

INSPECTION REPORT

WASHWOOD HEATH NURSERY SCHOOL

Ward End, Birmingham

LEA area: Birmingham

Unique reference number: 103132

Headteacher: Mrs Anne Jones

Reporting inspector: Mr Michael Allcock
19834

Dates of inspection: 20th – 23rd November 2000

Inspection number: 225011

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:	Maintained
Age range of pupils:	3 – 4 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	201 Sladefield Road Ward End Birmingham West Midlands
Postcode:	B8 2SY
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Appropriate authority:	Birmingham Local Education Authority
Date of previous inspection:	20 May 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Area of learning responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Michael Allcock: 19834	Registered inspector	Mathematical development. Knowledge and understanding of the world. Physical development.	What sort of school is it? Standards and achievement. Teaching and learning. Leadership and management. What should be done to improve further?
Michael Hudson: 14324	Lay inspector		Attitudes, behaviour and personal development. Attendance. Care and welfare of children. Partnership with parents.
Catherine Davey: 23999	Team inspector	Communication, language and literacy. Creative development. Personal, social and emotional development. Special educational needs.	Curriculum. Assessment.
Tom Simpson: 10428	Team inspector	English as an additional language. Equal opportunities.	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Washwood Heath Nursery School is in Ward End, an urban area of Birmingham, north-east of the city centre, near the edge of the inner city ring. The Edwardian school building originally housed a secondary school. It served many other purposes before the nursery moved there from a prefabricated building in Ward End Park. It is well adapted for use with young children. The school does not have a governing body or a fully delegated budget.

All children attend for one year, part-time, morning or afternoon only, following their third birthday. There are places for 170 children but at present 150 attend, 75 in each session. Numbers of boys and girls are similar. They come from a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds. 110 children have English as an additional language, and at 73 per cent, this is much higher than both the national and the local authority average. Most children are at an early stage of acquiring English speaking skills. The majority of children enter school with levels of attainment that are below those expected for children of this age. Attainments are well below those expected in aspects of language, especially speaking and listening. At this early stage of the year, there are two children on the register of special educational needs.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Washwood Heath is an effective school, with many strong features. High quality teaching and a very well designed curriculum ensure that children make good progress. They behave well and are keen to learn. Standards are in line with those expected by the end of the Foundation Stage overall. Children attain higher than expected standards in their personal, social and emotional development. They are very well looked after. The staff work very hard as a team. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- The school makes good provision for children with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs. They, and most other children, make good progress.
- Teaching, and as a result learning, is good.
- The headteacher provides very clear educational direction for the school, which is well managed overall.
- There is a very wide range of learning opportunities available for children.
- Children display very positive attitudes. They are enthusiastic about school and interested in all they learn.
- Relationships are very good, so discipline can be relaxed.
- The school makes very supportive provision for children's personal and social development.

What could be improved

- The monitoring of teaching and the curriculum by those with responsibility, to further raise standards.
- Provision for higher attaining children, so that they make the progress of which they are capable.
- The structure and timing of outdoor play sessions.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made good improvement since it was last inspected in May 1996. All but one of the issues for action then noted has been addressed in full. Morning and afternoon children now have equal access to a broadly similar education, including that of time spent in the nursery. The school has strengthened its provision for children with English as an additional language, even though the proportion has more than doubled. Practitioners now have a greater understanding of the needs of these children and of how to meet them. However, as at the time of the last inspection, support and learning are still not as effective when the contribution of bilingual staff is not available. There is a greater awareness of the cultural diversity that exists in the local community. This richness is celebrated by the school, which now makes very good provision for children's all round cultural development. However, though key

issues to provide non-contact time for the special needs co-ordinator and the member of staff responsible for developing closer links with parents have been resolved, the core action to develop the role of the headteacher as a resource has not. Therefore, this remains an area for improvement.

In addition to these improvements, teaching standards have risen, effectively promoting children's learning and ensuring that they achieve well. The curriculum has been further developed and is better planned. The headteacher has continued to improve the accommodation to ensure that both staff and children have a good environment in which to work, both inside and out.

STANDARDS

The table summarises inspectors' judgements about the achievements of pupils in relation to the national early learning goals by the time they complete the Foundation Stage.

Performance in:		Key well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
Communication, language and literacy	C	
Mathematical development	C	
Personal, social and emotional development	B	
Other areas of the curriculum	C	

The majority of children enter the nursery with attainments below, some well below, those expected for children of this age. Almost all achieve well in their year in the nursery. Those with special educational needs and English as an additional language are well supported and make good progress overall. However, the school does not make specific provision for higher attaining children, who subsequently do not always make the progress of which they are capable. Overall, children make very good progress in their personal, social and emotional development and good progress in all the other five areas of learning: communication, language and literacy; mathematical, creative and physical development; and knowledge and understanding of the world. This is due to a very well planned, rich curriculum and good teaching, with all practitioners working closely together to focus on raising standards. By the time the children complete the reception year at their primary school, most are on course to meet the early learning goals in all the foundation curriculum areas of learning. However, in their personal, social and emotional development, the majority of children are on target to achieve standards above those expected.

CHILDREN'S ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Children clearly love being at school. They show enjoyment of all features of school life.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good overall. Better in classes and around the school than in the playground.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Very constructive relationships between adults and children. Children are already beginning to take responsibility for their own learning.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Some problems with punctuality, particularly in the afternoon.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Up to 5
Lessons seen overall	Good

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

The quality of teaching is good overall. In the 31 lessons seen during the inspection, teaching was good or better in over 93 per cent. It was very good in 29 per cent. No unsatisfactory lessons were seen. The quality of teaching was good in all areas of the foundation curriculum, contributing positively to the good levels of learning seen and to the rapid progress most children make. Practitioners, both teachers and nursery nurses, organise lessons very efficiently, manage their classes very sensitively and provide very stimulating resources for children to use. The highly able bilingual support staff work very closely with them, ensuring good access to the curriculum for children with English as an additional language. Unfortunately, this provision is not full-time. Lessons and child-initiated activities outside are not always as successful as indoor provision.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. Well planned, broad and varied. Enriched by a good variety of stimulating visits.
Provision for children with special educational needs	Good. Children have clear targets and are well supported.
Provision for children with English as an additional language	Good overall. Very effective when bilingual support staff work alongside class teachers. Progress is slower at other times.
Provision for children's personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good overall. The school provides very well for children's spiritual, social and cultural development. Good provision for their moral development.
How well the school cares for its children	Good overall. Very effective procedures for child protection, ensuring children's welfare, and for assessing the progress they make. Teachers promote their personal development very effectively. Higher attaining children not always well enough provided for.

Parents have positive views of the school. They are well informed through meetings, the reports and newsletters they receive and the workshops they take part in. A number promote children's learning by their work as voluntary helpers and all help their own children with homework set.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. Very clear educational direction is offered by the headteacher. Management roles of staff members underdeveloped. Strong teamwork has ensured provision remains good.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Sound. Information from baseline and other assessments used to track individuals or groups of children. Insufficient monitoring by those with management responsibility.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. Specific grants well directed to support children with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs. School budget well managed to ensure identified priorities are addressed.

There is a sufficient number of appropriately qualified staff to meet the specific needs of the children. The contribution made by nursery nurses and bilingual support staff is a very strong feature of the school's work. A very strong commitment to improvement is shared by the long serving staff team. Accommodation is bright and well-cared for, though inside and outside play space is limited. Resources are good overall.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What some parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like coming to school. • Their children are well taught and make good progress. • They are kept well informed. • Staff are accessible and friendly. • The school is well led and managed. • Good support is provided for children with English as an additional language. • The pre-school worker provides good support for families and an interesting range of activities. • The toy and book libraries help them to support their children's learning at home. • Behaviour in the school is good. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boisterous outside play. • The lack of a sheltered area to wait in before the school is open. • Provision for homework and extra-curricular activities.

