

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **TUDHOE MOOR NURSERY SCHOOL**

Spennymoor, Durham

LEA area: County Durham

Unique reference number: 113991

Headteacher: Mrs S Heslop

Reporting inspector: Mr R Fry  
21073

Dates of inspection: 27 – 29 November 2000

Inspection number: 224548

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 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Tudhoe Moor Spennymoor County Durham
Postcode:	DL16 6EX
Telephone number:	01388 816112
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Appropriate authority:	Local Education Authority
Name of chair of governors:	Cllr. F Walker
Date of previous inspection:	3 June 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Area of learning responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Roger Fry 21073	Registered inspector	English as an additional language Equal opportunities Personal, social and emotional development Mathematical development Physical development	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? - The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
Jill Moore 11439	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Andrew Margerison 21666	Team inspector	Special educational needs Communication, language and literacy Knowledge and understanding of the world Creative development	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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Inspection Quality Division  
The Office for Standards in Education  
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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Tudhoe Moor is a self-contained nursery for boys and girls aged between three and four years old. The nursery has been designated by the local education authority to support children with special educational needs. It has 26 older children on roll each morning and 22 younger children each afternoon. The school serves the nearby housing estate and some parents have opted to bring their children to the school from a wider area. Children's attainment on entry to the school is below that typical of children nationally. Twenty seven per cent of pupils have special educational needs, an above average figure. Three children have statements of their special needs. One child has a Chinese background and is learning English as an additional language. All other children have English as their first language. The school was inspected in the first term of this school year.

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

Tudhoe Moor is a very effective, happy and caring nursery school. It makes good provision for all children, including those with special educational needs and for whom English is an additional language. Children make good progress because the teaching is consistently good and the work that children are set is demanding. The school is ably led by the headteacher. All staff work very well together and seek to further improve standards of children's work. The school provides very good value for money.

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

- Children achieve well, particularly in their personal development.
- The good teaching and learning allow children to make good progress in all the areas of learning.
- The expert support for children with special educational needs allows them to make very good progress.
- The extensive curriculum, which includes many visits, encourages children to be enthusiastic about school.
- The high level of care and stability in the school allows children to develop very good attitudes and encourages their very good behaviour.
- The very good leadership and management of the headteacher, supported by all staff has created a very effective school.
- The school ensures all have equal opportunities to participate in everything.
- Parents have very strong positive views of the school.
- The accommodation is excellent.

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

There are no major issues the school needs to address.

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

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

The school has made good improvements since the last inspection in June 1997. The school has improved its procedures for recording assessments it makes about children's progress. The school has adopted a tick-sheet system to record children's progress. Clear targets for lessons are now present in teachers' planning and records of assessments help teachers plan lessons in the future. Teaching is better focused and learning continues to be good. The headteacher's heavy workload is well organised, particularly when the nursery is full. She diligently teaches all week yet keeps up with her management functions successfully.

There have been other improvements since the last inspection. The proportion of very good teaching has increased. Parents clearly now regard the school as excellent. The children's attainments when they leave the school have improved and a significant proportion of children reach standards above those expected at five years old. Children's speaking, listening and social skills are better than they were. The provision for pupils with special educational needs forms an integral part of the school's work. Children of all capabilities work together effectively.

## STANDARDS

The school was inspected in the first term of the school year. Children's attainment on entry to the nursery is below what might be expected nationally. All children make good progress towards the 'Early Learning Goals,' and in personal and social development they make very good progress because the teaching is good and children enjoy school. They achieve well during the year or more they spend at the school and children are well prepared for the next stage in their learning at infant school. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress towards their individual small-step targets because they receive regular intensive short bursts of work on important skills, such as buying things at the shop.

When they leave the school most children are well on course to achieving the expected standards for their age and a significant proportion have achieved them already in some of the areas of learning. Standards in personal and social development are above what might be expected of children of this age. By the time children transfer to their next school, they have developed a very positive attitude towards learning. They relate well to adults and other children and are able to co-operate and share things. Many achieve a high level of independence and are able to organise their learning effectively and persevere with tasks for long periods.

*During the inspection* children were observed talking confidently and listening very well. They enjoy books and the most able begin to recognise familiar words. They understand the purpose of writing and many are learning to write their own name. They count up to five and more and use mathematical language in practical situations. They move confidently with increasing skill outdoors and on the 'assault course' of apparatus in the hall. They have an awareness of the world about them and develop a keen interest in finding out more. Children enjoy computer programs and move the mouse effectively to control what they are doing. They explore materials and tools and experiment confidently with paint, sounds, plasticene and large cardboard boxes when making Postman Pat's van.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Children show a keen interest in school life. They have very good attitudes to work and a thirst for knowledge in all the areas of learning. All children are busy workers.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Children behave very well in lessons and at playtimes. They consider others and share things well. They know what is expected of them and each plays their part in making their time at school a happy one.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Children work very well together or independently. Children carry out simple duties with enthusiasm. They are happy to take turns when needed and they respond quickly to adults' requests. They quickly gain confidence.
Attendance	Good. Children are keen to come to school.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	
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Lessons seen overall	Good
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*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.*

All teaching was at least satisfactory; fifty per cent was good and thirty eight per cent was very good. The needs of all pupils are met by teachers and support staff.

*Language and literacy* teaching is good, particularly in developing children's listening skills and in fostering an interest in early reading and mark making on paper. Children learn, for example, how to make Christmas cards. *Mathematics* teaching is good, especially in developing mathematical understanding through practical experiences. Children learn, for example, to match colours and shapes. The teaching of *personal and social development* skills is good. Adults encourage very positive attitudes, independence and a sense of responsibility in children. They learn to care for all living things, for example, they feed the birds regularly in the garden.

Support staff make a valuable contribution to the quality of teaching in the school; the strength of the teamwork is a major factor in children's achievement. Children with special educational needs are very well supported by all adults. Short intensive lessons successfully teach children, for example, to remember what they have chosen to buy as they approach the class shop to pay for it.

