduce the levels of vandalism and theft that occur outside school hours.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons 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
17	67	11	6	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 September 1999 – July 2000

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	39
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	11

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	15

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	2

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	15
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	5

Attendance

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
	%		%
School data	n/a	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
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	65

Number of pupils per FTE adult	10
--------------------------------	----

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

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

	£
Total income	112,485
Total expenditure	112,609
Expenditure per pupil	2,815
Balance brought forward from previous year	*
Balance carried forward to next year	*

** Budget not delegated, balances are not carried forward*

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	72
Number of questionnaires returned	30

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	57	37	0	0	7
My child is making good progress in school.	40	33	0	0	27
Behaviour in the school is good.	50	40	0	0	10
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	40	23	0	0	37
The teaching is good.	73	17	0	0	10
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	70	20	0	0	10
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	93	7	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	53	37	0	0	10
The school works closely with parents.	73	23	0	0	3
The school is well led and managed.	77	13	0	0	10
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	57	33	0	0	10
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	37	37	0	0	27

Many of the parents were unable to respond to the questionnaire because of the timing of the inspection at such an early stage of the school year.