The inspectors support most of the positive views of parents. However, while progress was found to be good for the majority of children, the higher attaining do not always make the progress of which they are capable. Inspection evidence also supported the apparently contradictory statements about behaviour. For while behaviour is very good in supervised, structured work inside the building, outside play can be hectic and may frighten some children. Parents and children have nowhere to shelter out of the extremes of weather when waiting until staff are ready to receive them. It is a genuine problem that the school and the local authority may wish to address. The school provides appropriate homework for its children. The level of activities outside the school is as one would expect to see in a nursery, with some stimulating visits being well used to enhance children's learning.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. Children attend the nursery from the age of three for one year only, before entering the reception year at their primary school. The school's detailed observational notes record that most children enter the nursery with little or no previous experience in the key areas of communication, language and literacy and mathematical development. Their personal and social skills are more advanced but still relatively underdeveloped. These findings are confirmed by the results of the local authority's baseline assessment procedures, completed by the time children had been in school for seven weeks. Evidence indicates that the great majority of children enter school with below or even well below average levels of attainment, especially in their understanding and use of language. Inspectors make judgements based on children's predicted attainments at the end of the Foundation Stage, after the reception year, and before they enter Year 1 of the National Curriculum. Most children have made good progress already this year. Provision is very good. The curriculum is very well designed to encourage the speedy acquisition of skills and understanding. Teachers know the children well and plan good levels of support for those with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs. Planning for those with higher attainment is not so specific, reducing the challenge these children receive and the progress they make.
2. The school concentrates appropriately on personal, social and emotional development in the children's first half term in school. Children make very good progress due to well-planned opportunities for them to take responsibility, work closely in pairs and groups and mix unselfconsciously and confidently with children from a wide variety of backgrounds. They are constantly given choices to make, so that they show mature levels of independence; for example they choose the paper they need and the paint or crayons they will use to complete a creative task. They are given the chance to work exclusively in their class base. However, as they become more sure of themselves they move freely throughout the school, taking a good level of responsibility for planning their own learning, within a well-designed framework. This demands careful monitoring, either by the detailed assessment of their activities by their own teacher or by those with whom children have chosen to work. All practitioners, teachers, nursery nurses and bilingual support staff, work very hard to plan and resource this high level of interaction. Social development is less well promoted during outside play. Even allowing for these young children's stage of development, there are times when a lack of respect for others and a tendency not to share toys is evident. This is due to the large numbers in the relatively small outside space, often without sufficient stimulation or intervention by supervising adults. All children are on target to meet, and the majority to exceed, the early learning goals by the end of their reception year.
3. Over 73 per cent of children enter school with English as an additional language and most are at an early stage of acquiring English-speaking skills. Early reading and writing skills are virtually non-existent for many. Teachers devise a wide range of well-structured tasks for children to listen and speak, to access books and begin to respond in written forms. Children respond by listening carefully to adults and their peers, answering questions and joining in with increasing confidence. Few are fluent but all try hard. The support given by the bilingual staff is crucial, as children with English as an additional language have questions repeated to them in their mother tongue and are able to take part on the same terms. This support necessarily diminishes when bilingual staff are not available. Then the progress of this substantial number of children slows. All children respect books, treat them carefully and love to share reading with adults. Story times are great fun. They are often accompanied by songs and rhymes or by role-play, as when a teacher, with blond wig including plaits, starred as Goldilocks to a trio of ferocious children as the bears. Children are encouraged to respond to stories in a variety of ways, increasingly by their own writing, as in a follow-up frieze to the story of The Bear Hunt in Class 1. Children are nurtured by this rich curriculum, so that most make good progress. However, the higher attaining children are not consistently given additional opportunity to extend their skills. They are, for instance, not always required to write their name on their work, and do not move on as quickly as they could. All

children are on target to meet early learning goals in speaking and listening, most in reading and the majority in writing by the time they complete their reception year.

4. The school concentrates its teaching initially on core social and linguistic skills, so that children acquire the necessary tools to access the curriculum. The main emphasis on mathematical development takes place in the second term. However, there is a well-integrated approach to mathematics that is developed through many areas of the curriculum. Early skills in counting are developed through songs and rhymes and in role-play, in following up recent visits to local shops and trips on buses, in making purchases and paying fares and in weighing and measuring when preparing food. Children are given opportunities to work with shapes, the higher attaining naming circles, squares and triangles. They are able to follow sequences and begin to create their own, including using printing with fruit and vegetables to produce repeating patterns. Early acquisition of mathematical language is encouraged and reinforced, so that children begin to discriminate between large and small, thick and thin. The majority make good progress, though opportunities are sometimes missed to further promote the attainment of those more ready to make further gains by, for instance, asking them to judge distinctions in the textures they are working with, labelling them rough or smooth, or to count the chips they were cutting to help establish correspondence. Most children are on target to meet the early learning goals by the time they are at the end of the reception year.
5. Progress has been made since the last inspection in children's knowledge and understanding of the world. The school has improved its information and communication technology provision, so that children get regular access to computers and use them in all areas of the curriculum. Most are confident when using the mouse. Some can print their own work unaided. Teachers devise many well-planned activities for children to take part in scientific experiments. These include observations of changes in materials and using the outdoor classroom to plant and harvest their own living things. Children display curiosity when experimenting with water, sand and other materials. The classroom specialising in construction is very well equipped to promote early skills in design. The class teacher provides very well designed tasks to motivate children and challenge their thinking. Children design and make their own wheeled vehicles, embellishing them with colour or design features like bumper bars. They experience their world in well-planned visits to local shops and the city centre, activities that are followed up with a wealth of work done in class. There is less evidence that they are given sufficient opportunity to develop early skills in history. Children achieve well and are on target to meet the early learning goals by the end of the reception year.
6. Children also achieve well in their creative development and are on target to meet the nationally recommended early learning goals. Classrooms are well organised to support creative and imaginative play. In the best lessons, children are given time to complete tasks, even given time to do too much to a painting or print, which they are regarded as owning, not the teacher. They express their ideas successfully through a wide range of media. They mix paint to make original colours and choose their own paper to use it on. They use many materials, including play-dough and salt-dough, which they mix for themselves to promote their understanding of how materials change. Children sing songs and repeat rhymes with their teachers with increasing confidence. Some choose to use musical instruments and play them carefully. Teachers plan regular opportunities for children to dance to a variety of music from around the world. A skilled teacher of dance leads them in more formal sessions, where they attempt to follow the music carefully, often interpreting the piece through adopting the roles of different characters.
7. Most children are on target to meet the early learning goals in their physical development. Many use scissors, screwdrivers and knives confidently in well-supervised lessons. Teachers plan carefully for both fine and gross motor skill acquisition in the activities they present to children. Teachers use large group activities, like parachute games, to develop co-ordination and teamwork. Children use a wide selection of wheeled toys in outside play, to promote confidence and control. Most are well co-ordinated when using them but are not prepared to share them willingly. Play with balls is also not always used well to encourage social development, as the minority, almost exclusively boys, drive the majority to the margins of the playground. The gains they make in awareness of space are contradicted by their lack of awareness of space that others need. Many

children tackle the challenging, fixed, playground equipment adeptly, using the fireman's pole, the net and the linking bars and ladders confidently. They make good progress in most aspects of their work, though fine motor control is slower to develop.

8. Most children enter the nursery in the early stages of acquiring English-speaking skills. As a result of effective support from teachers and, particularly, from bilingual support staff when this valuable resource is available, nearly all make good progress. By the time they leave the nursery, English language skills have advanced significantly, although for the majority of children they are still below expected levels. Children with special educational needs make good and occasionally very good progress in relation to their prior achievement. Tasks are well matched to their needs and these children receive good support in the classroom.

Children's attitudes, values and personal development

9. Since the last inspection children's attitudes have improved, and they are now very good and a strong feature of the nursery. Children are attentive and very well motivated, show marked interest in their work and take pride in endeavours such as toy building projects. They respond eagerly to the tasks they are set, show a high degree of commitment, and sustain very good levels of concentration. Children undertake activities very effectively both on their own and in small groups, and they are happy to share the pleasures of collective achievement, such as the results from a local traffic census. In discussions, they offer thoughtful and imaginative ideas and they listen to what others have to say. Parents say their children enjoy attending the nursery and work hard to succeed. Children's very positive attitudes enhance their learning.
10. Children's behaviour has continued to be good and suitably benefits their attainment and learning. Parents are pleased with the standards achieved. The nursery code of conduct is well understood and most children take pride in their good behaviour. In lessons, the code is properly observed by staff and the atmosphere is calm, orderly and purposeful. During structured outside play activities, such as the supervised use of the climbing frames, children patiently await their turn. However, in some free play activities, such as the uncontrolled use of footballs, some children can become selfish and bad mannered. Children have respect for property such as wall and tabletop displays. There are no signs of abuse, harassment or aggression, which in a nursery of such cultural diversity is particularly notable.
11. Personal development and relationships are good, as they were at the time of the last inspection. Most children settle easily into the nursery routine and thereafter improve steadily in their assurance and self-esteem. They show increasing independence, not only in their personal behaviour, but also in decision-making and choice of activities and equipment. Children's sense of responsibility improves with their growing confidence and they willingly carry out the duties they are given with evident diligence and pride. They are beginning to understand important personal and social issues such as healthy eating, road safety and the purpose of charities. Parents confirm that their children are becoming more mature and responsible.
12. The relationship between children and staff is particularly good. Children are treated with respect by staff and they respond positively to the consistent and sensitive approach they are shown. This relationship also helps the children to be considerate and tolerant to their peers. Relationships between children, irrespective of backgrounds, are good and children from different ethnic groups and of both genders work and play happily together. Although some have yet to understand the impact their actions can have, many form constructive relationships and are relaxed and confident within them. Children with special educational needs and those with little command of English are fully integrated into the nursery community.
13. Children for whom English is an additional language have very positive attitudes towards their learning. Most are keen to develop their skills across the areas of learning, including communication, language and literacy. They are enthusiastic about the work set and the majority are keen to contribute to discussions. They co-operate well with one another when playing or using tools and apparatus.

14. Children with special educational needs display very good attitudes to work. They settle quickly to exciting, challenging tasks and they behave well. The skills associated with acquiring greater independence are developing rapidly because teachers and other adults provide frequent opportunities for them to take responsibility.
15. Attendance is satisfactory in both the morning and afternoon sessions and attendance registers are checked at the beginning of each session. Registers comply with statutory requirements. Registration is conducted quietly and effectively and class practitioners welcome children in their own language. Not all parents observe the absentee procedure, and some children are taken on extended holidays in term time, which adversely affects their progress. Punctuality, especially for the afternoon session, is unsatisfactory. The satisfactory attendance has a positive impact on pupils' learning, but the late arrival of some children disrupts their classes.

HOW WELL ARE CHILDREN TAUGHT?