All adults have a very good knowledge and understanding of the needs of young children. Very good routines have been established and expectations are consistently high. Interactions between adults and children are effective and supportive. Good learning takes place as children gain skills, knowledge and understanding, and learn to think for themselves and take responsibility for their work.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. All the 'Areas of Learning' are very well developed. There is a good emphasis on children becoming independent learners. A large number of interesting practical activities are provided for all children in different parts of the building. All children have equal opportunities to develop knowledge and understanding of new ideas.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Children make very good progress. The two assigned nursery nurses are expert in meeting children's needs, such as by using Makaton sign language to assist communication. There are effective links with other agencies. Parents speak very highly of the provision. The school does not always involve parents as soon as children receive extra support and does not formally review children's individual education plans at Stage 3 of the process.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Very good. Children have very good opportunities to develop English. They join in with all activities and adults help them to understand what is happening for as long as necessary. During the inspection obvious good progress was evident in children's integration into lessons.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. Children's spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory. Their moral and social development is very good. Children learn right from wrong and to respect one another. The nursery is an exciting place and children learn about many aspects of their own culture.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good. Parents report that their children are very well looked after. Children are taught to be kind to each other and all aspects of their progress in lessons is systematically recorded by teachers.

The school works very well indeed in partnership with parents. There is an excellent sense of trust and respect between school and home.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The school's aims and values are very well reflected in its work. The headteacher, with her colleague, provide very good leadership and direction for the school. Many duties are effectively shared between staff. There is a strong sense of close teamwork.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. Governors know many of the school's strengths. However, governors do not visit the school often enough to see how well it is doing or provide enough support and guidance for the headteacher. The governing body successfully helped the nursery to get started when it took over the building.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The school keeps very good records of pupils' performances and uses this information effectively to identify strengths and weaknesses in the curriculum. The school development plan is a well written document that is regularly reviewed. The staff training programme is good.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The school plans ahead effectively. Priorities identified in the school development plan are well supported. The school makes good efforts to apply the principles of 'best value' with its limited budget.

The school is very well staffed, the accommodation is excellent and learning resources are very good. Support staff play a major part in the success of the school. The outdoor areas are very well designed and used.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children like going to school very much and make good progress with their work.</li> <li>• Behaviour is good.</li> <li>• The right amount of homework is set for children.</li> <li>• The teaching is good.</li> <li>• Parents feel very comfortable when approaching the school with a question or problem.</li> <li>• The school has high expectations of children.</li> <li>• The school works closely with parents.</li> <li>• The school is very well managed and led.</li> <li>• The school helps children to mature and become responsible for themselves.</li> </ul>	Parents had nothing but high praise for the school.

The inspection team agrees with parents' very strong positive views.

## OTHER INFORMATION

The governing body is responsible for drawing up an action plan within 40 days of receiving the inspection report, showing how the school will tackle the improvements needed. This action plan will be circulated to all parents at the school.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Attainment on entry to the nursery is below what is typical nationally. Although there is a wide range of attainment, some children enter with weaker personal, social and communication skills and their experiences of the world are limited. All children make good and often very good progress during the year or more they spend at the school, and they achieve well. The school's comprehensive records of children's progress confirm judgements made by inspectors in lessons. Children are well prepared for the next stage in their learning. Parents are very happy indeed with the progress that their children make at the nursery.
2. When they leave the school, most children are well on course to achieving the standards expected by the time they are five outlined in the Foundation Stage curriculum, and higher attainers exceed them. (see Section D of the report) Standards in personal, social and emotional development are above those expected of children of this age. The good standards reported during the last inspection continue and higher attainers achieve better than they did. There are several main reasons for children's good and very good progress. Teachers and support staff know the children well and meet their needs in many ways that children find interesting. Children are very well managed and each child receives much individual and small group attention, which allows them to make rapid progress. The staff uses the excellent accommodation very effectively. Parental confidence in the school is very high, children are aware of this and they feel confident too. Children very quickly gain very good attitudes to work and make the most of the opportunities provided, which are numerous.
3. Achievement in personal, social and emotional development is above expectations and they make very good progress. Children are confident in the classroom environment. They know the routines of the school and respond well to them. They relate very well to adults and to other children. They have learned to play co-operatively and to take turns. Children have developed a high level of independence for their age and organise themselves and their learning for considerable periods of time.
4. Children achieve well in language work. Children listen very attentively to adults and talk about their experiences enthusiastically. They are beginning to listen to each other and many respond well in conversation with other children. They enjoy stories and most talk happily about what is happening. They enjoy books and handle them carefully. Many children are beginning to recognise their own names and other words. Most children understand that writing is for expressing something. Higher attainers write their own names and some are beginning to use recognisable letters in their early writing.
5. Children achieve well in mathematics. Children use mathematical language, such as 'bigger than' and 'smaller than, in the context of practical situations. They develop a good understanding of mathematical ideas, such as some of the characteristics of shapes. Many children have already learned to count to seven.
6. The very comprehensive curriculum enables children to make good progress in their knowledge and understanding of the world. Children talk about their families and have brought pictures to school of when they were babies. They explore and recognise features of the world about them, and gain knowledge of the wider environment through

many visits and visitors. They confidently experiment with materials and equipment and effectively use skills, such as cutting, folding and gluing.

7. Children achieve good standards in physical development. The school makes very good use of the space it has. For example, the large equipment in the hall has a positive effect on children's confidence in moving and using equipment. Children move confidently, with an awareness of space and others. They learn to handle tools and other objects such as paintbrushes with a good degree of dexterity and accuracy. Children achieve well in creative development. They successfully explore and investigate a wide range of ideas. Children learn to move in time to music and to use colour to express their ideas.
8. All children's needs are met and all have equal opportunities to experience everything. Children with special educational needs, including those with statements, make very good gains in skills, understanding and knowledge. This applies to all Areas of Learning, but particularly to personal and social, physical and communication, language and literacy. In the small group sessions that are planned everyday, children benefit from the expertise of the specialist support staff. Activities build and develop children's skills in a supportive and gradual way. They take part in all activities and receive very well targeted small group lessons in basic skills, such as counting. Children's needs are identified at an early stage.

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

9. The high standards in pupils' attitudes, values, behaviour and personal development in and around school reported in the last inspection have been maintained. They are very good and are one of the strengths of the school. Parents have a very positive view about the values that the school promotes and know that their children are very happy in school.
10. Children's attitudes to learning are very good and they enjoy coming to school. When they arrive, they settle very quickly into activities that attract them and spark their interest. For the most part children listen carefully and respond well to their teachers and other adults. The adults use praise effectively to reward children's effort and achievement, however small. Praise helps create the positive atmosphere in the nursery, gives them a sense of security and helps children to develop confidence, fuelling their enthusiasm for learning.
11. Children listen carefully to each other and most of the oldest children talk confidently to visitors about what they have done. They are often proud of what they have achieved and want to share it with adults. Overall, children show very mature attitudes, undertaking independent work easily and clearing up after activities without much prompting.
12. In every situation, children's behaviour is very good. They all, including those with special educational needs, understand the routines of the nursery. These are simple, but very effective. For example, when "Whistle while you work" is played, it is time to tidy up. When children first come to school, many have under-developed social skills so their capacity to concentrate on a task is variable. However, improvement is quick. During the inspection, even those children who had only been in school for a few weeks were able to choose activities and resources for themselves and to work with a minimum of supervision. No incidences of oppressive behaviour or bullying were seen and parents support the view that children feel safe and secure with each other. Outside, in

the hall and in the classroom children happily share equipment and take turns without quarrelling. No parent has been asked to take their child to another school. When they transfer to infant schools, the high standards of behaviour and attitudes to work established in the nursery help children to settle quickly into their new school.

