

INSPECTION REPORT

WESTFIELD NURSERY SCHOOL

Longton

Stoke on Trent

LEA area: Stoke on Trent

Unique reference number: 123951

Headteacher: Mrs. G. Farnworth

Reporting inspector: Mike Capper
23239

Dates of inspection: December 10th – 12th 2001

Inspection number: 230140

Full inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Nursery
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 5
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Queensberry Road Longton Stoke on Trent
Postcode:	ST3 1QZ
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Appropriate authority:	Stoke on Trent LEA
Date of previous inspection:	January 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Area of learning responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
23239	Mike Capper	Registered inspector	Personal, Social and Emotional Development Communication, Language and Literacy Physical Development Equal Opportunities	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
1112	Peter Oldfield	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
23609	Alison Cartlidge	Team inspector	Mathematical Development Knowledge and Understanding of the World Creative Development Special Educational Needs English as an Additional Language	How well are pupils taught? How good are curricular opportunities?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Westfield Nursery School is located in Longton in the City of Stoke on Trent. Children are admitted in either the autumn or spring term of the year in which they are four. There are 35 children on roll, with 6 more children starting at the beginning of the spring term. Most children spend a full year – three terms – in the nursery before transferring to an infant or primary school. Children come from a range of social backgrounds, with an average number of children eligible for free school meals. The number of children on the special educational needs register is below average. Test results show that children's attainment on entering school is broadly average. There is an increasing number of ethnic minority children in the school, some with limited levels of spoken English. At the time of the inspection, twenty per cent of children had English as an additional language, with Punjabi and Urdu being the main heritage languages. This figure is well above the national average. The present headteacher was appointed approximately 2 years ago.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a very good school that is helping children to achieve well. The headteacher provides very strong and effective leadership. Teachers and nursery nurses are very hard working and they help the children to feel very happy and secure at school. Children from different backgrounds play together happily. They love coming to school and work hard. The quality of teaching is good and there is a very rich and stimulating curriculum. The school has very strong links with parents.

What the school does well

- Most children achieve good standards in all areas of learning.
- The school is very well led and managed by the headteacher.
- A very well planned, exciting and interesting curriculum ensures that children have a wide range of experiences
- The quality of teaching is good, with teachers and nursery nurses always putting the needs of the children first.
- There are very good and thorough procedures for assessing children's learning
- Parents are very supportive of the school's work and are successfully involved in their children's learning.
- Children are well behaved and keen to learn.

What could be improved

- Provision for children with English as an additional language.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made good progress since the last inspection in 1998. Standards of attainment are higher and weaknesses identified at that time have been addressed. Curriculum planning and provision for children's physical development have improved significantly. These improvements have had a good impact on children's learning. School development planning is now very good. The development plan sets a very clear agenda for school improvement, with realistic workloads and time-scales for a school of this size. The teamwork and shared sense of purpose that is apparent throughout the school is a significant feature of the school's work and means that the school is in a strong position to improve further in the future.

STANDARDS

Children attain good standards overall and most make at least good progress. They are on target to exceed expectations for children at the end of the foundation stage in personal, social and emotional

development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative and physical development. Children who have been identified as having special educational needs make good progress towards the specific targets in their individual education plans.

Overall, children have good literacy and numeracy skills for their age. Particular strengths in children's attainment include the high quality of their speaking and listening skills. Throughout the school, children listen carefully when a story is read to them and respond appropriately to questions about what they have heard. Children enjoy talking to adults, explaining what they are doing at a particular time. They do this very confidently, using a very good range of vocabulary. In physical development, all children, including those who have English as an additional language, make good progress. They develop good balancing skills and use a wide range of skills, including good co-ordination and balance. In creative development, the children's use of their imagination in role-play is noteworthy. Children sustain these activities for lengthy periods of time, working together well.

The very good relationships that are evident between children and adults are a strong feature of attainment in personal, emotional and social development.

Children who have English as an additional language are well supported by members of staff and are given good quality language support in a small group by a nursery nurse. They attain standards appropriate to their prior attainment but make slower progress than other children do in most areas of learning because there is no member of staff with specific skills in teaching bilingual children who can support these children in their heritage language.

CHILDREN'S ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Children are happy and quickly become engrossed in activities as soon as they arrive at school.
Behaviour	Good. Children behave well when they are working both indoors and outdoors. Lunchtimes are calm and civilised.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Children are taught to become independent. They tidy up very well at the end of sessions. Relationships are very good throughout the school.
Attendance	Good. Children like coming to school and arrive punctually.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	
Quality of teaching	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 all areas of learning, with one in five lessons being very good. Members of staff have a good knowledge of all aspects of the curriculum for young children and plan very well for lessons. They use assessment information very effectively and this means children learn quickly. Teachers and nursery nurses have a clear understanding of what each child needs to learn next and can adjust their teaching accordingly, maintaining high expectations for all children. Basic literacy and numeracy skills are taught well. They are used effectively to support work in other areas of learning.

The organisation of groups according to children's prior attainment is successful in promoting good standards because work meets the needs of the children in each group. Planned activities are

interesting and stimulating and are explained clearly to the children. There is a very good balance between activities led by a member of staff and those children choose for themselves. This means that the children are very interested in their work, concentrate very hard and show good levels of independence.

The management of behaviour is good. Members of staff are kind and patient and they establish very good relationships with the children. Praise is used well to encourage children to try new things and to gain confidence. Members of staff are particularly skilled in supporting children, including those with special educational needs, as they work and they ask questions to encourage children to think about and discuss what they are doing. However, members of staff have received no specific training to support children with English as an additional language and there is no bilingual assistant to help aid understanding and to assess children's knowledge and understanding in their home languages. This means that the level of ongoing support for these children is less effective.

Other comparative weaknesses in teaching are the inconsistent approach to teaching letter formation resulting in some letters not being written correctly and the over direction by members of staff of some art activities, limiting children's use of their own ideas.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. The curriculum is planned carefully to be relevant to the needs of individual children. Activities are exciting and promote good learning.
Provision for children with special educational needs	Very good. Needs are quickly identified and children are given good support.
Provision for children with English as an additional language	Unsatisfactory. The school works hard to meet the needs of children with English as an additional language. However, staff have not received training in teaching these children and there is no bilingual support available. Although the lack of bilingual support is beyond the school's control, it does have a negative impact on the children's progress.
Provision for children's personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. Children are given very good opportunities to work together and share resources, particularly during role-play. Good manners are promoted effectively. Carefully chosen stories are used well to reinforce good behaviour and attitudes but there are relatively few opportunities for children to share their ideas and experiences with other children.
How well the school cares for its children	Very good. Members of staff are sensitive to the needs of individual children and consistently and very effectively monitor their progress.