16. The quality of teaching is good overall. This contributes significantly to the effective learning children achieve and the rapid progress most of them make. Teaching is good or better in over 93 per cent of lessons. It is very good in 29 per cent of them. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen during the inspection. This represents a substantial improvement in this vital area, as at the time of the last inspection only 9 per cent of teaching was very good or better and 14 per cent was unsatisfactory.
17. One paramount reason why teaching is good, with some outstanding features, is the very good support provided by the highly gifted bilingual support staff who work with those children with English as an additional language. They work seamlessly close to their colleagues, offering a virtual simultaneous translation capability. This gives good access to the very good foundation curriculum to those children they work with most closely. The very well designed curriculum is jointly planned by all staff to ensure that key elements of, for instance, literacy, numeracy and personal and social education, feature prominently and are consistently reinforced. This is another main reason why teaching is as good as it is. Team working is well developed among a long-serving, cohesive staff, which ensures that the regular large group or whole school activities are joyous occasions for adults and children alike. This close co-operative approach enables practitioners, both teachers and nursery nurses, to be equally responsible for teaching classes. Teaching standards have also been improved by the good level of in-service training the staff has undertaken, which has improved understanding of the foundation curriculum and how young children learn. The school is aware that the regular, structured monitoring of teaching by the headteacher and other staff with management responsibility will help improve standards further and reduce the few inconsistencies in delivery seen.
18. The good level of detail in planning, for both the longer and shorter term, ensures that there is sufficient emphasis on the core skills of communication, language and literacy. Children are given many opportunities to listen carefully to adults and classmates. They answer in single words, or short sentences if they are ready to do so, and take part in a wide range of early experiences sharing reading and taking part in writing tasks. Learning objectives are made clear and translated into motivational activities in all of the classes, which are very well organised to concentrate on one or more of the areas of learning of the Foundation Stage. Outcomes are carefully evaluated, so that future planning can take account of how children performed and how well an activity served the learning intention. The school concentrates on language and personal development at the start of the year the children spend there. The very high proportion of children at an early stage of acquiring English as an additional language and the need to integrate children from a wide range of backgrounds makes this a prudent decision. The school is very conscious of its role in promoting educational inclusion. Less attention is thus devoted to mathematical development at this time of the year. However, planning is secure and teachers develop mathematics well across the curriculum by, for example, weighing flour to make dough, counting the beakers for break time drinks and exchanging money on bus or shopping trips while role-playing.

19. Teachers expect children to behave well, work hard and quickly become more independent. They create a calm atmosphere in which children can settle quickly, listen carefully and play in a purposeful manner. In creative activities, children are encouraged to join in, as in dance sessions where they move to a wide range of music from around the world, which often involves multi-cultural dress. More boisterous activities, like indoor parachute games promote physical development, a sense of co-operation, leading to team spirit, and the sense of exercise as both healthy and fun. Many outside activities also promote these goals. However, the playground is sometimes overcrowded, children spend too long there and play is neither adult led nor profitably child initiated. Some aggression is evident where balls and wheeled toys are not shared fairly.
20. Teachers organise their classes very effectively to promote children's early learning needs. Computers are used well to support work widely across the curriculum, with most children already working towards independence in their use. Teachers provide regular opportunities for children to develop their personal skills, through activities like serving their peers with drinks and biscuits, taking the register to the office and choosing which activities they wish to undertake and what materials they propose to use. This was very well illustrated in a very good lesson that extended children's knowledge and understanding of the world. Children deconstructed telephones and clocks to see how they work and chose from a range of tools, whether they would hammer nails or drive screws into their selected wood or board. Throughout, children are very well managed. Teachers know their own group very well but the freedom children have to move between rooms, becoming more autonomous as learners, means that they are well known by all staff. Relationships are relaxed and positive attitudes are encouraged so overt discipline is hardly ever needed.
21. Lessons proceed at a very brisk pace. Very little time is wasted, though some outside sessions are longer than the timetable indicates. Teachers are adept at reorganising space to allow large-scale creative or physical activities to take place indoors, at the drop of a hat. Resources are very well prepared and very effectively used. In one lesson, the tape recorder was used very well to develop children's spoken language as they discussed shopping. Excellent use of bilingual support ensured all children were able to participate in the activity. In a less successful lesson involving food technology, opportunities were missed to provide a simple recipe in picture form and for children to count the chips they were cutting and to extend language through discussion of texture or touch.
22. Each session has a planned period of evaluation and reflection at the end. Teachers use this to reinforce effectively key learning that has taken place during the nursery morning or afternoon. Their questioning skills are well developed, giving children good models of language and providing teachers with regular opportunities to assess understanding and move children's learning on. Most teachers structure their questions as effectively as they do the activities they present to children. This contributes effectively to the progress most children make, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language. However, while teachers often differentiate between higher attaining children and others in the questions they ask, not all make provision for these children in their planning and seldom in the activities they set, reducing the challenge the higher attainers need and inhibiting the progress of which they are capable.
23. The quality of teaching for children with special educational needs is good. Children make good gains in their learning because activities are specifically planned to suit their needs. Teachers know children very well and the quality of support in class is high. The school has taken on board recommendations following the last inspection and the co-ordinator now supports children with special educational needs within the classroom. This has accelerated their rate of progress since the last inspection. It is now good.
24. Children with English as an additional language are taught well. Teachers have a secure understanding of their needs and provide a good range of relevant and stimulating activities to satisfy these. Every opportunity is taken to further extend children's English language skills. Regular skilful and challenging questioning is an example of this. The contribution from bilingual support staff has a particularly significant impact on the children's learning. They successfully

reinforce concepts in both English and the children's mother tongue and play an important proactive role in all lessons that they are involved in. Unfortunately, because of the financial implications, the bilingual support staff are not available for the whole week. When they are not present, many of the children are frequently less able to access the areas of learning. This has a detrimental effect on the pace of learning.

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

25. The quality and range of learning opportunities provided for the children are very good. The curriculum is broad and balanced. The school has taken appropriate steps to address the imbalance in the time allocation for morning and afternoon sessions. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The nursery provides an exciting and challenging environment, which positively inspires children to want to learn. The nationally recommended guidelines for children in the Foundation Stage are inherent in the work and are enriched by experiences, which stimulate and focus children's interest and provide a basis for effective early learning. The curriculum is based on a clear understanding of how children learn, so that they have ample opportunity for enquiry, talk and play. High priority is given to children's personal, social and emotional development, which underpins all future learning. Due to the low levels of children's command and understanding of English on entry, heavy emphasis is placed on communication, language and literacy. The nursery also places appropriate emphasis on mathematical, creative and physical development, and scientific investigation. Very few opportunities are missed to involve children in speaking and listening activities. Consequently children are rapidly gaining a wider vocabulary, which in turn gives them access to other areas of the curriculum.
26. Children's learning is further strengthened by visits within the local area, such as to the supermarket and park. Visitors also enrich the curriculum and include those bringing in animals from a local farm, as well as dancers from the Royal Ballet and musicians from the Birmingham Symphony Orchestra. In learning about their immediate environment, children took part in a traffic survey, which involved counting and naming the different types of vehicles passing the school. Planned use of the garden area enabled children to grow their own potatoes, then dig them up and cook and eat them. Nevertheless, the outside area is sometimes underused as a tool to extend and enrich children's learning. Children are well prepared for the next stage of learning, and effective links have been established with other schools. A very good scheme to involve parents in children's learning is actively promoted through, for example, the work of the pre-school worker. Parents are encouraged to borrow toys from the toy library and workshops are in place to promote home/school reading. The rich environment for learning has a very positive effect on children's attitudes, attainment and progress.
27. The school uses a common format for planning that identifies areas of learning that are well linked to the early learning goals. Policy documents and schemes of work are detailed so that they underpin and strengthen provision. However, adequate guidance is not provided for staff to meet the needs of the higher attaining children. The school provides planned activities, which enable almost all children to have equal access and opportunity. However, provision for the higher attaining is not always appropriately made. The very good practice of family grouping enables staff to plan for and assess the specific needs of a small number of children, whilst giving them the flexibility of having an overview of children in other areas. Planning makes very good links to other areas of the curriculum. For example, children sort the fruit and vegetables they are using in their printing activity, while at the same time learning about pattern, shape, size and colour. In this way, they are learning to make sense of the world in which they live. Planning usually builds on what children know and can do. This enables them to move forward with their learning. Some activities build on familiarity, such as in story sessions when teachers often repeat stories. This reinforces language and enables children to join in with repeated words and phrases. Teachers evaluate planning regularly both in written form and through weekly discussion with colleagues. Sometimes, however, valuable information gained is not always included in future planning. This is especially evident for the more able. Therefore there are times when these children do not move forward with their learning as quickly as they might. The monitoring of the curriculum through observation of classroom teaching and learning is in need of further development.