13. Children's personal development is very good. They are given opportunities to show initiative and become involved in learning independent of adults for periods of time. Children work responsibly with little supervision on the computers or in the water tray. They put their completed work in the right trays, for taking home or to stay in school. At the core of the nursery's success are the very good relationships between children and the very good rapport they have with staff. Children are sensitively encouraged to consider the effects of their actions on others and there were many instances observed of children showing their caring attitudes. Children are very supportive of each other and respect each other's ideas and problems, so children with special needs are fully involved in activities and whole class sessions. They celebrate each others' achievements and special events such as birthdays. Children take care of equipment and respect the belongings of the nursery and each other. Due to the children's well developed personal skills and their awareness of how to behave well, staff can provide many opportunities for children to handle delicate objects, such as china dwarves and to visit places such as railway stations and building sites safely.
14. Children register themselves when they arrive with a simple card system. Children's attendance is accurately recorded in the office and attendance levels are good. Parents are encouraged to ensure that children attend regularly and they know of the procedures for reporting absence through illness.

## **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?**

15. The teaching is good with many strengths and parents' positive views are fully justified. All the teaching seen during the inspection was at least satisfactory; in 50 per cent of lessons the teaching was good and in 22 per cent of lessons the teaching was very good. There is a considerable improvement in the proportion of very good teaching since the last inspection. Teachers and support staff have continued to identify relative weaknesses and to improve what they do. The good quality of teaching has a positive effect on the learning that takes place and has resulted in the raising of children's standards of work, particularly of the higher attainers.
16. Some of the particularly positive features are the practical approaches to work, use of interesting resources and the enthusiasm and expertise of teachers and staff. These features have a positive effect on children's interest, motivation and learning. Support staff make a very valuable contribution to the quality of teaching and to the general welfare of children.
17. Teachers throughout the school are very good at teaching basic skills in language and mathematics. The system of having a 'focus' (most important activity amongst others) activity each session in the writing area is very good. Each child is expected to attempt some writing and small group lessons ensure that staff regularly work with each child to develop their literacy skills. Children learn very good listening skills through a variety of activities including story time, listening tapes and a wealth of incidental discussions. Children learn new ideas in mathematics as a result of what they see physically in front of them and ideas are very well reinforced through repetition in 'real' situations, such as in the class shop. Teachers provide a wide range of opportunities for children to

develop their mathematical understanding. For example, they encourage children to sort, measure and compare objects.

18. Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach and they plan lessons effectively. There are clear learning targets and children understand what they have to do. Good planning by teachers leads to effective learning for children. For example, younger children who attend in the afternoon were observed working in twos and threes with adults, matching objects with similar coloured bases. Other groups successfully matched different sized cut-out tomatoes to their slots on the base. Topic themes develop children's awareness of themselves and others. For example, a topic on 'ourselves' develops children's understanding of the body and specific functions, such as the senses.
19. Teachers and support staff are enthusiastic and use a wide range of methods to teach lessons. They challenge children and encourage them to work hard. As a result of the practical approaches taken by the school, children begin to use their developing mathematical understanding to solve problems. For example, children learned how to wrap parcels with some help from adults. This involved estimating the size of paper to cover the objects. Children manoeuvred the paper very well for their age and Postman Pat soon had some parcels to deliver in his newly made van. Children revised the terms 'big' and 'little' to describe the parcels. Good links were made to children's creative development. Children also learned to paint and to join large boxes with string.
20. Very good use is made of resources and the accommodation. For example, information and communication technology is used effectively to support work in various Areas of Learning. The improvement in teachers' knowledge and confidence in using computers has resulted in it now being taught even more effectively.
21. Pupils are very well managed. All staff have created a calm working atmosphere and children are carefully and consistently controlled to ensure they do not disturb the work of others. In lessons, children sustain concentration and make clear positive steps in their learning. Expectations of behaviour are explicit and consistently but sensitively enforced so children behave very well and respond very positively to lesson activities. Consequently, children learn much and make good progress in acquiring, for example, appropriate knowledge and understanding of the world around them. Teachers know the children very well and they make accurate assessments of their achievements. The staff maintains accurate records of progress during or after lessons daily.
22. Teachers and support staff know the pupils with special educational needs very well and take their needs into account when planning lessons. There is plentiful adult support in the school for children with special educational needs. Teachers and support staff work very well together to plan and organise activities to ensure all pupils have access to them. All adults are sensitive to the needs of individual pupils and they intervene at the right moments to keep pupils on task or to help them when they have a problem.

### **How well children with special educational needs learn.**

23. Children with special educational needs learn new skills, knowledge and understanding very well. In whole class lessons, they take part in all activities and are well supported by all staff. Adults have a very good awareness of their needs and have very high expectations of their performance. For example, children are expected to sit on the carpet in the same way as other children and listen to stories. Verbal prompts are used effectively to maintain their attention. Consequently, children make very good progress in developing a capacity to follow school routines. Teachers and support staff

consistently challenge children and encourage them to communicate for themselves and to become more independent. This method has a very good impact on the children. For example, a child who was unable to walk when he came to the nursery is now able to stand unsupported and can walk, albeit unsteadily, with some support from an adult or the furniture. The positive approach to relationships is infectious and the child is now trying to stand up for himself.

24. Learning in whole class lessons is very well reinforced in the small group lessons run by the specialist support staff. The focal point of these lessons is to consolidate basic skills in English and sign language, basic number recognition and colour matching. Children make very good progress in these Areas of Learning. The management of children is very good. High expectations of behaviour are reinforced consistently. Children are encouraged by simple rewards for those more reluctant to concentrate. Staff take notes throughout these short sessions and they are used effectively to record children's progress and to assist future planning.