The school values the very strong links that have been established with parents. These links have a very positive effect on children's learning.

There is very good provision for children's personal, social and health education. Members of staff are very quick to point out potential health and safety hazards and to discuss ways of keeping fit and well. Children are always given the reason for behaving in a certain way and this means that they understand the implications of their actions on others.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. There is a very clear, shared vision for the future of the school that is based on a good understanding of how the school could improve further.

How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The school does not have a governing body. In its place a nursery panel oversees the work of the school. However, the nursery panel has no involvement in the day-to-day running of the school and its structure means that it cannot give the same level of support that would be available from a governing body.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good overall. The school's monitoring of the curriculum has been very effective in identifying areas for improvement. The monitoring of teaching is in the early stages of development.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Most of the school's finances are managed by the local authority with the school only having responsibility for an element of the budget. Within these constraints, financial planning is thorough, with spending clearly targeted on raising standards.

The school applies the principles of 'best value' to its work, for example, by ensuring that competitive bids are sought for all large purchases. Additional funding from a range of sources is used effectively to support learning. For example, extra grants have been used to employ an additional nursery nurse for part of each week. This has helped the school to meet the needs of children who have weak language or communication skills.

The school is staffed with a good number of teachers and nursery nurses. Members of staff are very experienced and have a good range of skills. However, a significant weakness in staffing is the lack of a bilingual member of staff.

Accommodation is good. The building is well maintained, and attractive displays help to make the school welcoming for children. The only significant weakness in accommodation is the lack of a room for parents to meet which would be beneficial for developing even greater parental involvement in the life of the school. At the moment, courses for parents have to be held off the school premises.

Resources are very good. The very wide range of resources mean that teachers and nursery nurses are able to change activities at least twice a day. This has a good impact on learning and helps to make school exciting for the children. There is a well-resourced library/book corner, which is used effectively by members of staff to introduce children to early reading skills.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children enjoy school • The school is well led • Teaching is good • The need of individual children are met well • The school is very welcoming to parents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The lack of bilingual support for children with English as an additional language.

Parents are very supportive of the school. The inspection team agrees with parents' views, both positive and negative.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Children's attainment on starting school is broadly average. This is confirmed by a variety of teacher assessments made in the children's first few weeks in the nursery. Children with English as an additional language have a range of levels of competency in spoken English when they start school, with a small number having only very limited skills.
2. Overall, children achieve good standards and they make good progress. They are on target to exceed expectations for children at the end of the foundation stage in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative and physical development. Children who have been identified as having special educational needs making good progress towards the specific targets identified in their individual education plans.
3. Standards of attainment and children's progress have improved since the last inspection, especially in physical and creative development and knowledge and understanding of the world. This is because the curriculum has been developed and extended and there is a better balance between teacher directed and child initiated learning than there was at the time of the last inspection.
4. Standards of literacy are good. Particular strengths in attainment include the high quality of children's speaking and listening skills. Throughout the school, children listen carefully when a story is read to them and respond appropriately to questions about what they have heard. Children enjoy talking to adults, explaining what they are doing at a particular time. They do this very confidently, using a very good range of vocabulary. Children handle books with care and are beginning to recognise letter sounds. They are beginning to use paper to record their own ideas and feelings either by making marks or by writing letters to represent whole words. Children develop very positive attitudes to writing because of the many opportunities that they are given to 'write' for a range of purposes. However, there is a minor weakness in the development of letter formation. Members of staff not always use the correct way of forming letters when they are modelling writing to the children, and this can lead to children learning bad habits which are not always corrected.
5. Standards of numeracy are good. Most children show a good awareness of shape and are competent in completing jigsaw puzzles with as many as 48 pieces. Higher attaining children count up to twenty, understand that two halves make a whole and refer to the time and use coins when taking part in role-play. They accurately add two small numbers together.
6. In physical development, children develop particularly good balancing skills. They show a wide range of skills, including good co-ordination and balance. They enjoy playing on the fixed play equipment and quickly become proficient at making balances in different ways using various body parts.
7. In creative development, the children's use of their imagination in role-play is noteworthy. Children sustain these activities for lengthy periods of time, working together co-operatively.
8. The very good relationships that are evident between children and adults are a strong feature of attainment in personal, emotional and social development. Children play together well and support each other in their learning. Children show interest in each other and are responsive to each other's needs, for example, clapping classmates if they have done good work.
9. Children who have English as an additional language are well supported by members of staff and are given focused language support in a small group by a nursery nurse. However, they make

slower progress than the other children do in most areas of learning because there is no bilingual support available and members of staff have not received specific training in teaching these children. This makes it difficult for teachers to accurately assess children's attainment when they start school. It also means that children are not able to talk to adults in their first language about what they are doing. As a result, there are missed opportunities to extend children's vocabulary and their understanding of what they are taught. Children who have English as an additional language make good progress in their physical development. The lack of bilingual support has less impact on the development of skills in this area of learning because children are able to practice and develop skills at their own rate.

10. The school is part of a pilot scheme organised by the local authority to support more able and gifted children. As part of this project, the school has identified more able children and is currently introducing various strategies to support them in their learning. These are in an early stage of development and it is not yet possible to judge the impact of the project. Nevertheless, teachers and nursery nurses set demanding targets for all children based on test data and ongoing assessments of children's work. These ensure that all children, including the more able, are given appropriate challenge in their work.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. Children are well behaved and develop good attitudes to their work. This makes a positive contribution to their learning. They work hard, develop good self-esteem and become secure and confident individuals. The school has maintained the good quality provision identified in the last inspection.
12. Inspection findings confirm the views of parents that children are very happy at school and enjoy their work. All children, including those with special educational needs, are very enthusiastic and very keen to participate in all activities. They concentrate well, especially during role-play, where the levels of concentration are very high. Children persevere with tasks and select resources carefully. This can be seen at the start of each day. Children come into school each morning excited about what activities will have been provided. They quickly choose where they are going to work and quickly become engrossed, often staying on the same activity for a long time.
13. The behaviour of the children is good, whether working indoors or outdoors. The children demonstrate a good awareness of the school's rules and co-operate well with each other showing respect for others. They explain clearly how the school's 'sticker system' works and show great pleasure when they or a classmate is awarded a sticker. Children are polite to each other and lunchtimes are calm and civilised. Children treat their school and each other's property with care. They willingly help to tidy up at the end of each session and there is no evidence of bullying taking place.
14. Children develop good confidence and have very good relationships with each other and members of staff. They take turns and share fairly and help each other when required. This is seen to good effect when children are giving out fruit or when they offer to wash up a milk cup for their friend. Children co-operate well when working in pairs and groups. They play happily with each other regardless of age, race or gender. In role-play, children listen to each other and accept each other's ideas. Children with special educational needs or English as an additional language are well integrated in to the life of the nursery.
15. The children's personal development is good. They show good independence in many activities and help each other when appropriate. They eat together sensibly at lunchtime and have a good awareness of the need for manners and hygiene. Children sensibly select which activity they are going to do at the start of sessions and persevere well. However, during the inspection, children had few opportunities to share or evaluate their work with each other, although they are able to do this in a 'celebration time' at the end of each week.
16. Attendance at the school is good. Children like school and are keen to attend. There is no

unauthorised absence and most children arrive punctually. There is a very efficient 'rolling start' to the day with registers completed approximately twenty minutes after the appointed start time. This allows parents with children at other schools to take them elsewhere first. The time before registration is used effectively with children choosing from a range of activities.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