28. The curriculum is well organised and planned to cater for children with special educational needs. Following recommendations from the last inspection, the well-informed co-ordinator now has time to monitor classroom teaching and learning for children with special educational needs. This has accelerated their progress. At the time of the inspection, children had only been attending the nursery for a short time. Therefore individual education plans had not yet been written, although children had already been placed on the special needs register because they were giving cause for concern. Staff are currently assessing the needs of these children through baseline assessments, as well as through day-to-day assessment and regular discussion with colleagues, parents and outside agencies. Good use is made of special needs assessments specifically designed to highlight particular areas of concern. Evaluations of planning also identify the specific needs of individual children. However, this is not always sufficiently highlighted on future planning in a minority of lessons. Nevertheless, teachers know children well and include specific activities aimed at involving children with both academic and personal difficulties. From scrutiny of children's work, together with individual education plans from the previous year, it is evident that good progress is made because small achievable targets are set. These targets are reviewed regularly. Procedures include discussion with parents and other adults involved, together with regular updating of the special needs register. The special educational needs co-ordinator works closely with staff and gives regular help and guidance. Good use is made of local special schools, who assist with the provision of specialist equipment.
29. There is a good balance between teacher directed activities and child initiated tasks, such as those in the role-play area. However, a significant number of children do not possess a sufficient command of language to generate ideas through talk, although teachers make every effort to involve children in their own learning. For example, frequent opportunities are provided for direct enquiry, as was clearly evident when children used screwdrivers to open mechanical devices such as clocks to find out how they worked.
30. Planning to support children with English as an additional language is good. Activities are appropriately planned in relation to the regular assessment of the needs of different children. They are chosen carefully in order to match topics currently being taught and designed to make tasks interesting as well as relevant. Bilingual support assistants have a suitably proactive role to play in the production of specific plans, in consultation with class teachers and the school's co-ordinator for English as an additional language. Children with English as an additional language are included fully in all activities provided by the school.
31. The school works hard to ensure equality of access to all children. The school values the ethnic and religious diversity of its children and creates frequent opportunities to celebrate these. For example, resources reflect cultural differences and visitors to the school celebrate the latter through, for instance, dance and music. Festivals associated with major world religions are regularly celebrated. Opportunities to explore cultural diversity through art are, however, underdeveloped.
32. Provision for children's spiritual development is very good. There are frequent opportunities for children to reflect, and for them to develop their natural curiosity and imagination. During a good dance lesson, children listened carefully to music and then happily imitated the movement of birds, fish, and butterflies as the mood of the music dictated. Their delight is clear to see, especially in story and singing sessions when teachers use costume, props and dramatic voices to make learning an exciting experience. The very good practice whereby bilingual support staff give simultaneous translations enables children with little or no English to experience the joy and rapture evoked during activities such as story and drama. Children's natural sense of curiosity is aroused when they plant seeds and watch carefully for signs of change, and, following a construction activity, in testing to find if the vehicle they have designed and made is strong enough to carry passengers.
33. Provision for children's moral development is good. Whilst it is very good in the classroom, provision is less effective during outdoor activities. There are frequently too many children in a comparatively small area. There is no designated area for activities such as ball games. This leads to frustration and, sometimes, examples of inappropriate behaviour. Some children

commandeer the wheeled toys and opportunities are missed to develop children's understanding of fairness and the importance of sharing. Staff tend to adopt a supervisory role rather than that of a teacher and insufficient regard is paid to the need to become more fully involved in children's play. Nevertheless, children are taught the need for exercising good manners through the very good example set by staff, and are learning to understand the difference between right and wrong because it is well taught. The scheme whereby children are rewarded for effort and good behaviour motivates them to try hard. Children are rapidly learning the importance of living in the community in peace and harmony.

34. Provision for children's social development is very good. All staff provide very good examples of good social behaviour through their warm and constructive relationships with one another and with the children. This is a strength of the school. Children give out drinks at snack-time. They help each other by co-operating in group tasks such as when generating sufficient air to make the parachute rise. This evokes a good team spirit. Although for the majority of children language skills are poorly developed, there are many opportunities provided for them to play alongside and with their peers both in large and small groups. Children are encouraged to set out and tidy away tools and equipment, and are taught the importance of caring for living things such as plants and animals. Good links with the community enable children to find out about the work of the police, doctors and local shopkeepers, for example, and in raising their awareness of the wider community they raise money for the less fortunate.
35. Following recommendations at the time of the last inspection, the school has recognised the need to provide further opportunities for children to celebrate the rich diversity of cultures within the school community. As a result, provision for cultural development is now very good. This represents an improvement since the last inspection. In learning about the importance of religious festivals such as Christmas, Diwali and Eid, children, parents and staff dress in traditional costume and special food is prepared and eaten. In celebrating the Chinese New Year, children learned special dances and performed them for parents. A varied range of books and other resources are attractively displayed. An implicit part of the curriculum is the way in which children are taught to respect others' beliefs and customs. Visits such as that of The Royal Ballet and the Birmingham Symphony Orchestra further enhance this provision. Music from other cultures is used effectively in dance and drama. Less prevalent is the use of the work of famous artists in providing a stimulus for children's own work.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS CHILDREN?

36. Procedures for child protection and welfare are very good and they continue to be a strength of the nursery. Staff know the children very well and pastoral care has a very high priority. Children feel safe and secure. Procedures for accidents, illnesses and medicines are good and sufficient staff have in-date first aid qualifications. The child protection policy is very good and well understood by staff, a co-ordinator is designated and there are links with the requisite agencies.
37. The responsibilities for health and safety are clear, the policy is well structured and staff have good health and safety awareness. In-house risk assessment inspections are regularly carried out and remedial action taken. The outside play area is suitably secure and high-density matting is fitted under the climbing frames. All inspections of appliances and equipment are in date and the use and storage of hazardous substances are well managed. General cleanliness and hygiene in the nursery are very good. There are water leaks through the ceilings of three classrooms. Emergency evacuations are practised and security is regularly reviewed.
38. Procedures for monitoring and supporting children's personal development are very good and represent another strength of the nursery. Personal, social and emotional development is seen as a key to other learning. Throughout their time in the nursery, children's personal development is appropriately monitored, rewarded and recorded. To improve children's independence and self-reliance, staff encourage them to dress themselves and improve their personal hygiene. To promote a sense of collective involvement and responsibility they are given classroom duties, such as serving refreshments and taking the attendance register to the office. Social skills are further developed through group activities and structured play.

39. The nursery's procedures for monitoring and improving attendance remain good, as at the time of the last inspection. The attendance policy, which is outlined in the induction booklet, clearly states both the absence procedure to be followed and the importance of punctuality. A number of parents do not comply with the absence procedure while others take their children on extended holidays in term time without informing the nursery. Some parents, especially those with children attending the afternoon session, do not ensure their children are punctual and may have to wait before entering class. Although the nursery reminds parents about absence and punctuality, it does not ask them to complete courtesy letters before extended holidays or to use a late book to record the names of children who are consistently late over a protracted period.
40. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are good. The behaviour policy is satisfactory and suitably defines standards and expectations. It is supported by a balanced range of rewards and sanctions, which are implemented by staff with consistency and common sense. The policy is supplemented by a good code of conduct, which is displayed in classrooms and resource areas. Although arrangements for supervising outside play activities are generally good, the play area is small and some free play is not closely monitored. The procedures for monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour are also good. They work well and no groups or individuals are unfairly treated or disadvantaged. There is no separate anti-bullying policy, but children are fully aware that any signs of abuse, harassment or aggression will be dealt with firmly.
41. Children with English as an additional language are well cared for and valued as individuals by all staff. Practitioners have a good understanding of the social and learning needs of all the children and share a common commitment to meet these. Effective structures for assessment and record keeping are in place. For example, the level of children's English acquisition is assessed by bilingual staff on initial entry to the nursery. This information is used to set relevant targets for improvement. There are regular on-going assessments of individual progress, which are appropriately recorded, and formal assessments, using a standard format at suitable intervals during each child's stay in the nursery.
42. There are very good procedures for assessing children's attainment and progress. There are frequent planned opportunities for staff supporting children with little or no English, to share information on children's progress, which is then incorporated into future planning. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Valuable information is obtained from parents not only on a child's entry to the nursery, but also through continuous dialogue. This, together with termly reports, keeps parents well informed about their child's progress. Baseline assessment is used effectively at the beginning and end of the nursery year and comparisons made between and within classes. This helps to ensure consistency of judgements as well as to identify areas of concern. Teachers maintain detailed records of children's progress against the early learning goals for children in the Foundation Stage. These show clearly the rate of progress that is being made. Examples of children's work are kept, although the system for dating this work is not always consistently applied.
43. Staff know children very well and regularly record the experiences children have each day. Useful profiles of each child are kept, recording personal as well as academic achievements. All staff are fully involved in observation and record keeping. The very detailed evaluations of lessons is a very good method of recording what children have achieved in a particular activity, and what they need to do next. However, the valuable information gained is not always identified in future planning. This is particularly evident for the more able; therefore for these children progress is not always as rapid as it might be. Children with special educational needs are assessed regularly and effectively in relation to their individual learning targets and this determines what further help is needed. Procedures for identification, assessment and review of children with special educational needs are good and fully meet the requirements of the Code of Practice. Children receive good support for their personal as well as academic development which in turn helps to raise standards. They receive good encouragement, and staff take great delight in celebrating and rewarding their efforts. Their work is valued and attractively displayed along with photographs showing their involvement in activities.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