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

25. The quality and range of the curriculum are very good. The extensive range of rich and worthwhile lessons successfully develops children's understanding and skills. As at the time of the last inspection, the planned curriculum covers all the recommended Areas of Learning for children of this age. The curriculum promotes children's intellectual, social, emotional and physical development very effectively through a balanced programme that encourages confidence and independent learning. Aspects of personal and health education such as topics on healthy eating and the hazards of smoking are included. The curriculum ensures that children participate in purposeful play, talk extensively to adults and each other, develop literacy and mathematical ideas through practical activities and pursue specific initiatives and interests of their own. Firm educational foundations, that emphasise a positive attitude to learning, successfully prepare the children for transition to the next stage of schooling.
26. As at the time of the last inspection, the provision for children with special educational needs is very good. The school is a designated local authority provision for children with significant special educational needs and has more staff to provide the required level of support. All children who attend the nursery and experience difficulties benefit from skilled teaching and support. The school's procedures ensure that children who have difficulties are identified quickly. The individual education plans in place for the children have specific targets that are very effectively supported by teaching methods that encourage and support learning. There are no individual education plans in place for pupils at Stage 2 of the Code of Practice, which detail what provision or support is provided for these children over and above the majority of the class. The involvement of children's parents is limited during the early stages of the identification of children with special educational needs. However, the very effective assessment procedures that the school has in place provide information for staff to monitor the progress of these children.
27. For children at Stage 3 and above, the support provided by the school and specialist support staff is very good and is focussed upon the needs of children. They make very good progress towards their targets in their individual education plans. Parents are kept informed about their children's progress on a regular basis and parents are very pleased with the support that their children receive. However, insufficient emphasis is placed on

formally evaluating the progress of those children on Stage 3. The school does not rigorously measure the effectiveness of the teaching. For those children with statements of special educational need, formal reviews are held on a termly basis.

28. The school has policies in place for all the Areas of Learning and for specific subjects within them so there is a consistency and a secure base to the teachers' lesson planning. In weekly planning and daily activities, teachers make subtle variations to lessons to accommodate each child. Consequently, each child has equal access to every aspect of the curriculum. Irrespective of their physical, learning or language difficulties the children are valued and have excellent opportunities to develop their skills and understanding across all the Areas of Learning. The school has established good links with the community and other schools in the area. A local business has supported the school by helping them with the costs of sending an aid parcel to children in Romania. Another has helped with the provision of paper supplies. Nearby primary schools are invited to Christmas events. Before the children transfer to Infant schools each September, children make several visits to their new schools and infant staff often spend some time in the nursery working alongside children to get to know them.
29. The provision for children's spiritual development is satisfactory. There are frequent opportunities for children to observe something new, celebrate special events and to acquire new skills. On occasions, moments of genuine awe and wonder occur, such as when a child with special educational needs was thrilled by seeing how the wind blows a windsock about in the school garden. During the inspection, one child's birthday was celebrated during a whole-class session, with candles and a cake and by singing "Happy Birthday." There are fewer planned opportunities, particularly at the end of the mornings and afternoons, for children to reflect upon what they have achieved or about the feelings of others less fortunate than themselves, through for example prayer.
30. Considerable importance is placed on developing children's personal and social skills and the provision for both moral and social development is very good. The start to the school session is very positive and staff welcome the children as part of the well ordered and structured daily routine. This ensures that children understand what is expected of them in terms of behaviour and performance during activities. Expectations are high and all staff consistently and positively reinforce the school's rules and policies in positive, but sensitive ways. Consequently, all children understand the routines of the nursery and the difference between acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. On the few occasions when behaviour falls below the expected standards or a child does not carry out a task or activity when asked, staff intervene quickly and skilfully. Children are clearly and firmly made to consider how their actions affect others. For example, two boys had a minor dispute about the computers, the incident was quickly dealt with and the boys were redirected to another activity, but knew that even minor quarrels were not tolerated.
31. Many opportunities are provided for children to develop social skills and children's development is very good. Shared group activities are a feature of the nursery. Role-play areas often require children to take turns, share equipment and work with each other. For example, the running of the Post Office involved two children at a time. Staff controlled who were the shopkeepers, but made sure that all those who wanted a turn had the opportunity. Snack time provides good opportunities for children to interact socially and develop positive relationships. At the end of sessions, children are expected to help to tidy up and put equipment away, even if they have not been playing with it.

32. Provision for children's cultural development is satisfactory. Children are encouraged to appreciate their own culture and environment. They are introduced to a range of traditional stories, nursery rhymes and songs. Music is an integral part of every day and musical instruments are used well to develop children's musical awareness and skills. The range of books is good and children are encouraged to take books home to read with their parents or carers. Some of the books represent positive images of people from different countries and walks of life. The main festivals of Christianity are celebrated and the languages or festivals from other cultures are recognised when appropriate opportunities arise. Visits and visitors successfully enhance and extend the cultural opportunities available.

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

33. The level of support for children is very good, with the result that the children are secure and very happy in school. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection. All staff are very good role models and their high expectations are reflected in the very good attitudes, behaviour, relationships and personal development of the children. Very good behaviour is promoted, expected and achieved. Staff observe the children closely and know them very well. Their constant vigilance ensures that children make the most of all lessons. A strong emphasis is placed on social and personal development and this is reflected in the children's confidence and progress generally.

34. Behaviour and attendance are monitored well and prompt action is taken to prevent problems from developing. No oppressive behaviour was seen and there are effective procedures in place to deal with any problems should they arise. Teachers make good use of moral examples to ensure that children understand right from wrong. Management of poor behaviour is also incorporated into these themes. For example, a child was given the naughty dog from the story to look after to ensure that the dog behaved herself. Children are encouraged to care for each other and the lesson was learnt well.

35. Arrangements for child protection are very good. All staff are involved in training and understand the school's procedures, which are in line with local guidelines. Health and safety issues are well managed and include assessments of physical risk. All evacuation drill notices are in place as are the correct emergency exit signs. All equipment is checked annually. The governors monitor health and safety procedures effectively. Good use is made of outside agencies to support children's development, such as speech therapy and physiotherapy.

36. Procedures for assessing children's attainment and progress are very good. The school uses the local education authority's assessment system to discover young children's capabilities when they start school and as they grow older. These provide a record of each child's progress through each of the Areas of Learning. In order to ensure that a systematic and objective approach is in place, the assessment co-ordinator identifies areas for assessment each week. During activities or immediately after lessons, staff record each child's performance. Each half term their progress is reviewed and when children have achieved a particular standard of performance, it is recorded on the child's record sheet. The record grows as children move through the nursery. The school provides detailed and accurate records for the infant schools at the time when children transfer to them.