17. The quality of teaching is good overall in all areas of learning, with one in five lessons being very good. The quality of teaching has improved since the time of the last inspection when a lower percentage of teaching was judged to be good and there was no very good teaching. Members of staff now have a good knowledge of all aspects of the curriculum for young children, not just communication, language and literacy as in the past.
18. Teachers and nursery nurses plan very well for lessons. They consistently use the very thorough information they have collected and shared with other members of staff, on children's attainment and progress. When planning lessons they use this information to help them teach basic skills effectively and this means children learn quickly. Teachers and nursery nurses have a clear understanding of what each child needs to learn next and adjust their teaching accordingly, maintaining high expectations for all children. For example, the teacher shared with one child the new shape names she had learnt since the last assessment and this provided the child with encouragement and a good understanding of her own learning.
19. The organisation of groups according to children's prior attainment is effective in promoting good standards because work meets the needs of children in each group effectively. Parents are rightly very pleased with the quality of teaching.
20. Planned activities are very interesting and stimulating and are explained clearly to the children. There is a very good balance between activities led by a member of staff and those children choose for themselves. This means that the children are very interested in their work, concentrate very hard and show good levels of independence. This is an improvement since the last inspection, when there were too many activities led by members of staff and, as a result, children had insufficient opportunity to develop their own ideas.
21. Effective use is made of children's literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills to support work in other areas of learning. For example, children 'write' down appointments and times when in the role-play hospital and use the computer to produce pictures of snowmen.
22. As at the time of the last inspection, members of staff manage children's behaviour effectively by being kind, patient but firm. They have established very good relationships with the children and praise is used well, encouraging children to try new things and to gain confidence. A particularly good feature is the way members of staff take the time to explain why children should behave in a certain way. For example, a teacher asked a child not to call out answers because she would not know how clever the other children were. Children respond well to these explanations and parents greatly appreciate the patience members of staff show when talking things through with the children.
23. Members of staff are particularly skilled in supporting children, including those with special educational needs, as they work. They ask questions to encourage children to think about and discuss what they are doing. For example, when a child slipped on some climbing blocks the nursery nurse asked '*how can we make it more stable?*' enabling the child to develop a better understanding of safe structures. Skilful support means that children with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets set in their individual education plans. The individual needs of all children are met more closely than at the time of the last inspection. The school has identified children with specific talents and gifts and these children are supported well.

24. A nursery nurse provides helpful support for children with English as an additional language by targeting specific vocabulary and acting as a good role model for clear speech. However, members of staff have received no specific training to support these children and there is no bilingual assistant to help aid understanding and to assess children's knowledge and understanding in their home languages. This means that the level of ongoing support for these children is less effective. As a result, children with limited spoken English do not learn as quickly as other children. Some parents expressed concern about the lack of specialised support for these children and the inspection team would agree with these concerns.
25. Very good use is made of the wide range of very good educational resources to support children's learning. For example, a mini topic on snow is supported by jigsaws, books and craft activities that are all linked to the theme. However, members of staff provide limited opportunities for children to discuss their work with their group before and after activities.
26. Homework is imaginative, well supported by parents and makes a good contribution to the children's learning. Comparative weaknesses in teaching are the inconsistent approach to teaching letter formation resulting in some letters not being written correctly and the over direction by members of staff of some art activities, limiting children's use of their own ideas.

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

27. The school provides a very good curriculum. It takes due account of the cultural diversity of the school's intake and different backgrounds are respected. There are very thorough arrangements for planning what children are to learn, ensuring that all areas of learning are given very good coverage. Planning focuses on what children are expected to learn in the long-term and there are helpful suggestions for suitable activities to support learning. Members of staff meet together regularly to adapt planning to meet the children's changing needs and to discuss the additional activities that would support specific teaching sessions well. The school has been very effective in improving the curriculum since the time of the last inspection when it was judged to be satisfactory overall with a lack of rigour in its planning and insufficient opportunities for children to make choices about their work. The balance between teacher led and individual choice is now very good. Parents are pleased with the stimulating curriculum provided and agree that the individual needs of children are being met well.
28. There is very good provision for children with special educational needs. These children often work in smaller groups with additional support from a nursery nurse to help them develop specific knowledge and skills. The very good quality assessment arrangements enable members of staff to give the right individual support as children work. Targets in their individual education plans are specific and manageable. The school has identified children with specific gifts and talents and their needs are also met effectively.
29. The school works hard to ensure equality of opportunity for all children. However, whilst the school successfully promotes and values different cultures the lack of bilingual support for children with English as an additional language means that these children do not have full access to the curriculum when they do not understand what they are expected to learn. As a result, the progress of these children, whilst being satisfactory overall, is not as good as the progress made by other groups of children. Some parents expressed concern about the provision for these children as the school receives only limited external support or training to improve provision.
30. The strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy are effective and these skills are promoted well in all areas of learning. Members of staff constantly reinforce mathematical vocabulary and encourage children to count. For example, children are encouraged to discuss the properties of two-dimensional shapes when using shapes during a printing activity. Interesting and colourful books and a range of writing materials are available throughout the day and children are encouraged to use these resources independently as well as during teacher led activities.