44. Parents' views of the nursery are good, as they were at the time of the last inspection. Opinions expressed at the parents' meeting, through questionnaires and in discussions during the inspection indicate wide parental support for most aspects of the nursery's provision. Parents say the nursery is well led and managed, teaching is good and their children work hard and make good progress. Parents assert that the nursery works closely with them, they find it easy to approach staff with questions and problems and the nursery keeps them well informed of their children's progress. They confirm their children enjoy attending the nursery, they are becoming more responsible and mature, and behaviour is good. Inspection evidence upheld these views.
45. Some parents are unsure about aspects of the nursery's provision. Only a small majority of parents is entirely happy with the nursery's approach to homework and a significant minority is equivocal about the provision of activities outside lessons. Inspection evidence did not support these views. Suitable homework is encouraged, and the available activities outside lessons are similar to those of other nurseries. However, inspectors concur with parents' concerns about some elements of outside play, which can be too boisterous. They also share parents' views that a waiting area outside school would be a useful addition.
46. The key issue from the last inspection has been fully addressed. The nursery has worked hard to build a more effective partnership with parents and it is now good. The quality of information provided for parents, including that on children's progress, is also good and provided in the appropriate parental language. There is regular communication with parents through notices, newsletters, questionnaires and parents' evenings. Parents find staff very approachable and class practitioners are always available to talk to parents at the end of each session. End of year reports give a good summary of children's progress towards the early learning goals, but do not include clear targets for improvement. Induction procedures are suitably gentle and parents stay in classrooms until their children are settled. Very good use is made of the pre-school worker to help parents understand the foundation curriculum. The induction booklet is carefully structured and provides useful information. Nursery workshops offer further information to assist parents with children's learning.
47. The impact of parents' involvement in the work of the nursery is good. The nursery-parent agreement is simple and appropriate, though some parents fail to comply with their undertaking about attendance and punctuality. The nursery greatly values the part parents play in their children's education and welcomes their presence at all nursery activities. A good mission statement is issued on parental involvement. A number of parents regularly help in classrooms, accompany educational visits, such as to the zoo, and take part in cultural presentations, such as Asian dancing. Although there is no parent-teacher association, many parents assisted with the faces mural and millennium wall in the outside play area and subscribed to the library project. The nursery encourages parents to support their children's learning through homework using the toy library, reading to and with them and directed observation. Most parents maintain reading diaries. A few parents rely heavily on the nursery to educate their children with little help from themselves, but the great majority make a good contribution and substantially enhance their children's learning and personal development.
48. Parents of children who have English as an additional language are warmly welcomed into the nursery. Frequent parent workshops have encouraged parents to come into the nursery to share activities with their children and teachers. Regular projects involve both parents and children in examining specific areas of life and learning – such as one involving shopping. Teachers work closely with parents of children with special educational needs. Parents' views are respected. They are kept well informed, and are fully involved in the setting of small achievable targets, which enable them to support children's learning both at home and in school. A pre-school worker is attached to the school and also makes a positive contribution to the well developed relationships between parents and the nursery, as well as helping to enhance the support that the parents can provide for their children's learning.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

49. The leadership and management by the headteacher and senior staff is good overall. There has been an effective response to most of the key issues identified following the last inspection. However, there has been only partial resolution of the issue to use the resource of the non-teaching headteacher to provide non-contact time, so that other key staff can more effectively carry out their duties. Furthermore, no mention of the issue was made on the copy of the school's subsequent action plan submitted to the current inspection team. This has led to insufficient delegation to the majority of staff with responsibility for managing the areas of learning of the foundation curriculum and key aspects of the school's work. For example, teachers who co-ordinate core areas of learning do not manage the budgets set for them; in one extreme case was not aware what the budget for the current year was. Co-ordinators are not given non-contact time to monitor teaching and learning or the curriculum in their area. However, the headteacher has begun informal monitoring and the closeness with which the staff team works ensures a modicum of evaluation to be undertaken, with a view to specific staff development being planned.
50. The headteacher offers strong leadership and very clear educational direction for the school. She has initiated a strong sense of common purpose, shared by her long-serving and loyal staff, as well as the parent body the school works very hard to serve. There are clear mission statements built into policies for the foundation curriculum and many aspects of the school's work, indicating very clear aims and values, especially of educational inclusion. These include equality of access to the full curriculum to all, which the school does so well to achieve, given the high numbers of children with English as an additional language and significant levels of special educational need. Parents are very appreciative of the positive influence of the school's aims upon their children. They value the careful tracking of individual children and the well-focused provision made as a result. However, some higher attaining children are not always fully extended by the tasks they are set.
51. Provision for children with English as an additional language is well managed. The co-ordinator and the headteacher meet relevant staff every month to discuss concerns and to evaluate individual and overall progress. Appropriate targets for action are produced. The work of support staff is effectively monitored. The co-ordinator for children with special educational needs is well informed and provides good leadership. Her role in the monitoring of classroom teaching and learning has been further developed in line with recommendations following the last inspection. This has improved the quality of both teaching and learning for children with special educational needs.
52. The school's development plan is detailed for the current year and gives clear evaluation of the outcomes of last year's targets. However, there is no indication in the plan of longer-term goals or of a vision for the future. Success criteria are appropriately identified and some idea of costs provided, though key personnel are not named nor time frames indicated. The school budget very clearly reflects the priorities outlined in the plan. One clear indication of this is the deployment of funds to enable the school to keep as high a level of bilingual support as possible, at a time when the local education authority is redistributing some grant aid in this key area. The administrative officer manages this grant and all other monies very prudently. Although the school does not have a fully delegated budget, it is conscious of the principles of best value and applies them both when using public money and in the disbursement of the private funds it is successful in raising or attracting. The administrator has a very good knowledge of computerised administrative procedures. Several of the teaching staff are also computer literate, so new technology is used well in the classrooms and the school website is close to completion.
53. Staffing levels are appropriate for the number of children on roll. However, without the very good teaching provided by the three nursery nurses, working closely with their teacher colleagues, the child: teacher ratio would be high. They and their bilingual support colleagues give excellent value for money and make a splendid contribution to the success of the school. The headteacher has instigated effective staff review and appraisal procedures and has implemented them efficiently for many years. This would appear to put the school in a strong position ahead of the introduction of the government's planned performance management procedures. However, as the school does

not have a governing body, or a fully delegated budget with which to reward excellence, this is not as straightforward as it appears. Newly appointed staff and college students are well supported, through advise from colleagues and detailed documentation.

54. The accommodation has been well adapted for its purpose. The headteacher has been successful in identifying sponsorship and additional funds, to add to money prudently set aside from the limited budget the school manages, to further improve internal and exterior teaching and administrative spaces. The classrooms are very well used to create specific teaching spaces focused on areas of learning. Interior accommodation is maximised by efficient planning, for example when dance or parachute games take place. However, the school lacks a hall suitable for indoor play activities and meetings to occur without significant reorganisation being needed. Part of the outside play space is currently used for car parking, throwing too much pressure on the well developed outside classroom/playground area. This results in overcrowding and occasional lapses in behaviour. The site is kept very clean and carefully maintained by the caretaker. Parents have expressed concern that there is nowhere for them or their children to shelter in inclement weather before the school is open. Given that the two schools on the site have quite different afternoon starting times, this is a real problem.

55. Learning resources are plentiful, of good quality and accessibly stored. There are very good numbers of high quality outside play materials available. The co-ordinator is aware that there are too few artefacts to support children's work in the history strand of knowledge and understanding of the world. A feature much welcomed by parents and children alike is the provision of both a toy and book library. Design and technology tools are stored away safely.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

56. In the context of the school's many strengths, the headteacher and staff should address the following key issues in their action plan in order to raise standards and the quality of education still further.

- (1) Develop the management role of staff by:
 - releasing those with leadership responsibility to allow them to monitor teaching, learning and the curriculum; (paras. 17, 27, 49, 60, 66, 72, 78, 84, 91)
 - further empowering them as managers, for example by giving them budgets to manage and responsibility to spend the money delegated. (paras. 49, 72, 78)

- (2) Make specific provision for higher attaining children, so that they too make good progress by:
 - setting challenging targets for children's attainments and monitoring closely their progress towards the targets; (paras. 3, 4, 22, 50)
 - ensuring that foundation curriculum schemes of work for the areas of learning provide staff with adequate guidance to meet the needs of these children; (para. 27)
 - ensuring that teachers plan to meet their needs in lessons and carry planning through into children's daily work and any homework felt to be appropriate*; (paras. 1, 22, 27, 61, 66, 71)
 - improving the monitoring and assessment of their work so that subsequent planning builds progressively on outcomes, making sure that the level of challenge is kept up. (paras. 27, 43, 64, 66)

- (3) Improve structure and timing of outside play by:
 - monitoring closely how much time is spent outside; (paras. 19, 21, 82)
 - ensuring an appropriate balance between adult led and child initiated activity; (paras. 2, 10, 19, 33, 83)
 - limiting the number of children playing outside at any one time so that the space can accommodate them; (paras. 2, 7, 19, 33, 54, 58)
 - managing and modifying behaviour more actively. (paras. 2, 7, 10, 12, 33, 40, 45, 80, 82)

Other points to consider for inclusion in the school's action plan.