37. The procedures for monitoring children's academic progress and personal development have improved since the last inspection. They are manageable and informative. The

school has experimented with several different approaches and is continuing to develop this aspect of its work. For example, the school now collects examples of children's work to help monitor their progress. These are beginning to provide good evidence to support the assessments made after lessons. The work samples are dated but comments about the degree of support given to the child or the context of the activity are limited. However, the information gathered through the current system is used well to plan activities on a weekly basis. The planning process enables staff to make allowances for the needs of individual children.

38. The support provided for children with special educational needs by all the staff in the school is sensitive and responsive to the individual children. Reflecting this awareness of their difficulties, the school has developed very good procedures for monitoring the progress of children with special educational needs. To complement the whole-school procedures, the support staff for those children with statements of special educational need make notes on the children's performance in small group lessons and have developed an additional recording format that gives more specific detail about children's progress. Regular meetings with the assessment co-ordinator ensure that the two approaches to monitoring are compatible and accurate.

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

39. The school has excellent links with parents, which is a strength of the school. The parents' questionnaires had no negative responses at all from the 60 per cent of parents who replied. Parents are highly valued and their support and help are encouraged by the school. The information in the regular newsletters and school brochure sent to parents is good. There is a notice board for parents in school and the term's lesson plans with learning targets are left out for parents to see. Parents gain, for example, a better understanding of their children's learning and of the terminology used by school. The school's work in this area has improved since the last inspection.
40. Parents bring their children into school and help them to sign the registration sheets, which are designed to encourage counting and name recognition. Parents clearly understand school procedures well and they have a good opportunity at this time to discuss any matters with the staff. Parents are encouraged to take books out of the school library as often as they wish and they were observed doing so. Children feel secure and confident because their parents are very happy with the school. The very good relationship between home and school has a very positive effect on learning.
41. Parents are kept well informed of their children's progress throughout the year and the school works well with parents of children with special educational needs and for those whom English is an additional language. Books have been translated into Chinese for one child and the Chinese culture explored and shared to raise children's awareness of other cultures. Parents of children with special educational needs are kept well informed about their children's needs and progress in the later stages of the process, but not sufficiently during the first stages of identification.

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

42. When the school was last inspected, Tudhoe Moor provided good value for money. Since then it has improved in the areas required of it. The school is very effective and is very good value for money.

43. The governing body makes a satisfactory contribution to the smooth and effective running of the school. The number of governors is small and parent governors only remain on the governing body for short periods because their children stay no more than two years in the school. These factors limit what the governing body can do. In the past when the nursery took over the entire building, governors were very active in ensuring that the school received all that it needed, for example, lesson equipment and furniture. The chair of governors has a clear view of the school's strengths and of the many influences on the school. Some other governors have provided good support in the recent past, for example, by making visits to see lessons. At present governors are not regularly acting as 'critical friends' to the school in some areas of its work, such as the quality of lessons and children's learning. The headteacher receives helpful support in areas such as health and safety. The contents of the school's information booklet for parents meets statutory requirements. The governing body sees and approves all school policies but has not always recorded their acceptance formally or stated dates for their review.
44. The school is very well led by the committed headteacher, who with the staff has provided the drive, vision and good ideas to improve the school after a good previous report. The headteacher promotes a highly supportive working atmosphere based on very good relationships with children, parents and teaching and support staff. There is very close team-work amongst staff and clear expectations of what needs to be done. Very good communications between staff and parents are a feature of the school. The school is keen to improve further and the staff shares the vision for the school. The headteacher works very closely with all staff and has given valuable advice to staff to help them improve.
45. The school's aims are reflected clearly in its work. Some responsibilities are delegated to individual teachers and they carry out these diligently. Teachers responsible for subjects develop their colleagues' expertise effectively. For example, the new Foundation Stage curriculum has been enthusiastically implemented. Duties and decisions are shared effectively between the staff. New staff are effectively inducted when the need arises.
46. Children's progress in teachers' assessments is carefully evaluated and effective plans are put in place to further improve standards. Teachers are quick to alter the curriculum if the need arises. Children's good progress is clearly documented.
47. The special needs co-ordinator ensures there is a very good level of support for pupils with special educational needs and that the staff is well deployed. All supporting adults make a very valuable contribution to the quality of teaching in the school. They have a very good understanding of their roles and are highly committed to the school and its children. The school is devoted to equal opportunities for all.
48. The school has a clear view about what it needs to do to improve further in the next twelve months and more. The school development plan is good. It takes the form of a series of targets, which include who is responsible for what, costs for the year, training plans and how the school will know when it has achieved particular goals. Targets in the plan are regularly reviewed and progress is clearly evident. There are many good examples of clear thinking in the school's documents. For example, the two key issues from the previous report have received positive attention. Parents confirm that the school is even better than it was. Presently the school is not a provider of initial teacher training, but it is certainly suitable. The school is generously staffed.

49. The school does not have a delegated budget. Educational priorities, nevertheless, are well supported through the school's financial planning. The strategic use of resources available, including money for school improvement, is effective. Funds for staff training, for example to improve all staff's understanding of information and communication technology, are well used and this work has had a positive effect on the teaching. The school follows the principles of 'best value' as far as it can. The secretary efficiently administers the school office. Proper use is made of new technology to save time and increase efficiency.
50. The accommodation is excellent and the caretaker looks after it very well. There is, for example, considerable provision for out-door physical activities with grass areas and a flat playground. There is plenty of classroom space, which is skilfully zoned into areas for different activities. There is an established garden for pupils to find insects and see how plants grow. Resources are very good and often have a very good effect on the quality of children's learning.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

No major issues were found that have a negative effect on children's progress.

51. The governing body, staff and local education authority are invited to address two minor issues:

- Increase the role of governors as 'critical friends' to the school and date and review policies formally. (Paragraph 43)
- Involve parents of children with special education needs more formally in the process of identification and review of provision during the earlier stages of the process. Ensure that the reviews and evaluations of individual education plans at Stage 3 of the process meet the Code of Practice. (Paragraphs 27, 41)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed

16
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Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

15
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## Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	37	50	13	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)	24
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

### Special educational needs

	Nursery
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	8

### English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	1

### Pupil mobility in the last school year (children have not yet reached compulsory school age)

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	N/a
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	N/a

## Attendance

(children have not reached compulsory school age)

### Authorised absence

	%
School data	N/a

### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	N/a

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

## Teachers and classes

### Qualified teachers and support staff

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	12

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	99

Number of pupils per FTE adult	5
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*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## Financial information

Financial year	* 1999/2000
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	£
Total income	N/a
Total expenditure	N/a
Expenditure per pupil	N/a
Balance brought forward from previous year	N/a
Balance carried forward to next year	N/a

\* The school is not responsible for its budget, Durham Local Education Authority is responsible for most expenditure. However, the school has a small budget of £1650 for every day needs such as pencils, paint and paper.