31. Effective links with the local community have been maintained since the last inspection and these enhance children's learning. For example, a visit from a nurse provided a wealth of information for children's role-play hospital and visits to local sports' facilities provide additional opportunities for physical development. The school has established satisfactory links with the schools that receive their children when they leave the nursery.
32. There is very good provision for children's personal, social and health education. Members of staff are very quick to point out potential health and safety hazards and to discuss ways of keeping fit and well. Children are always given the reason for behaving in a certain way and this means that they understand the implications of their actions on others.
33. As at the time of the last inspection, the provision for children's spiritual development is satisfactory. Children have good opportunities to marvel at the beauty and wonder of nature when studying various plants and creatures. A weakness is the limited opportunity for spiritual reflection and for children to share their ideas and experiences with other children.
34. The provision for moral, social and cultural development continues to be good since the last inspection. Children are given very good opportunities to work together and share resources, particularly during role-play. Good manners are promoted effectively. For example, children serve each other with fruit at the end of the day and are reminded to say 'please' and 'thank you'. Carefully chosen stories are used well to reinforce good behaviour and attitudes. For example, a story about sharing a piece of fruit was used effectively to show that if we are too greedy, we might end up with nothing. A visit from a disabled person helps children understand and respect differences. Members of staff are good role models and are skilled in giving the reasons for behaving in a certain way. Parents are pleased with the values promoted by the school.
35. Children are given good opportunities to learn about their own and other cultures. For example, they cook and share foods such as poppadums and rice from other cultures. They celebrate various festivals such as Diwali and the Chinese New Year. The school takes care to ensure that various cultures are promoted through the use of multicultural toys, puzzles, books, dressing up clothes and pictures.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

36. The school continues to give its children good support and guidance and very effectively promotes the welfare, health and safety of all children in a caring environment. All members of staff show concern for the well being of the children and there is a very good range of strategies to promote their personal and educational development. Teachers are sensitive to the needs of particular children and consistently and very effectively monitor their progress. All members of staff know the children well and relationships throughout the school are very good.
37. The school has good routines for monitoring and improving attendance. The headteacher normally greets parents at the start of each day, completing an attendance sheet, which also serves as a note of meal requirements and can be used in emergency drills. The formal register is completed from these sheets. Explanations are given by parents to support absences. As a consequence attendance levels are good. The procedures for registration work well and help to meet the needs of parents who have children at other schools.
38. The procedures for child protection are well understood and are very good. The headteacher is the designated person and members of staff have received suitable training. They are aware of the need for vigilance and the steps to take if suspicions are aroused. The school has effective links with the appropriate specialist agencies.
39. Health and safety are well promoted in the school. All members of staff are conscious of the need for safety and watch for the security of the children. The school building is well maintained. Minor injuries are handled well, with trained first aiders in place to deal with minor

incidents.

40. The school expects good behaviour and has appropriate rules and sanctions. Children's behaviour is well monitored and any incidents of poor behaviour are dealt with well, as there are teachers and other adults always in close proximity. There were no incidents of poor behaviour seen during inspection week. The family-like atmosphere provides high levels of pastoral care.
41. The development of children has a high priority at the school. Personal development is closely monitored and weekly staff meetings are used effectively to discuss individual children and to note concerns. This daily monitoring is very effective in building upon teachers' previous knowledge and understanding of children's progress. This information is shared with parents at formal meetings.
42. Procedures for assessing children's attainment and progress are very good. Members of staff complete very thorough assessments of children's attainment and progress and use this information very effectively to plan what individual children need to learn next. Samples of work and detailed notes on each area of learning are kept to illustrate progress over the year. Assessments carried out at the beginning and end of the children's time at the nursery also give a good indication of their progress over time. Members of staff set targets for each child and these are discussed with parents at least every six weeks.
43. Children with special educational needs and gifted and talented children are identified quickly so that their individual needs can be met. Whilst the school identifies children with English as an additional language, they do not have access to a bilingual assistant to help assess children's knowledge accurately. As a result, teachers are unsure of the extent of understanding of these children in areas of learning other than in communication, language and literacy because the low scores achieved in assessments could be due to limited English rather than a lack of knowledge. This is a comparative weakness in assessment procedures.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

44. The school has maintained the very good partnership with parents that was found at the time of the last inspection. The school values the very strong links with parents and this has a very positive effect on children's learning. Parents are very pleased and compliment the school upon the social development of their children. They feel that the family-like atmosphere and friendly staff allow them to feel very welcomed and to be supportive to the school. During the inspection, a high number of parents were seen and many positive comments were received about the work of the school.
45. The school values parental help in school and welcomes parents' observations and comments. The high number of parents who regularly help in classes help to make the school more effective. The school makes great effort to use the special skills offered by family members. For example, a sister comes into school to cook ethnic foods with the children. Although the partnership between home and school is very strong, home visits are not yet made. Nevertheless, from the first of the meetings with new parents and throughout their children's time in the school, parents get splendid opportunities to meet teachers who quickly develop a very good knowledge of the needs of individual children.
46. Parents are kept very well informed about school events as well as about their children's work. They are supplied with regular high quality newsletters and feel very aware of the busy life of the school. One of the ways in which voluntary parent helpers assist the school is by placing letters into school satchels for the children, so that other parents receive such information on a regular basis. This assists the routine of the school.
47. End of year reports on children's attainment and progress are very descriptive and indicate achievements and targets. They include examples of the children's work and form a valuable record of a child's time in the nursery. The school works hard to involve parents who do not

have English as a their first language in the day to day life of the school and is largely successful in doing this. However, the lack of any bilingual teachers or teaching assistants does limit opportunities for meaningful discussions with these parents, especially when their children first start school. This was the only major concern raised by parents. The inspection team agrees with these concerns.

48. The school encourages parents to support at home their children in their work. Homework is regularly set and reading books are eagerly looked at by children and shared with parents. When children come into school at the start of each day, many parents stay for a short time to work with their children on whichever activity they have chosen. There is a very happy but purposeful atmosphere in school at this time of the day. The school also provides noteworthy opportunities for parents to extend their own skills. Many parents took part in a computer course last year, and the school is shortly to run a course about managing children's behaviour. These activities help to develop links between home and school.
49. All parents speak highly of the school. At the end of each academic year, parents write in a comments book, various thoughts about their children's time in school. These are totally positive and give a very clear picture of the high level of parental satisfaction that is evident in the day to day life of the school.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

50. The headteacher provide very good leadership for the work of the school. Parents are very happy with the quality of leadership. They feel that she is always available if they need to talk to her and has improved the school. Inspection findings support these views.
51. There is a very clear, shared vision for the future of the school that is based on a good understanding of how the school could improve further. School development planning has been improved since the last inspection and is now very good. The development plan sets a very clear agenda for school improvement, with realistic workloads and time-scales for a school of this size. The teamwork and shared sense of purpose that is apparent throughout the school is a significant feature of the school's work, with all members of staff having the children's well being and education at the forefront of their planning. This means that the school is in a strong position to improve further in the future.
52. Strategies for monitoring the work of the school are good. They have been significantly developed since the last inspection. The headteacher is working hard to establish a climate where the monitoring and evaluation of teachers and nursery nurses is accepted as an everyday part of life and there is a sensible pace to the implementation of monitoring procedures. These have focused initially on looking at the effectiveness of key elements of the curriculum. This has had a significant impact on the work of the school. For example, a very detailed review of provision for children's physical development led to the school allocating an area of the school for physical activities. Similarly, over a period of 5 weeks, the school monitored the children's use of the book area. This identified differences between how often boys and girls looked at books. Consequently, the school has altered the way the book corner is organised, including making books more interesting for boys and changing the books on display more often. Inspection findings confirm that these changes have been successful in making the book corner more welcoming and attractive to boys and girls.
53. The monitoring of teaching is satisfactory, although it is not as well developed as the monitoring of the curriculum, with the headteacher relying on informal observations of teachers and nursery nurses at work in the classroom to identify their strengths and weaknesses. These are supplemented by regular discussions with members of staff about areas for personal and professional development. Records show that these discussions are very detailed and helpful. However, the headteacher has identified the need to implement more structure to the monitoring of teaching and learning throughout the school. Members of staff have already received training, and focused lesson observations will start in the next year.