- Improve the resources for history, within knowledge and understanding of the world, including the artefacts available to teachers and children*. (paras. 55, 73, 74, 76, 78)
- Continue to work with parents to improve children's punctuality, particularly in the afternoon session*. (paras. 15, 39, 47)

*Items already identified for improvement by the school.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	31
Number of discussions with staff, other adults and children	23

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	29	64	7	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 children

Children on the school's roll

	Nursery
Number of children on the school's roll (FTE for part-time children)	75
Number of full-time children eligible for free school meals	N/A

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery
Number of children with statements of special educational needs	0
Number of children on the school's special educational needs register	2

English as an additional language

	No of children
Number of children with English as an additional language	110

Child mobility in the last school year

	No of children
Children who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	0
Children who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	1

Attendance**Authorised absence**

	%
School data	N/A

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	N/A

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

Teachers and classes**Qualified teachers and support staff**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	4.0
Number of children per qualified teacher	18.8:1

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	175

Number of children per FTE adult	8.0
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	29099
Total expenditure	28210
Expenditure per child	376
Balance brought forward from previous year	6860
Balance carried forward to next year	7749

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	140
Number of questionnaires returned	46

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	67	24	7	0	2
My child is making good progress in school.	43	46	2	0	9
Behaviour in the school is good.	56	36	0	0	8
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	24	31	9	0	36
The teaching is good.	76	17	0	0	7
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	52	40	0	4	4
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	74	20	0	2	4
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	59	24	6	0	11
The school works closely with parents.	67	22	4	0	7
The school is well led and managed.	69	22	0	0	9
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	59	30	4	0	7
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	41	30	7	0	22

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

57. The school has maintained the very good quality of provision in this area of learning identified following the last inspection. Children are happy to come to school, a finding strongly endorsed by the parents. They make very good progress because all adults involved in the nursery know children well, and because of the very good choice of learning opportunities provided. All are on target to achieve the early learning goals by the time they leave the reception year. The majority are predicted to exceed the nationally expected standards. Children display very positive attitudes because teachers make learning exciting and enjoyable. Adults give clear explanations of tasks, thus enabling children to move quickly to chosen and allotted activities. With regular encouragement, they co-operate on purposeful tasks such as in sorting out the sequence of the story of The Bear Hunt on a class collage, or in endeavouring to create enough air to enable their parachute to rise. They are quickly becoming used to sharing tools and equipment, and eagerly participate in role-play, such as that in the supermarket, because adults give very good encouragement by joining in. They wait patiently for their turn for a ride in the pretend bus. They are beginning to devise their own activities, as when two children discovered that they could make bubbles when washing their hands. In the course of these activities, children benefit greatly by the well-gauged intervention of adults. For the majority, however, their low command of English language means that they do not yet fully involve others in their play. However, very good encouragement from staff enables them to indicate by gesture, and sometimes single words, what their intentions are. Children's achievements are celebrated, which in turn encourages them to take pride in all that they do.
58. Behaviour overall is good. In the classroom it is very good. However, this sometimes deteriorates outdoors because there are often too many children using a confined space for the range of activities on offer. For example, large balls were available during one session but there was insufficient room for these to be thrown, bounced or kicked effectively. Teachers do not involve themselves sufficiently in children's learning in this area, and tend to take on a supervisory role rather than that of a teacher. Nevertheless there were occasional good examples, for instance, when the teacher involved children in role-play by providing books, stories and costume which enabled them to dramatise the story of The Three Bears, and by becoming involved fully in children's learning. Children develop their social skills as they give out drinks and biscuits during snack-time. They are encouraged to say please and thank you, because teachers set very good examples by treating all with courtesy and respect. Children are becoming increasingly aware of the difference between right and wrong. Good strategies are in place in the form of rewards and sanctions. Consequently, children are rewarded for good behaviour, which is actively promoted. This is paying dividends in creating an atmosphere of peace and harmony where all can live together regardless of race or colour.
59. Staff actively promote independence by exposing children to a range of activities where they have to make choices. For instance while making a collage, children had to decide on the colour of background paper, the choice of material from a wide selection and the means whereby they would fix their selection. Children can often be seen writing shopping lists and letters unprompted, because teachers design activities that give children a purpose for writing. The care and attention that teachers give to children is a major strength of the school. This helps children to settle quickly into school routines and develop a sense of security and purpose. The welcome extended to parents and children at the start of each session helps children to adjust to school quickly. Skills in information and communication technology are taught well. This enables children to operate the tape recorder or computer independently. They know where things are and can help themselves to tools and equipment, for example when designing and making constructions from paper and plastic. They follow routines sensibly and know where to go at different points of the day. The very good strategy of attaching each child

to a family group is very successful in building children's self-esteem. This gives them confidence to participate in activities in their own classroom, plus the flexibility to join other groups when they are ready. The organisation and management of the children is very effective in helping them to maintain interest and concentration. They persevere and concentrate on tasks for considerable lengths of time because activities are well chosen to stimulate their interest. Very good use is made of the parachute when children have to work as a team to enable the parachute to rise. This encourages them to persevere for the sake of others as well as themselves. Although teachers plan opportunities for children to share their feelings and opinions, low command of language for the majority limits their involvement in discussion.

60. The quality of teaching in this area of learning is very good and this, together with good planning, results in high quality provision. Very good opportunities for children to develop their personal, social and emotional skills are provided across the whole curriculum. Teachers are very mindful of the needs of all, including children with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. It is noticeable that progress for the latter accelerates considerably when they are supported by the very able bilingual support assistants. This provision results in educational inclusion across the school. Children are challenged very well and their keenness to learn is a major feature in lessons. Assessment procedures are very good and include day-to-day assessment in lessons as well as careful record keeping. Teachers evaluate plans very thoroughly but do not always include their findings in future planning. The monitoring of teaching and learning in the classroom has not been sufficiently addressed. Nevertheless, the aims and philosophy of the nursery are implicit in all the children do and achieve.

Communication, language and literacy

61. On entry to the nursery, children's skills in communication, language and literacy are very low. A high proportion of children come from homes where English is their second language, and for some, most of their experiences in English only occur in school. A significant number of children have little or no command of the English language. Nevertheless all children, including those with special educational needs and children for whom English is an additional language, make good progress because of good and sometimes very good teaching. Basic skills are taught sequentially and practitioners work very hard to surround children with a language rich environment. Nevertheless, the needs of the more able are not always sufficiently planned for; therefore these children do not always make the progress of which they are capable. At the time of the inspection, standards in this area of learning were deemed to be below that expected. This represents a considerable improvement in the short time children have had nursery experience, and indications are that children will achieve most of the early learning goals specified in national guidance for communication, language and literacy by the end of the reception year. It is noticeable that the progress of children with little or no English accelerates considerably when they are supported by the very able and knowledgeable bilingual support assistants. Although teachers work very hard to include children with little or no English, there is a marked slowing of progress when specialist support is not available.
62. Children make very good progress in developing their speaking and listening skills because teachers find innovative ways of involving them in their own learning. For example, during a dramatic retelling of the story of The Bear Hunt, children eagerly copied the teacher's good example by repeating 'sound' words such as 'squishy, squashy and squelchy'. During registration, children are actively encouraged to answer to their own names using sentences. The very good use of role play, such as that in the pretend supermarket, and the use of singing games, are successfully building children's confidence in modifying their voices to suit the characters they represent. Good, and sometimes very good, questioning techniques continuously challenge children to participate. Therefore, children's command of language and confidence in using it is growing rapidly. During a very good story session, the teacher used a big book story, a story tape and her own voice very effectively to develop children's listening skills, while at the same time encouraging children to predict what might happen next. Children respond eagerly although they often use single words to answer questions and speech is often immature. The very good strategy whereby bilingual support assistants give simultaneous

translation enables children with little or no English to participate, thus giving them equal opportunity and access. Teachers usually make the most of opportunities to include language from other areas of the curriculum. As an example, during a printing activity the teacher carefully extended children's knowledge of the names of different fruit and vegetables, and at the same time reinforced their knowledge of colour names. Nevertheless, opportunities are sometimes missed to extend children's knowledge of language because teachers do not always identify in their planning the specific subject related words they intend to teach.

63. Children are rapidly developing a love of books because teaching is good and learning is made pleasurable. Very good use is made of a wide range of exciting resources to capture children's imagination and enthusiasm. A very good example was seen where the teacher used a puppet to correctly order the sequence of events in the story song 'There was an old lady who swallowed a fly,' when the children took great delight in finding the next object for the old lady to 'swallow'. Simple costumes are used to enhance the telling of traditional stories such as Goldilocks and the Three Bears. This makes the story accessible for most of the class. Teachers carefully point to words and pictures to develop children's understanding that print carries meaning. Children are encouraged to choose library books to take home and a very good scheme, which involves parents in children's reading, means that by the end of the year children are keeping very simple reading diaries. Children are introduced to a wide range of both fiction and non-fiction books. The very good practice of grouping children with little or no English in some story sessions enables bilingual support assistants to tell stories in the children's home language, whilst at the same time giving the English translation. Classrooms provide a language rich environment with big bold captions and notices in both English and Urdu. Teachers frequently encourage children to find their own name cards during registration.
64. Children make good progress in writing. A strength of the school is the way in which children are encouraged to write for a specific purpose. For example, children carefully 'wrote' their shopping lists before visiting the pretend supermarket. The teacher then acted as scribe in writing the words correctly. Following a dramatic story telling session, children 'wrote' sound words then put them carefully in order on their picture frieze. A minority of children copy their own names from their name cards and others attempt to copy under the teacher's writing. However, for the majority, writing bears little resemblance to actual letter shapes. Nevertheless, teachers provide effective opportunities for children to improve their skills sequentially through the use of tracing and writing patterns and templates. Good use is made of materials such as play-dough, an example being when children selected plastic letter shapes associated with their names, then carefully cut them out. All classes have writing tables containing a good range of mark making tools and children can often be seen using these unprompted. Occasionally opportunities for more able children, to practise and build on existing skills are missed. Therefore, progress in a minority of lessons is not as rapid as it might be.
65. Attitudes and behaviour in lessons are consistently very good because teachers plan stimulating, exciting tasks, are very good role models, and value the efforts that children make. Children show an infectious eagerness to learn and concentrate and persevere on tasks until they are complete. They share books and equipment amicably and although they tend to work alongside rather than with others, a sense of harmony prevails throughout lessons. Many children have insufficient language to be able to communicate with each other orally but often use gesture and mime to communicate their needs.
66. Teaching is never less than good and is often very good. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen. This is an improvement since the last inspection. A particular strength of the school is the quality of relationships between children, staff and parents. All staff make a valuable contribution to children's learning in this area of the curriculum and the quality of teamwork is very good indeed. The very effective small family grouping of children is proving extremely successful in increasing children's confidence and sense of security. In the best lessons seen, teachers take every opportunity to enable children to practise their communication, language and literacy skills right across the curriculum. The quality and range of learning experiences is very good and good planning provides the basis for effective early learning, because teachers recognise the need to teach skills sequentially. Procedures for assessment are very good, and

include both formal and informal record keeping that shows the rate of progress children are making. However, although teachers evaluate their plans very effectively both in written form and orally during weekly meetings, information gained is not always identified on future plans, therefore planning for the specific needs of the higher attainers is not always rigorous enough. The formal monitoring of lessons, to ensure that the quality of teaching and learning is consistently high, has not been addressed sufficiently since the last inspection.