## **Results of the survey of parents and carers**

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	58
Number of questionnaires returned	35

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	89	11	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	80	20	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	86	11	0	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	6	9	0	0	85
The teaching is good.	94	6	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	57	43	0	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	89	11	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	46	31	0	0	23
The school works closely with parents.	69	31	0	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	89	11	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	71	18	0	0	11
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	60	20	0	0	20

### **Other issues raised by parents**

None. Parents expressed very strong support for the school.

## **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**

52. Many children enter the nursery with under-developed personal and social skills. They make very good progress, and most children exceed the expected standard at five years old. In the last inspection, children's personal development was highlighted as a good feature of the school. Standards have improved. Parents are very content with the progress their children make both personally and socially and have great faith in the school.
53. Children are confident in the classroom and around the school. They know the routines of the day and respond very quickly to them. For example, they know that a certain song is the moment to clear away and that everyone has an equal chance to do everything. Children relate very warmly to adults. They are well supported in this by the excellent partnership that has developed between parents and school. Parents are encouraged to come into the classroom at the start of each morning or afternoon session and there is a smooth transition between home and school. Children tick their names on the register and soon settle to work.
54. Children quickly succeed in establishing effective relationships with each other. They learn to play with each other, listen and help each other as necessary. Children, for example, enjoyed celebrating one of their classmate's birthdays. Opportunities were taken to celebrate the child's birthday reflecting his Chinese background. Children are also content to work alongside each other on individual tasks without interfering with their neighbour. Children play co-operatively and it is rare that there is any dispute. Adults encourage the very good response to school by intervening quickly, sensitively and with considerable know-how.
55. An important feature of the school's approach to learning is the way in which children develop a high level of independence at an early age. Children soon learn to be self-reliant and to find solutions of their own when they can. They respond very well to activities because they are interesting and well prepared by the staff. Children organise themselves with materials and equipment and little time is wasted. Levels of concentration are usually very good and children persevere with chosen or given activities and succeed with them.
56. Children are keen to explore new ideas. One of the main reasons why children's personal development is so quick is that children are very well managed. Teachers and all adults have very clear expectations of behaviour and expected routines. At the end of a session one morning, children were taught about postal letters, what they are, how to open them and other important basic knowledge. Children responded very quickly and gave sensible answers to questions.
57. The nursery staff succeeds in making so many of the social situations interesting. Taking turns in the shop is interesting because the objects are the kinds of things that children like, such as cars and dolls. The personal development of children with special educational needs is equally successful. The least able children learn, for example to remember what they have asked for a few seconds before and that objects in a shop need to be paid for. All children receive very good levels of individual support.

## Communication, language and literacy

58. All children, including those with special educational needs, make good progress and their attainment matches that expected for their ages. Higher attainers exceed the expected standard at five years old. This is a similar picture to that reported at the time of the last inspection.
59. The teaching of language and literacy is consistently good. Teachers' planning for the week provides good opportunities for children to experience books, stories and writing activities. The very good management and organisation of the nursery has a significant positive effect upon the pace of learning. Each child is expected to attempt some writing each day and staff regularly work with each child to develop their literacy skills. In some sessions, adults record the achievements of children as they complete tasks. Some recording is completed after the lesson.
60. Teachers and support staff provide many opportunities across all areas of the curriculum that build confidence and encourage children to communicate their thoughts and feelings to others. Very good relationships between children and adults ensure all children feel secure and confident, knowing that they will be listened to and their contributions valued. Within this happy environment, children develop good skills and willingly express their thoughts. Although a significant number of children, especially the younger ones, are understandably shy of unfamiliar adults, most soon gain confidence and talk readily about what they have done. The older higher attaining children are full of exuberance and talk about what they have done or what has happened to them. Activities in the small group sessions for children with special educational needs very effectively develop, reinforce and consolidate their capacity to communicate with adults and each other. Even the youngest children are beginning to develop hand-letter signs to complement their spoken language. The staff is very aware of children who have persistent language deficiencies and have established close links with the speech therapist who provides good advice and support for both the school and parents.
61. Throughout all activities staff talk to children and encourage them to use the most suitable words they need. Higher attainers and older children explain in great detail what they have done and how they have done it, for example, how they produced their picture on the computer. However, the opportunities at the ends of mornings and afternoons for children to explain to each other what they have done are not consistently used to their full potential. During role-play activities, children talk with each other and adopt particular roles, such as the postman or woman or pretend to talk on the telephone. Staff effectively create imaginative scenarios that encourage children to develop language skills and find pleasure in stories and characters. For example, one child had an in-depth conversation with 'Scraggles' the cat about his mouse chasing habits that showed he had listened carefully to staff and had developed an imaginary character for the soft toy.
62. Listening skills are developed effectively through a variety of activities including story time, listening tapes and a wealth of incidental discussions throughout the lessons. All adults are very good role models as they give their full attention and respect to what is said by other adults and by children. Children follow their example and listen carefully to their teachers as activities are discussed, stories told or instructions given. Older children respond maturely to straightforward questions and there are few completely irrelevant contributions made to discussions.
63. Early reading skills are developing effectively in an environment that presents many opportunities for children to encounter the written word. Where worksheets or other

printed materials are used, the adults explain to children what they say. Children are taught that signs, symbols and print carry meaning. For example, two pairs of "feet" stuck on the floor by the door are the cue-marks for lining up. Children quickly learn their own name labels and use them to register themselves at the start of the morning and afternoon. A good range of books is available for children and staff, including a range of "Big Books." The book corner is always available for children to browse so most children have a good understanding of how books are organised. Children turn the pages and behave like readers. Books are valued by staff and stories are read with expression and enthusiasm. Children listen attentively and respond well to questions about what they can see in the pictures.

64. Most children know that print is linked to the picture and that the printed words carry the story. The oldest higher attaining children retell familiar stories from the pictures, include some detail of the characters and events and try to follow the words. They read their name and are beginning to learn some letter names and sounds. Average attaining children retell a familiar story, but the details are scanty. All children are encouraged to take books home to share with their families.
65. Teachers provide many opportunities for children to learn to write. With the exception of the children with special educational needs, children know that marks convey meaning and children will act as writers when the tasks demand it. A significant number of the oldest children can write their names. The letters are generally correctly formed and legible, although some letters are reversed and inconsistent in size. Most children, with some help, know the initial letter of their name. All children hold a pencil correctly and even those children who are not writing independently make their marks carefully and with intent.
66. The assessments of children's progress completed after the sessions are transferred regularly on to children's general record sheets. An up-to-date profile of each child's progress is maintained. This information is used effectively to plan the next week's lessons.