54. The school does not have a governing body. In its place is a nursery panel, which oversees the work of the school. This has responsibility for eleven nurseries in the local authority and discusses them all at the same meeting. The nursery panel has no involvement in the day-to-day running of the school. Its structure means that the nursery panel cannot give the school as much support as would be available from a governing body. In the absence of this involvement, the school receives good support from local authority advisors. This includes responsibility for setting targets for the headteacher.
55. Most of the school's finances are managed by the local authority with the school only having responsibility for an element of the budget. The day-to-day management of the available funds by the headteacher and school secretary is good. Financial planning is thorough, with spending clearly targeted on raising standards. The school development plan includes appropriate detail of how improvements are to be funded. The school applies the principles of 'best value' to its work by ensuring that competitive bids are sought for all large purchases. Additional funding from a range of sources is used effectively to support learning. For example, extra grants have been used to employ an additional nursery nurse for part of each week. This has helped the school to meet the needs of children who have weak language or communication skills.
56. The school is staffed with a good number of teachers and nursery nurses. Members of staff are very experienced and have a good range of skills. However, a significant weakness in staffing is the lack of a bilingual member of staff. The allocation of bilingual support staff is outside the school's direct control. Nevertheless, the lack of such staff or training opportunities for permanent members of staff has a negative impact on the learning of children with English as an additional language.
57. Accommodation is good. The building is well maintained, and attractive displays help to make the school welcoming for children. The only significant weakness in accommodation is the lack of room for parents, which would be beneficial for developing even greater parental involvement in the life of the school. At the moment, courses for parents have to be held off the school premises.
58. Resources are very good and include an appropriate range of multicultural resources. There is a well-resourced library/book corner, which is used effectively by members of staff to introduce children to early reading skills. The very wide range of resources mean that teachers and nursery nurses are able to change activities at least twice a day. This has a good impact on learning and helps to make school exciting for the children.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

To further raise standards of achievement, the appropriate authority, headteacher and staff should:

- ◆ Improve provision for children with English as an additional language by
 - Ensuring that there is sufficient bilingual support available in school;
 - Using bilingual support to develop assessments arrangements when children first start school;
 - Providing training for all members of staff in how best to support children who are in the early stages of developing skills in spoken English and developing more strategies for the teaching of these children.

(paragraphs 9, 24, 29, 43, 47, 56, 60, 69, 76, 80, 89)

In addition, the following areas for improvement should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

- ◆ Give children more structured opportunity to reflect on what have they have done, talk about their feelings and share their work with each other. (paragraphs 15, 25, 33)
- ◆ Implement plans for improving the monitoring of teaching. (paragraph 53)

- ◆ Ensure that there is a consistent approach to the teaching of letter formations. (paragraphs 4, 26, 75)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of sessions observed	25
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	12

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	4	19	2	0	0	0
Percentage	0	16	76	8	0	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of sessions observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each session represents more than three percentage points

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	35
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	5

FTE means full-time equivalent.

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

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	7

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	0
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	0

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.0

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0

Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed in the summer term in 2001 when all children were attending the nursery full time.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and support staff

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	17.5

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	78

Number of pupils per FTE adult	7
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000-2001
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	£
Total income	13038
Total expenditure	14226
Expenditure per pupil	356
Balance brought forward from previous year	1550
Balance carried forward to next year	362

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	1
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	1

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	35
Number of questionnaires returned	32

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	81	19	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	69	31	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	69	22	3	0	6
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	75	22	3	0	0
The teaching is good.	88	12	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	81	19	0	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	88	12	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	66	28	3	3	0
The school works closely with parents.	84	26	0	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	88	12	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	78	22	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	69	22	3	0	6

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

59. Children's attainment is good, with most children on target to exceed the expectations of the early learning goals by the end of the foundation stage. This is similar to attainment at the time of the last inspection, with children making good progress because of the good quality teaching and the strong emphasis that is given throughout the school day to developing personal and social skills. Parents are pleased that the children are enthusiastic about school and quickly learn to become independent.
60. Children with special educational needs attain standards that are appropriate to their prior attainment. Children who have English as an additional language are well supported by members of staff, who take great care to ensure that they are able to participate in activities. However, the lack of any bilingual support staff has a negative impact on learning. It means that children cannot always make their needs known and teachers cannot accurately assess children's attainment when they start school.
61. A strength in this area of learning is the very good relationships that are evident between children and adults. Children play together well and support each other in their learning. Children show interest in each other and are responsive to each other's needs, for example, showing pleasure when somebody who has been ill returns to school. They have good levels of independence and develop a good awareness of different cultural and religious traditions, celebrating Christmas, Diwali and Eid. This aspect of the curriculum is well promoted by members of staff, with good use being made of visitors to support children's learning. For example, a visitor to school takes cooking sessions and the children are given good opportunities to taste food from different cultures.
62. Children are confident when talking with adults and are enthusiastic about trying new activities. They quickly learn to listen to each other and the teacher, and they take turns when required to do so by a piece of work. They settle quickly to their tasks and concentrate well for long periods of time. For example, children worked for up to half an hour on an outdoor task that involved putting out arrows on the playground to show different directions. Children show good independence by choosing resources when they are working. Children play well together and share resources amicably. They handle equipment with care and are very good at helping to tidy up at the end of the sessions.
63. The quality of teaching of personal, social and emotional skills by the teachers, nursery nurses and teaching assistants is good. Members of staff are very patient and act as good role models. They have high expectations of the personal and social skills that children should learn and use questioning and discussion very effectively to support children in their learning. Activities are well laid out at the start of each session so that children are able to make sensible choices about what they wish to do. This successfully encourages independence.
64. The school is very well resourced and teachers and nursery nurses make very good use of these resources to make learning exciting. This means that children are keen to learn and develop positive attitudes toward school. This can be seen at the start of each school day. As children come into school with their parents or carers, they happily explore the nursery to see what activities are set out, before choosing where they are going to work. At this time there is a buzz of excitement as children explore the nursery before they settle down to work purposefully.
65. Teachers are very good at taking every opportunity to encourage children to respect the world around them. For example, on a walk, the teacher talked about rubbish that had been left on the floor, asking the children to think about why it was not nice. All children understood that

rubbish should be put in a bin and not thrown on to the ground. Role-play is used very effectively to encourage children to co-operate with each other. Teachers plan different role-play opportunities both indoors and outdoors, which give children the chance to work together and to share ideas. When working in the home corner, children take on different roles, with adults intervening, when appropriate, to extend learning. This was seen to good effect as a teacher encouraged a discussion about the names of fruit as a child set out the fruit bowl for 'dinner'.