67. The contribution that the subject makes to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. Children listen with amazement and delight to dramatically told stories and poetry both from their own and from other cultures. There are frequent planned opportunities through drama and role-play for children to co-operate with others. Stories often contain moral teaching, and through the very good example set by teachers, children are learning to live with each other in peace and harmony. This creates an atmosphere which is very conducive to good learning.

Mathematical development

68. Children enter the nursery with below expected levels of skills in all areas of mathematics. This is particularly noticeable in the strand of shape, space and measures, where they display little experience of using mathematical language when talking about size or quantities. Many do not know the names of any common shapes. By the time they leave the nursery, many children carefully cut coloured paper to create a repeating pattern. They understand the difference between two statements such as larger, smaller or fatter, thinner. The names of common two-dimensional shapes are known and convincing freehand drawings are made of them. They count to beyond ten, using and applying mathematical understanding in a variety of situations. They make good progress overall and are in line to attain the early learning goals by the end of their reception year. Therefore standards remain similar to those reported at the time of the school's last inspection, despite changes to its intake.
69. All children display positive attitudes to mathematics. They enjoy the practical way their teachers structure the lessons and the fun that their learning brings. Songs and rhymes are used well to give early experience of counting on and back. Fingers are used to reinforce understanding and a closed fist for zero, which some children can explain. When making a cake, children count the cherries on top, reinforcing one to one correspondence. Children help their teachers with the register, which gives them useful experience of numbers up to twelve. Higher attaining children count confidently to ten unaided and accurately, matching the numbers to objects. Three is more common, often with help, due to the stage of language development as much as mathematical competence many children have reached. Teachers use most opportunities to introduce and reinforce key numeracy skills. However, chances were missed to develop counting as children spooned flour in a dough making recipe or cut potatoes into chips.
70. Mathematical development has a higher profile later in the school year, when children are more settled and confident. By then language development, and language acquisition for many, is more advanced. However, the school works hard to promote the early acquisition of mathematical language both to support calculation, through the use of phrases like 'more than', 'less than' and to develop understanding of shape, space and measure. In the classroom devoted to mathematical development, well-planned, daily activities focused on key skills take place and apparatus, games and materials are provided to reinforce the subject. However, although there are numbers on the wall, there are insufficient interactive displays to encourage counting, sorting and matching skills, for example. One higher attaining child using a jigsaw identified and named squares, circles and triangles and showed a good understanding of the differences in size of the same shape. Another, working on a sequence, was able to follow the teacher's repeating pattern green, green, blue and also named all the other primary and main secondary colours. Children gain significant early experience of the concepts of volume in work using sand and water. Role-play is well used by teachers to introduce mathematical language, as children shop using sterling, euros and rupees. The use of a digital scanner at the checkout adds a real feel of the supermarket. Money also changes hands, and good language enrichment takes place, as children take turns to drive the bus and sell tickets from a real roll.

71. Teaching in mathematics is good. All staff are effective teachers of the subject and most use the activities they lead to develop mathematical concepts using the appropriate vocabulary. Bilingual staff ensure good access to the subject for those children they support, particularly where a specialist vocabulary in one language does not always correspond to concepts and vocabulary in another. Stimulating activities are well planned and delivered in all classrooms, whatever the area of learning that is based there. For example, in the creative area, printing with fruit and vegetables gives children insight into circles and other shapes and makes them think like mathematicians as they design repeated patterns. Planning is detailed and ensures that children who need additional support receive it; though vital bilingual support cannot be assured full-time, due to staffing constraints. Planning sometimes takes account of the needs of the higher attaining. However, specific tasks to challenge them are not often seen in practice. Lessons are well organised to allow both adult led and children's own choice of activities to take place. In a very good lesson, children kept a tally of passing pedestrians and vehicles. Back in the classroom, the teacher very effectively represented the totals by the same number of play people, cars and lorries. This enabled the children to make rapid gains in understanding that they must match the numbers they are counting to the objects they see. Classrooms are very well managed, so that a free flow of children takes place calmly, with all adults knowing children from all classes well. This allows lessons to proceed at a brisk pace and much learning to be achieved in every session. Teachers very effectively assess their own class and any other children who work with them, evaluating outcomes in detail, so that their own future planning, and that of their colleagues, can be modified in the light of experience. Good questioning skills are deployed in introductory and review sessions, helping to extend mathematical understanding well. All teachers use a good range of computer programmes to promote children's acquisition of mathematical knowledge.
72. The co-ordinator has effectively addressed the need to update documentation for the subject, as was mentioned in the last report. She has included new guidance based on the new Foundation Stage curriculum but has not yet had sufficient opportunity to modify existing planning to take account of recommendations made. At present, she does not have adequate regular non-contact time to enable her to observe teaching and learning or to monitor the curriculum in other classes. Nor does she have responsibility for the budget allocated to the subject. This limits her capacity to work as effectively as she might as a manager to help raise standards still higher.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

73. The school has improved provision and standards in this area of learning since the last inspection. Information and communication technology (ICT) is very well used, so that children quickly develop useful skills and use ICT widely across the curriculum. Provision for children to develop a sense of where they live, while acquiring helpful early geographical skills, is now better. However, the school is aware that children are still not introduced to a sufficiently rich and stimulating set of experiences to develop their sense of time and introduce them to history as a subject. Progress is now good in most strands of the area of learning. Children achieve well compared to their previous learning. Most are on course to reach the early learning goals by the time they complete their reception year.
74. The children are introduced to a rich and varied curriculum in most aspects of the area of learning. Many come to school with limited experiences of the world beyond the home. The school quickly builds on these and adds to them through the highly motivating and stimulating activities children are offered. They respond very positively to the diverse range of tasks they undertake in science, information and communication technology, design and technology, geography and, to a lesser extent, history. This provision broadens children's horizons and gives them a very useful introduction to the separate subjects of the National Curriculum at a child friendly, active level. They soon learn to use tools safely, share equipment and materials without too much fuss, interact with computers confidently and discover about their immediate, and wider, local area first hand.

75. Teachers promote scientific understanding through a wide range of practical activities. Children plant and tend seeds and enjoy harvesting the fruits of their labour. They wash, cut, microwave and mash their potatoes, learning how things change when heated. Work with growing things has been effectively extended to promote children's scientific understanding by activities identifying tastes and smells and by well-mounted displays in the school entrance area. Children enjoy working with dough, sand and water, learning about their different properties. Teachers are creative in their variation of tasks, for example by filling the water tray with lentils, so that children can further understand how materials feel and move. Computers never sleep idly in corners. Children work constantly at them, individually or in pairs, with or without adult support. Almost all use the mouse confidently to access the programmes teachers have loaded to promote skills and understanding widely across the curriculum. Some are able to print their own work confidently, showing very much higher than expected levels of attainment.
76. Teachers introduce exciting opportunities to design and make models and artefacts. Children sit rapt, taking telephones and clocks to pieces, intrigued by their inner workings. They consider the teacher's design proposal for a wheeled vehicle, before embarking on their own solutions. Higher attaining children respond to the additional challenge to add finishing touches to personalise their design, using colour or additional features like bumper bars. Children use hammers and screwdrivers confidently in their work. The good level of supervision they receive enables children to practise their making skills safely and with great enthusiasm. Higher attaining children work in great detail. One arranges a pattern of nails in neat rows, with regular spacings, showing highly developed design skill and good control of tools. Much current work has been initiated by recent visits the nursery has undertaken, locally to shops, or by bus into the city centre. This has clearly promoted children's awareness of place and sense of belonging. The experiences enjoyed have stimulated both large-scale adult led activities, for example making models, and role-play activities initiated by the children that involve shopping or taking bus trips. Major features seen in the city are recorded. For example, the moon and star symbol on the mosque was carefully recorded in a drawing. Early concepts of time are less readily seen in either current or completed work, but documentation indicates that past and present events are considered, including oral history and subject specific vocabulary.
77. Teaching is always good and often very good indeed. Planning is thorough and teachers describe in their plans clear learning intentions. They then plan activities that are designed to meet the learning objectives. Lessons are very well resourced, often by teachers' own ingenuity. This was seen in a lesson on the sense of smell, when children had to match scents emanating from containers, photographic film holders with holes drilled in the lids, to everyday items including lemons, onions and curry powder. Children are entranced by much of what they experience. They work very productively, concentrate for long periods at some construction tasks and show good levels of independence in their choice of task or how they complete it.
78. The co-ordinator has the capacity to become a very good manager of this diverse and exciting area of learning. She has a very organised approach. An example of this is the topic boxes that she has prepared for various aspects of the teachers' work, with appropriate notes provided. These topic boxes are well resourced for all but history. The school realises that work is needed to reach the level specified in the scheme of work. The co-ordinator has too little non-contact time to monitor teaching and the curriculum and develop the area of learning further, especially as she works part-time. Her role is capable of further development by allowing her responsibility for the budget allocated to improving provision.