### **Mathematical development**

67. Most children reach the expected standard at five years of age. From evidence in the assessment records, higher attainers exceed the expected standard. Standards have improved since the last inspection.
68. Children's good progress is largely the result of good teaching, which is based firmly on small group practical activities. In this way, children learn new ideas as a result of what they see physically in front of them and ideas are very well reinforced through repetition in mock 'real' situations, such as the class shop. Teachers provide a wide range of opportunities for children to develop their mathematical understanding; they encourage them to sort, measure and compare objects. Children learn to use mathematical language in the context of practical activities and to recognise basic shapes and their properties. They are familiar with some number rhymes and counting games. They sort and count small numbers of objects successfully. Most older children count to seven confidently and are beginning to understand how to record their counting.
69. As a result of the practical approach taken by the school, children begin to use their developing mathematical understanding to solve problems. For example, children learned how to wrap parcels. This involved estimating the size of paper to cover the objects. Children manoeuvred the paper very well for their age and Postman Pat soon

had some parcels to deliver. Children revised the terms 'big' and 'little' to describe the parcels.

70. Children with special educational needs receive extra close attention in very small groups. Children practise identifying objects and then learn to pay for them at the shop. Very good use was made of quick questions by support staff to keep children on task in this lesson. Children successfully identified, for example, a train and a man. This intensive form of teaching brings about the very good progress of the lowest attainers towards the targets in their education plans.
71. Children receive regular oral practice in the recall of numbers. All children are working on numbers up to ten. The number practices are cleverly introduced and revised through the activities of 'Scraggles' the cat, who on different days has chased different numbers of mice out of the play house. In the week of the inspection, the number seven was a key number. Children learn to subtract numbers. They count those mice that are still left in the house to see how many 'Scraggles' has chased away. Children were completely absorbed in the activity. Children as a whole group can all count from one to seven together.
72. Children are given many opportunities to learn to write numbers and to consolidate what numbers mean with objects of all shapes, sizes and colours. Average attainers successfully write over the top of numbers given to them on paper and are able to count individually up to seven. Higher attainers successfully count to ten. The very well organised class is divided into many small group areas. Children were observed at different times matching shapes such as rectangles, squares, triangles and semi-circles to the correctly shaped holes.
73. Good planning by teachers leads to effective learning for children. Support staff make a valuable contribution to the quality of teaching. For example, younger children who attend in the afternoon were observed working in twos and threes with adults, matching objects with similar coloured bases. Other groups successfully matched different sized cut-out tomatoes to their slots on the base. They said the numbers clearly when asked by the teacher. Children enjoy mathematics and are developing a positive attitude towards learning.

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

74. The breadth of the curriculum provided by the school and the good quality of the teaching ensure that children make good progress in developing a knowledge and understanding of the world about them. Some children enter the school with a limited experience of the world, but by the time they leave the school most children achieve the expected standard for their age. Higher attainers exceed the expected standard at five years old. Children with special educational needs benefit from the same range of opportunities, they make very good progress in broadening the range of their experiences and awareness of the world around them. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection.
75. Central to the school's approach to developing children's knowledge and understanding of the world is the broad range of visits they make and the range of visitors to school. Children visit local places such as Hardwick Country Park, where they explore woodland and collect leaves. Teachers take advantage of any opportunity to extend children's knowledge. For example, visits to a local building site and the fire station give children good opportunities to learn about the special clothing and equipment used by builders

and fire fighters. The visit to the fire station also reinforces children's appreciation of the importance of their health and safety, such as the danger of fire.

76. The outside areas of the school are used well to build on learning during visits. For example, children's understanding of different environments and sorts of animals is widened. Teaching is at its best when teachers give children opportunities to explore and experience the world around them. For example, during the inspection children were taken into the garden to look for small creatures. They were encouraged to look under logs to find slugs and to look at plants to learn how they change in winter. A child with special educational needs was thrilled by the freedom and the chance to see how the wind blew the windsock the staff had brought to show the effect of moving air. Special days when the children can bring their pets to school or visitors bring animals and birds such as an owl reinforce these activities and teach children to care for animals and the environment.
77. The emphasis on practical and 'hands on' learning is maintained in the classroom, teachers provide a wide range of objects and plan opportunities for children to explore things. This approach contributes significantly to children's social, moral and cultural development. Two strengths of the teaching are the very good management of children and the organisation of activities. Expectations of behaviour are explicit and consistently but sensitively applied so children behave very well and respond very positively to the activities. Consequently, children make good progress in acquiring knowledge and understanding of the world around them. Topic themes develop children's awareness of themselves and others. For example, a topic on 'Ourselves' develops children's understanding of the body and specific functions, such as the senses. Special theme days such as "Feely Feet" day focus children's attention and ensure that they have good opportunities to develop and reinforce their understanding of touch through experience, exploration and investigation. Children take great delight in these activities and join in enthusiastically.
78. Adults take good advantage of incidental opportunities to reinforce children's understanding of the world around them. For example, when children were writing Christmas cards the support assistant asked them who was in their family and the names of their brothers or sisters. Through such topics children begin to develop an understanding of things happening in a certain order over time and that we change as we get older. A display of photographs of the children as babies reminds them of this work. The sand and water trays, construction equipment and toy railways give children good opportunities to explore for themselves. Adults frequently intervene to help children develop their work and teach new words such as 'big,' 'little,' 'up' or 'down.'
79. The use of information and communication technology in the nursery to develop children's computer skills and to support other Areas of Learning is very good. There are enough computers in the classroom and they are constantly used by children. The oldest children use the mouse, 'rollerball' control and the keyboard to control programs. They successfully select specific functions, pick up and move objects on screen to dress a teddy or create a car. Children accurately select small pictures on screen to help them choose specific functions. Younger and lower attaining children need some support to operate the programs, but all children enjoy the activities. When they have completed a piece of work they are proud of their achievements and are pleased to show them to adults. Children benefit from praise and encouragement and it gives them added confidence. Other types of technology, such as tape recorders and listening tapes are used creatively to support children's literacy and listening skills.

80. Assessment of children's achievements is good. For some activities staff complete assessment sheets as children complete tasks. They give a very accurate picture of exactly which children have finished each task and how they performed. However, this is not always practical so teachers and support staff fill in the record sheets after each morning or afternoon session, noting what each child has achieved against the planned targets for the week.