66. Procedures for assessing children's progress are very good. All members of staff note down key achievements, which are then shared with the rest of the staff. The information gained from these assessments is used very effectively to help teachers and nursery nurses decide what needs to be taught next. This means that learning is well planned and is based on a good understanding of individual needs. Specific skills are taught effectively. For example, since they started in the nursery all the children have been taught how to do up their coats.
67. A comparative weakness in provision is that children are given few opportunities to talk about their feelings or to share their work with each other in a systematic way at the end of the school day. Although children do get an opportunity to share their work in a 'celebration time' at the end of each week, this is an aspect of the curriculum that is currently underdeveloped.

Communication, language and literacy

68. Children's attainment is good, with most children on target to exceed the expectations of the early learning goals by the end of the foundation stage. As at the time of the last inspection, children's speaking and listening skills are a particular strength of attainment.
69. Children with special educational needs attain standards that are appropriate to their prior attainment. Children who have English as an additional language make satisfactory progress in developing competency in spoken English, but their progress is limited by the lack of any bilingual support.
70. Children make good progress in developing speaking and listening. Throughout the school, children listen carefully when a story is read to them and respond appropriately to questions about what they have heard. Children talk happily in role-play activities, planning how they will play before embarking on complex stories. For example, when playing in the 'clinic', there was a lengthy discussion about who should be the 'doctor' and who should be the 'nurse'. Children enjoy talking to adults, explaining what they are doing at a particular time. They do this very confidently, using a very good range of vocabulary. Higher attaining children, in particular, are able to sustain lengthy conversations with adults, speaking clearly and using a wide range of descriptive words.
71. Children quickly develop reading skills and they have very positive attitudes towards books. They learn to handle books carefully and they enjoy sharing them with an adult. They understand how books are organised and are beginning to understand that words and pictures have meaning. Some children can read a story from memory, using the pictures to help them. More able children understand the difference between story and information books and talk happily about stories they have enjoyed. Most children know some letter sounds, with a few recognising common words such as 'I', 'and', 'the' and 'we'.
72. Most children know the difference between drawing and writing and are able to make marks that resemble letters. The most able children can write their own names from memory and are beginning to write a small number of letters to represent simple words. For example, they tried to write words when sending letters to Santa. However, those children who can write down words or letters often form the letters incorrectly.
73. The quality of teaching is good in this area of learning. There is a very strong emphasis on developing children's language skills in all activities, which helps children to make good progress. There are three main teaching groups in the school and these are organised broadly by ability. This very effective organisation means that teachers and nursery nurses can closely

match work to individual needs. Teachers encourage children to become confident in talking to large or small groups as well as to individuals. Role-play activities are well planned and make a particularly good contribution to the development of children's speaking skills.

74. Reading skills are taught effectively. Every opportunity is taken to teach children about the sounds that letters make and to introduce them to a range of written vocabulary. Displays around the school help children to understand that language communicates meaning. When talking about different words, teachers and nursery nurses frequently ask children to identify the letters in the word, asking, for example, which names start with the same sound. This helps children to quickly learn the different sounds of the alphabet. The school has reviewed the organisation of the book area to make it more attractive to the children. This has been very effective in ensuring that both boys and girls look at books on a regular basis. The school changes books that are on display weekly and ensures that there are books that are going to be interesting to children of different gender or background. This includes books that are written in more than one language. Teachers read stories well and children enjoy listening to them. Props are used effectively to sustain interest. This was seen to good effect in a session where the teacher used various 'witches props' to encourage children to participate in the story. Children responded appropriately, joining in with the teacher when they recognised parts of the text. Teachers have high expectations of what children should achieve. This is particularly evident when teachers are sharing books with children on a one-to-one basis. At these times, questioning is used very effectively to assess understanding and to develop skills.
75. Teachers work hard to make writing purposeful and, as a result, children become confident writers. They are very enthusiastic and are always willing to record their ideas on paper, often using recognisable words or letters. Supplies of paper, pens and pencils are always available and children readily use them. Children are successfully encouraged to write for a range of purposes, for example, when writing out 'prescriptions' in the role-play area or using the computers to make marks on the screen. Children develop a positive attitude towards writing and they are successfully encouraged to improve their skills. However, there is a minor weakness in the teaching of letter formation. Members of staff do not always use the correct way of forming letters when they are modelling writing to the children, and this can lead to children learning bad habits which are not always corrected.
76. Children who have English as an additional language are well supported by members of staff and are given focused language support in a small group by a nursery nurse. This quality of teaching in these sessions is good. Activities are well planned and are clearly focused on developing children's competence in English and extending their vocabulary. Nevertheless, children with English as an additional language make slower progress than other children because there is no member of staff with specific skills in teaching bilingual children who can communicate with these children in their heritage language. The lack of any bilingual support means that when children first start school, teachers cannot accurately assess their attainment. In addition, children are not able to talk to adults in their first language about what they are doing. This means that there are missed opportunities to extend children's vocabulary and their understanding of what is being taught.
77. Homework makes a good contribution to children's learning. They regularly take reading books home and also have 'home/school packs' that develop language skills. These activities help to involve parents and carers in supporting their children in their work.
78. The curriculum is rich and stimulating with children given very good opportunities to develop skills, knowledge and understanding in all aspects of the subject. Children are very well prepared for the next stage of their education. Teachers and nursery nurses carefully plan work in the long and medium term, with a good feature of this being the close links that are made between different subjects. This gives activities a real sense of purpose for the children.
79. The quality and use of assessment is very good. All members of staff are involved in assessing children's learning. They note down significant achievements as they happen and then share them with the rest of the staff. This information is used effectively to group children and to

decide what needs to be taught next. End of year records show that over time a very detailed picture is gained of individual children's achievements.