Physical development

79. The school has maintained the good provision reported in its previous report. Inspectors then commented on standards seen towards the end of the children's year in the nursery. This latest inspection came after an extended half-term break during the first term of the year. Much else was similar, though the proportion of children having English as an additional language at an early stage of acquisition makes the giving of instructions and communication generally more difficult when bilingual support is not available. Children make good progress in their physical development and are on target to reach the early learning goals by the end of the reception year.

80. All strands of the foundation curriculum are addressed in detail in up-to-date school documentation. Resources are helpfully identified and safety features given appropriate emphasis. Teachers plan regular opportunities for children to develop fine motor skills. They manipulate scissors and larger tools, use crayons, pencils and paintbrushes with appropriate accuracy and care. Many show good fine motor control when using the mouse to interact with the computer. The acquisition of gross motor skills is promoted by well-devised tasks involving small toys and construction materials and the popular parachute games, which promote teamwork and team spirit. Such activities also contribute effectively to children's social development. Outside play is less structured. Staff usually supervise play on the climbing frame and in other regular activities, such as drawing and role-play. However, play on wheeled toys and with balls is mostly unstructured, unsupervised and can be hectic. This confirms opinions some parents shared with inspectors. In an enrichment lesson, when play with balls was intended to be more structured, boys took possession of them and refused to share with each other or girls. Much of this play shows increasing dexterity and control but too little awareness of space, especially the space occupied by other children. Most children use the climbing frame, accepting its size and challenges. Some need adult support but enjoy the scale of demand it brings. They move over it with increasing confidence, showing appropriate balance and co-ordination and good levels of stamina.
81. Several teachers are very proficient at teaching dance; one is specifically qualified to teach the subject. They plan regular lessons, where imaginative or expressive dance takes place to a good range of music from around the world. They also use tapes made for the purpose by a professional dance teachers' association. Multi-cultural dress is often worn and children quickly become less inhibited, moving confidently, trying hard to interpret the music in their movements. Teachers use appropriate language to encourage children to respond using a wide variety of movements, for example soldiers move stiffly, clowns jerkily. Dance lessons incorporate appropriate health related issues. Teachers plan for warming up and cooling down sessions, so that children become steadily aware of how their bodies react to exercise and what to do to keep themselves safe and healthy.
82. Children enjoy the pace and challenge teachers build into lessons in this area of learning. Very good relationships between children and adults are developed. Children have positive attitudes when working in the classrooms and when involved in structured play outside. However, attitudes deteriorate and behaviour is below the high level seen at other times in extended lessons using the outside classroom. At such times, the timetable is not always adhered to and enrichment activity and the use of the outside classroom merge so that the lesson is overlong, without sufficient direction offered.
83. The quality of teaching is good overall. Very good teaching was seen in dance and in activities involving well-planned use of the outside classroom. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen but not all outside play was given sufficient teacher input or was sufficiently well planned. This resulted in an intended teacher directed outside activity having to be abandoned, when wheeled toys appeared and children disappeared. Teachers produce a good range of activities to develop the children's manipulative and movement skills. They work very well together, when classes join for dance or indoor games, as for example when using the parachute. Lesson leadership is energetic, with good models of skill being demonstrated when appropriate, for example, when showing how tools should be used or in dance.
84. The co-ordinator is a physical education specialist. She has produced very detailed guidance for her colleagues in all aspects of physical development. Advice is helpfully given on lesson content and activities suggested to fit a range of purposes. She has had no opportunity to monitor lessons to see how well her suggested curriculum is working in practice. The hall is too small for convenient indoor play. However, teachers use space very creatively to make dance and games possible for the children.

Creative development

85. At the time of the inspection, children's creative development was below that expected of a typical three-year-old. Nevertheless, scrutiny of work indicates that children have already made rapid gains in learning in the short time they have been in school. This is because teachers and other adults in the nursery provide a wide variety of exciting, stimulating activities that are well suited to the needs of these young children. Children are beginning to manipulate equipment such as scissors, paintbrushes and glue-sticks with increasing dexterity because of the well-planned opportunities across the curriculum for them to practise. The school provides a very effective early learning environment and this, together with good teaching, is enabling children of all abilities, including those with special educational needs and those with little or no English, to make good and sometimes very good progress in this area of the curriculum. This represents a similar picture to the one described at the time of the last inspection. Indications are that children are on course to achieve, and may well exceed, national expectations by the end of the reception year.
86. Children become very involved in creative activities. They select paint and materials to make collages with increasing confidence, and mix powder paint and glue to the right consistency for their handprint pictures. They are beginning to observe the detail in their self-portraits, whilst showing an increasing awareness of proportion, shape and size when positioning eyes, noses and hair. They press, squeeze and roll play-dough with rapidly growing dexterity. Children are beginning to show skill and inventiveness in combining buttons, fabric and feathers, and fold, cut and glue with increasing competency. Although command of the English language is low for a significant number of children, teachers work hard to overcome this by providing many opportunities for children to communicate feelings and ideas through art, music, drama and dance. One good example was when children expressed great delight as they learned to adapt their movements successfully to suit the moods of different types of music in a dance lesson. They happily became birds, butterflies and fish in their interpretations, moving rhythmically in time to the music. Children show initiative when deciding which piece of material will fill the small spaces in their collage pictures and, because teachers are very aware of how children learn, are allowed to make mistakes in order to improve.
87. The school has high regard for the place of role-play in the curriculum. For example, one classroom area is devoted to a supermarket where children happily pretend to be the customer, checkout assistant or shelf stacker. This rapidly increases children's confidence in learning to co-operate harmoniously with others. They sell tickets for a journey in their pretend bus and happily involve adults in their play. Teachers are very good role models and involve children fully during the dramatic reading and singing of stories, rhymes and songs. Children happily take on the role of different characters as a result, sometimes changing their voices to suit the character they represent.
88. Attitudes and behaviour are very good, as is personal development, because of the highly motivating, well-planned activities and the high regard that adults have for the children in their care. Children are actively encouraged to take responsibility, such as in deciding which size wheel or axle is best suited for the model they are creating, or how best to attach a button to their collage picture. Although children find difficulty in talking to each other, they play alongside others harmoniously, sharing and taking turns with equipment because these social skills are taught very well. Children sometimes take responsibility for their own learning. They select the creative activity in which they want to participate and then decide which tools and equipment are best suited for the purpose. They set out and tidy away tools and equipment purposefully and treat these with care and respect. The very good practice whereby bilingual assistants simultaneously translate questions and instructions gives all children equal access and opportunity to participate in the full range of learning experiences.
89. Good, and sometimes very good, teaching means that children are making rapid gains in learning in this area of the curriculum. Very good teaching is characterised by a thorough knowledge and understanding of children and their needs, a very good pace to learning and the provision of opportunities for children to practise creative skills in other areas of the curriculum, such as those in communication, language and literacy. Teachers usually gauge well when to intervene. Exceptions occur when teaching is too directed, which sometimes prevents children

from reaching their full potential creatively. This was evident when a teacher removed a child's printed pattern before, in the child's view, it was complete. A strength of teaching is the very high quality of relationships in lessons. This creates an atmosphere conducive to good learning. Teachers plan lessons well and clearly recognise the importance of teaching skills in the right order and of the need to build on these at every opportunity. Teachers' enthusiasm abounds in the telling and singing of stories and songs, and role-play. They positively infect children with their enjoyment, making them want to participate eagerly.

90. The subject makes a very good contribution to children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Children express amazement and wonder when the orange they have selected in their printing activity makes an intricate pattern. Their delight during role-play is evident for all to see. Very good opportunities are provided for children to work and play together in peace and harmony, and the respect shown towards all involved in the nursery is of a very high quality. Children participate in dance and drama when celebrating religious festivals such as Diwali and Eid. Visits by the Royal Ballet Company and the Birmingham Symphony Orchestra further enrich provision. Nevertheless, opportunities for them to look at works of art from their own and other cultures, and to incorporate this into their own work, are too few. Children are given frequent opportunities to work and play together in large and small groups as well as individually and sometimes work co-operatively as a class to produce large pieces of work, such as that of the story of The Bear Hunt.
91. Resources are good, plentiful and easily accessible to these young children. They include a good selection of both natural and man-made fibres. Two classrooms are completely devoted to the teaching of creativity. This enables children to make choices from a very good range of exciting activities. The planned scheme of work effectively provides children with a comprehensive range of well-sequenced early learning activities, which are well suited to their needs. Lessons are always well prepared and organised and children are trained to use aprons, which are readily tolerated, for messy activities. Although teachers make good provision for children of all abilities in lessons, this is not always clearly identified in planning. The monitoring of lessons to ensure that teaching and learning is of consistently high quality has not been properly addressed since the last inspection. Records to show what children have achieved against the early learning goals are kept systematically, together with examples of children's work. However occasionally these are undated, and are therefore of little use in indicating the rate of progress that is being made. Good use is made of the local environment as a stimulus for children's work. Information and communication technology gives children opportunities to create their own pictures on the computer.