### **Physical development**

81. Children enter the school with typical standards of physical development. Most make good progress and reach the expected standard at five years old. Higher attainers exceed the expected standard and are very well co-ordinated and agile. Children move around the school confidently and use all the available space safely. They are aware of others and are particularly sensitive to the special educational needs of some children. They play co-operatively together, take turns and share equipment sensibly. Children climb, jump, slide and balance on equipment, moving imaginatively in, through and over apparatus, practising and developing skills that improve their co-ordination.

82. Before a lesson for older children, the hall was completely reorganised and much of the large equipment was placed to form an 'assault' course. The purpose of the lesson was for children to deliver a letter safely by travelling, for example, across imaginary mountains, stepping stones and rivers. All children moved safely across the apparatus and most showed good balance on the small plastic disc stepping-stones. Children had to use a wide range of movements to get through, under and over the apparatus and they learned to balance better and to connect their movements from one piece of apparatus to another so that they did not fall in the 'river.' Most children climbed quickly and jumped using two feet safely. Children had very good attitudes to work and took turns to cross apparatus, a further sign that routines are very well established in the school. Children with special educational needs were very well integrated into the lesson and took part in everything with occasional help and encouragement from adults. All children were encouraged to have a go at all parts of the course. Support staff make a very valuable impact on children's learning during physical education lessons.

83. Children practised many physical skills whilst making Postman Pat's van. They held brushes and applied paint smoothly to unpainted areas of the boxes and all knew why they were painting the van red. Children's fine hand and finger control of tools is good. They handle pencils and scissors with increasing precision. They mix their own paints at times before successfully applying the resulting paint to paper. They move sensitively to accompany their singing and use various hand and high and low movements as they interpret songs with the support staff. Teachers plan a series of social games to encourage pupils' personal development and co-ordination to music. Children play 'pass-the-parcel' and learn to keep the parcel moving when the music plays.

84. The school has many good photographs of children taking part in physical activities from previous years. They show the extensive range of the school's provision over time. Photographs show that small apparatus, such as bats, balls and hoops, are used to develop children's co-ordination and team-work. Co-operation amongst children and large movements are encouraged, practised and developed using a large parachute. Children hold it around the edge and play co-operative games by, for example, pulling it tight or loosening it to guide a ball on its surface in a particular direction. Children make many structures with bricks and toys. During the inspection, children were observed during moments of intense contemplation and reflection as they, for example, created a zoo and made sure the animals were fed and had friends.

85. The teaching is good across the full spectrum of physical activities. Teachers and support staff prepare very carefully before lessons begin to meet the physical needs of all children. Lessons are often linked to other work that children are engaged in. These links make lessons even more relevant and interesting to children. Lessons focus clearly on what children are going to learn that is new and which skills they need to consolidate. The school has excellent facilities for young children, which includes an extensive fenced outdoor area. The school has a very wide range of equipment. For example, a large container of foam balls is used to encourage children's confidence in all physical activities. Many activities are available both in and out of doors.
86. The outdoor provision is very good and is very well organised and managed during the drier and warmer months. The extensive outdoor surfaces provide a large area where children can confidently extend their physical skills and develop good powers of co-ordination and control. All adults work hard to ensure that the area is used imaginatively and encourages learning. The school provided much photographic evidence of how the site is used. Children have very many opportunities to take part in outdoor play, for example, in the large sand-pit. Children enjoy sports days and develop an interest in the school garden.

### **Creative development**

87. All children, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in developing their imaginative and creative skills and their attainment is in line with that expected for their ages. Higher attainers exceed the expected standard. This is a similar picture to that reported at the time of the last inspection.
88. A wide variety of opportunities are provided for children to explore different media. Sufficient time and resources are available for them to express their ideas imaginatively. Children's work is valued by staff and celebrated through bright and eye-catching displays. All children are interested and enthusiastic in creative activities such as painting, drawing and making models. Most children successfully choose the materials they want to use when making their models. For example, children were making sit-in models of Postman Pat's van. They chose boxes and glued on material or paper to represent wheels and other features of the van. Lower attaining children used the materials enthusiastically, but needed some help to join them together. Most children use paintbrushes and glue sticks accurately. Higher attaining children use a wide range of colours on their paintings or models.
89. The teaching of practical activities is good. Teachers and support staff give sensitive support during these sessions. Teachers allow children to experiment and investigate and to express their own ideas rather than imposing their own views. However, guidance is given when it is needed. For example, teachers and support staff show children how objects are joined together and how much glue is needed. Children then learn to make better choices of materials or colours and develop their skills effectively through practice and experience. The practical sessions are very well organised and managed and adults work well together. Activities are well planned and integrated into the theme of the lesson so that different elements reinforce and consolidate children's learning. For example, children write their names on a blank Christmas card for their Mums with one adult and then go to another table with another adult to decorate them. Over the period the staff makes sure that all children have the opportunity to do each activity. Their achievements are recorded on focussed assessment sheets at the end of the session. Some variations are made, mainly in the degree of adult support, for the morning and afternoon sessions to take account of the differing ages of the groups.

90. Children listen, play and move to a range of music and musical instruments enthusiastically. They are keen to take part in singing sessions and to take turns to play untuned instruments, such as cymbals and wood blocks, to accompany known songs. They listen carefully and try hard to join in when they should. Most older children develop a good sense of rhythm, such as clapping in time when they are singing. As the children move through the nursery they are taught a broad repertoire of songs and nursery rhymes and learn to respond to instructions to vary the speed or volume of their singing. Music is an important part of the nursery day. "Whistle while you work" is used to indicate tidying up time and at the end of the closing session, children sing a variation of "Time to go home." Staff work closely together in the closing sessions. They are very effective role models and the teaching encourages a sense of excitement that captures children's attention.
91. The use of children's imagination is encouraged throughout the nursery. Teachers incorporate 'pretending' into organised activities to generate interest and enthusiasm. For example, in a whole class physical development lesson, the hall was set out as an assault course and children had to pretend they had to negotiate hazards such as a swamp to deliver a letter safely. In addition, role-play areas such as a Post Office give children good opportunities to work together by taking on imaginative characters.
92. Although most children are independent in their play, take turns and share equipment with no quarrelling, the management of these areas by adults is very effective. For example, to make sure that only one child plays in Postman Pat's van a uniform is provided and coloured sashes are given to those children whose turn it is to run the post office. Periodically, these are given to different children so they all have equal opportunities to take part. Children with special educational needs are well supported by the staff to help them develop their imaginations and to play in these areas constructively.