Mathematical development

80. Children's attainment is good, with most children on target to exceed the expectations of the early learning goals by the end of the foundation stage. They make good progress during their time in the nursery. Good standards have been maintained since the last inspection. Most children show a good awareness of shape and are competent in completing jigsaw puzzles with as many as 48 pieces. Higher attaining children count up to twenty, understand that two halves make a whole and refer to the time and use coins when taking part in role-play. They add two small numbers together. Lower attaining children count to five accurately and show a good understanding of mass and weight. For example, when discussing a book with a nursery nurse with different sized teddy bears they understood that the very large bear would be too heavy for the small child to pick up. Children with special educational needs are given effective support enabling them to make good progress towards targets set in their individual education plans. Children with English as an additional language lack the support of a bilingual member of staff and although they make satisfactory progress overall, they develop new skills at a slower rate than other children.
81. The quality of teaching is good with an example of very good teaching. In the very good lesson, a nursery nurse took a group of children on an interesting 'shape' walk increasing children's knowledge very well by pointing out various shapes in street furniture, buildings and vehicles. The quality of teaching has improved since the time of the last inspection when it was judged to be 'mostly good'. Children's learning is supported effectively by the use of good quality resources. For example, when children are learning about positional vocabulary such as 'under' and 'over', the nursery nurse uses pictures, words and physical activity to support her verbal instructions. Counting activities are made fun by including them in a story. One nursery nurse told a humorous story about a farmer's animals becoming mixed up in their pens to encourage children to take an interest in counting out the correct number for each animal in the story. Members of staff make effective use of a wide range of practical activities to make learning fun such as printing using various shapes. The interesting way mathematics is taught means that children are very attentive when members of staff are talking and behave well, concentrating on the tasks they have been set. Children were also well behaved at the time of the last inspection.
82. Very good use is made of assessments to help members of staff plan what they are going to teach next. For example, during an activity on printing with various shapes, the teacher asked children to discuss the properties of shapes they previously did not know to help them remember in the future. At the time of the last inspection, insufficient use was made of assessment information for this purpose.
83. Correct mathematical language is promoted effectively and rhymes and 'free choice' activities are used well to reinforce what children have learnt. After taking part in the 'shape' walk, children could play with 'spheres' during water play on one day and fill various shaped containers the following day. This is an improvement from the time of the last inspection when 'free choice' activities lacked interest.
84. Members of staff use praise effectively to support children in their learning and as a result, children are quick to encourage each other. For example, when children were ordering the numbers to ten and a child made a mistake, another child said 'good try'.
85. All children, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language are included in activities and encouraged to take part during group discussions. However at times children with English as an additional language need to copy what other children are doing because they do not fully understand the task.
86. The curriculum is very good and as at the time of the last inspection children are successfully

encouraged to use their numeracy skills to support work in other areas of learning. Very detailed planning helps teachers to be well organised and clearly focused.

87. Information and communication technology is used well to support children's learning. For example, children enjoy playing a variety of mathematical games on the computers. They match numbers and count different objects showing good levels of skill.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

88. Children's attainment is good, with most on target to exceed the expectations of the early learning goals by the end of the foundation stage. They make good progress during their time in the nursery. Attainment and progress have improved since the last inspection when children were on target to meet expectations. Most children can name animals that might live on a farm or in a zoo and understand that there are seasonal changes throughout the year. They make effective use of their construction skills when making boats that float by joining reclaimed materials with sticky tape and glue. Children make a route to find a teddy bear by positioning directional arrows and correctly follow each other's routes. They know that places can be near or far.
89. Higher attaining children know how to drag objects across the computer screen. They are able to give statements such as '*plastic balls float and glass balls sink*' and have a good knowledge of names of exotic fruit. Lower attaining children know the names of many animals such as squirrel, crocodile and tortoise and play simple games on the computer by clicking on icons. Children with special educational needs are given effective support enabling them to make good progress towards targets set in their individual education plans. Children with English as an additional language lack the support of a bilingual member of staff and this means they make less progress than other children, because they do not always understand the purpose of tasks.
90. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection and is now good. Members of staff teach children the correct scientific terms when setting up experiments to show how some foods change when heated or cooled. For example, the teacher talked about the jelly needing to *dissolve* after they tried to make a jelly with cold and then hot water. Children are given good opportunities to make observations and discoveries when taking part in educational visits and at school. For example, during a walk a nursery nurse discussed with her group how the leaves lose their colour in winter and rot into the earth and how berries provide a food supply for some birds. Children learn about the past by visiting a local museum with a Victorian schoolroom. Children's knowledge of seasons and days of the week are reinforced effectively and higher attaining children are encouraged to discuss which day it was *yesterday* and what it will be *tomorrow*. The interesting activities provided help children to concentrate well and they enjoy taking part in experiments and nature walks.
91. There is a very good curriculum offering a breadth of interesting and stimulating activities. Opportunities to work in the local area and outdoors and to work with a variety of materials have been greatly extended since the time of the last inspection and this has had a significant impact on the breadth of children's knowledge and understanding. The study of living things has also been improved and children enjoy seeing and handling a good variety of animals and plants. Teachers' detailed planning supports learning very successfully.
92. Effective use is made of assessments of children's attainment and progress to plan lessons. Members of staff are monitoring the use of the computers effectively by encouraging children to put their name cards in a box to show they have taken part in a particular activity. This enables members of staff to promote certain activities if necessary and encourage children who rarely use the computer. The very good accommodation and learning resources are used very well.

Physical Development

93. Children attain good standards, with most children on target to exceed the expectations of the early learning goals by the end of the foundation stage. This represents an improvement since the last inspection when progress and attainment were only satisfactory. Since then, the school has improved the curriculum, teaching and resources considerably. This has had a good impact on children's learning and has helped to raise standards.
94. Children now make good progress in physical development, with their balancing skills particularly good. They grow in confidence and use a wider range of skills as they get older. When working outdoors, children show a wide range of skills, including good co-ordination and balance. They enjoy playing on the fixed play equipment. More able children show considerable skills in climbing and performing various swinging and balancing movements. They ride wheeled vehicles confidently.
95. When working indoors, children can throw a beanbag with varying degrees of accuracy. They run, jump and hop showing appropriate care and make different sorts of balances using different parts of their bodies. They enjoy moving to music and are able to use their imagination well to make different body shapes.
96. Children use tools confidently and safely. Their cutting skills improve and they begin to use equipment without adult assistance, for example cutting twigs to make arms for a snowman. They stack blocks to a considerable height and concentrate well when making models. Children quickly improve their manual dexterity. They learn to thread beads and show good skills when working with construction kits, for example by undoing screws and bolts.
97. The quality of teaching is good. Teaching is particularly effective during the group sessions that are held in the hall of a neighbouring community centre. At these times, there is a good focus to learning. These sessions are well organised and lesson planning is thorough, giving good detail of the purpose of an activity. Members of staff who take these sessions have high expectations of the quality of work that the children should produce and they consistently encourage them to do their best. Individual children are supported well. For example, a less confident child, who has English as an additional language is given one-to-one support to enable her to participate fully in activities.
98. During 'free choice' time, activities are well planned and learning is made purposeful. There is a very good range of resources and children are given many opportunities to explore and experiment with different pieces of equipment. This helps them to improve skills. Children are confident and adventurous and share equipment and resources well. Children concentrate and persevere on activities such as climbing and riding bikes. Adults give good quality support to children when they are working independently. The lack of such support was a weakness at the time of the last inspection. Teachers and nursery nurses know the children well and talk to them about what they are doing, extending learning by the careful use of questioning. For example, questions like *'how can we make it stable'* helped children who were working with building blocks to improve their building. Children are encouraged to think about the effects of exercise on their body and are taught to look after their bodies. For example, children are very conscientious about washing their hands after they have been to the toilet.
99. Teachers and nursery nurses have a good awareness of health and safety issues and they manage behaviour effectively. Good use is made of praise and this has a good impact on their confidence and self-esteem.
100. Children with special educational needs are well supported and are enabled to make good progress in developing physical skills. Similarly, children with English as an additional language make good progress. The lack of bilingual support has less impact on the development of skills in this area of learning because children are able to practice and develop skills at their own rate. Great care is taken by adults to introduce new language to all children as they are working. For example, members of staff introduce words like 'over', 'under' and 'through' when working with children on the indoor large construction kits.

101. The curriculum is very good and children are given a wealth of different activities to choose from each day. This includes regular access to outdoor activities. There is a very good balance between activities that are led by an adult and activities where children choose for themselves. Occasional visits to the school, such as that of coaches from a local football club, supplement the curriculum and extend the range of skills that children are able to experience. Planning is detailed and covers all aspects of the area of learning. Teachers and nursery nurses thoroughly and regularly assess the attainment and progress of individual children. They use effectively the information gained from observations and evaluations at the end of lessons to help them decide what needs to be taught next.
102. Accommodation is good and has improved since the last inspection. The outdoor area is now very well resourced and provides a safe environment for children to work in. A recent review of the curriculum identified ways that improvements could be made and these have been acted upon quickly. An area of the building has been designated as a physical development area and it is being used successfully for this purpose. A range of resources are readily available in this area and children use them well for climbing and balancing activities as well as for different types of imaginative play.

Creative development

103. Children's attainment is good, with most on target to exceed the expectations of the early learning goals by the end of the foundation stage. They make good progress during their time in the nursery. Standards have improved since the last inspection when there were insufficient opportunities for children to take part in creative activities. Children produce well-observed paintings of leaves after a walk in the woods and make good use of space and shape in their pictures of sunflowers. They successfully shape clay to make colourful sea creatures, make interesting mushrooms from salt-dough and carefully weave fabric through the slats in the fence. Lower attaining children are confident when making marks on paper and experimenting with paint such as seeing what happens when three paintbrushes are used together. Higher attaining children include more detail in their pictures. Children with special educational needs are given effective support enabling them to make good progress towards targets set in their individual education plans. Children with English as an additional language are less involved with other children during role-play and tend to play alone rather than join in with a game. They co-operate with each other when supported by a nursery nurse but the lack of support from a bilingual member of staff means they make less progress than other children, because they do not always understand the purpose of activities.
104. Children are given good opportunities to try new ways of playing percussion instruments both during whole group music sessions and when instruments are made freely available outside. All children enjoy taking part in musical activities and most learn to keep a steady beat and sing in tune. Higher attaining children have a good knowledge of the names of various instruments such as tambourine, cymbals and cowbell and understand that the size of instruments can affect the sound produced.
105. The quality of children's role-play is very good. Members of staff set up interesting scenarios and this means that children maintain their interest for long periods of time and develop complex and interesting story lines. For example, in the hospital area children concentrated well as they booked in 'patients' and gave them injections. The teacher encouraged children to think about why babies are sometimes ill and successfully used questioning such as '*what do you need to do next?*' and '*who looks after people in the ambulance?*' to extend learning and introduce new vocabulary.
106. The quality of teaching is good overall and has improved since the last inspection. Teachers give children very good support during role-play. Members of staff interact with the children unobtrusively, feeding in new suggestions in a subtle way that enables children to explore their own ideas and extend their knowledge. For example, the headteacher asked a higher attaining child if she would write down the appointment so that the time was remembered. Teaching is less effective during some art activities when members of staff restrict what children can make.

For example, some activities involve gluing together pre-cut shapes and at these times children have limited opportunities to use their own ideas or to select their own materials. This remains a relative weakness from the time of the last inspection. Support is more effective when ideas are shared and children's imagination and individuality is encouraged. Such as when children made snowmen from modelling material and a selection of other materials and were encouraged to use original ideas. Members of staff support singing effectively enabling children to join in and learn to sing in tune.

107. Children work with each other well during role-play. For example a small group of girls were sharing food when 'feeding their babies'. Higher attaining children invent their own role-play situations such as 'worshipping in church'. All children are successfully encouraged to take part in putting resources away carefully at the end of sessions. Children's good behaviour has been maintained since the last inspection.
108. The curriculum for creative development is very good. There is a very good breadth of well-planned activities enabling children to learn effectively. A strength in the provision is the variety of excellent opportunities for role-play both outdoors and inside. For example, a 'drive through' restaurant is set up outside and children extend their knowledge and understanding effectively when playing in the Chinese restaurant, hairdressers or garage. Opportunities for children to make three-dimensional works of art have been significantly improved since the last inspection and children have good opportunities to use rigid and soft materials to build models and structures.
109. Children are successfully encouraged to use their numeracy and literacy skills to support this area of learning. For example, when playing in the role-play hospital, children 'write' prescriptions and give appointment times to patients. When making pictures members of staff discuss the shapes used and encourage children to count the various objects made or drawn. Information and communication technology supports the subject effectively. Children use the computer 'mouse' correctly to operate an art programme to make pictures of snowmen and click on the correct icons to complete nursery rhymes. Creative development makes a good contribution to children's social and cultural development with role-play including experiences from various cultures.
110. Members of staff assess children's attainment and progress very thoroughly to ensure that work provided is challenging and relevant to their needs. In addition they monitor the effectiveness of the role-play areas by observing when children choose each activity and what resources are used successfully. This enables them to improve facilities and to attract children who might not choose to play in an area. Accommodation and resources are very good. Role-play areas include a wide selection of good quality resources, including resources from other cultures, and this has a very positive impact on the quality of children's learning.