

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **GROSVENOR NURSERY SCHOOL**

Kearsley, Bolton

LEA area: Bolton

Unique reference number: 105144

Headteacher: Mrs M Vickers

Reporting inspector: Mrs R S Rodger  
10347

Dates of inspection: 19-20 February 2002

Inspection number: 230164

Short inspection carried out under Section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996



## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Nursery
School category:	Maintained
Age range of pupils:	3 to 5 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Lord Street Kearsley Bolton Lancashire
Postcode:	BL4 8AR
Telephone number:	01204 573849
Fax number:	01204 573849
Appropriate authority:	The management committee
Name of chair of management committee:	Mrs L Thomas
Date of previous inspection:	10-12 June 1998

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

The nursery is situated close to the centre of Kearsley on the outskirts of Bolton. It is an area of mixed housing with most of the part-time children living locally. Several parents attended the nursery themselves. There are 95 children on roll, 50 boys and 45 girls. The nursery is resourced to provide for eight children with special educational needs who attend the nursery full time from all over the metropolitan borough of Bolton. In addition there are three more children with special educational needs who attend the nursery part time. There are two additional staff appointed to work with the children with special educational needs. The children with special educational needs have moderate to severe learning difficulties, including speech and language delay, general learning difficulties, cerebral palsy and spina bifida. The school is accessible to children with limited mobility who need to use a wheelchair. All the children are of UK heritage. There are no children with English as an additional language and three children are eligible for a free school meal out of the eight full-time children with special educational needs for whom a meal is provided. The attainment on entry of the part-time children is below average. Admission to the nursery is at the start of the term after the children are three with some children attending for two years prior to starting in a reception class at the beginning of the term in the year in which they are five years old. The nursery has a community room and crèche for use by parents and others living in the community. It is well used to provide courses for parents and in the recent past was used by the nursery staff to make a good collection of story sacks for use by the nursery children.

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

Grosvenor Nursery School is a very effective nursery as it was at the time of the last inspection in 1998. The inspirational leadership of the headteacher and the support of a committed team of staff means that the children are provided with very high quality experiences covering all the areas of learning. The curriculum is fully inclusive and provides very effectively for the children with special educational needs who are fully integrated into all aspects of the nursery work. Teaching is at least good and sometimes it is excellent, especially in creative development. Parents are very supportive of the work of the nursery and they are kept well informed of their children's progress through the comprehensive and accessible records of achievement. By the time they leave the nursery, children are likely to achieve highly in personal, social and emotional development, some aspects of communication, language and literacy, knowledge and understanding of the world and in creative development. Based on the attainment on entry, the value added by the teaching in the nursery, the effective leadership of the headteacher and the standards reached by the time the children leave the nursery to start school; good value for money is provided.

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

- Leadership and management by the headteacher.
- Includes children with special educational needs in all aspects of the nursery's work.
- Provides a broad and balanced curriculum.
- Provides very effectively for creative development, especially learning through imaginative play.
- Keeps informative records of achievement which give parents useful information about their child's development.

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

- There are no major areas for improvement but the nursery may wish to give children more responsibility during snack-time and to take account of the small scale steps for learning when assessing children with special educational needs when they join activities with other children.

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

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The nursery was last inspected in June 1998. Two areas for development were identified in the previous inspection report. These concerned including more financial detail in the school development plan and implementing the statutory requirements for teacher appraisal. Good progress has been made on both of the areas for development. Staff training costs are linked to priorities in the school development plan. The money raised through fundraising is used to provide a wide range of additional resources for the practical work in the nursery. Performance management has been introduced this year. All staff have set themselves targets related to the needs of the nursery and their own personal development which is closely monitored by the headteacher. The nursery has continued to improve its provision for children with special educational needs and to provide well for creative development which has been a priority in the past year. More attention is given to teaching and assessing the basic skills as part of the work completed by staff towards achieving the Basic Skills Quality Mark. All assessment arrangements have improved since the last inspection. The strengths identified in the last report have been maintained.

## STANDARDS

Children enter the nursery with below average attainment. Personal, social and emotional development is given a high priority, especially for the pupils with special educational needs, and pupils achieve well. The children are likely to have exceeded the early learning goals by the time they leave the reception class. There is good achievement also in communication, language and literacy, especially in communication skills and early writing which is given a high priority. Attainment in mathematical development is typical of children of the same age elsewhere and children are likely to achieve the early learning goals by the time they leave the reception class. Achievement in knowledge and understanding of the world is good and children are well on their way to have exceeded the early learning goals by the time they leave the reception class. This is due to the way the staff build on children's general knowledge through a wide range of activities which help the children learn about themselves, where they live and how they travel around. Opportunities for physical development outside were restricted during the inspection because of the weather. The children showed a good range of skills indoors. A strong feature of the creative area of learning is the attention given to imaginative play. For example children pretended to be other characters and imitated the excellent role models provided by adults in the space center.. Because creative development is given a high priority and always has the support of an adult to enrich and extend children's learning of new vocabulary and understanding of events, achievement is very good. The children with special educational needs achieve well due to the wide range of sensory activities provided. Older children and the more able children have more challenging targets to achieve and they also achieve well in all areas of learning.

## CHILDREN'S ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Children are keen to come to the nursery. They learn to concentrate, persevere and to work independently due to good teaching and a multitude of exciting and innovative activities. Children with special educational needs especially show great delight in the activities provided because they are so tactile and allow them to use senses that are not impaired, so they gain a great sense of achievement.
Behaviour	Good. Children quickly learn to accept the routines of the nursery and behave appropriately. Several children with special educational needs exhibit challenging behaviour which is effectively managed by staff.

Personal development and relationships	Very good. A very high priority is given to personal relationships. Children gain in confidence as they get older. They are very familiar with the routines and know how to look after themselves. The amount of responsibility given at snack-time varies considerably. A high number of children have only been attending the nursery for a term and a half and are still only three years old. Relationships at all levels, between the staff, the staff and children and the staff and parents are excellent.
Attendance	Attendance is not statutory. Registers are completed appropriately at the beginning of each session.

Children come into the nursery very confidently and soon settle and persevere with many activities. The older children are very caring of the children with special educational needs, especially those with limited mobility. They are encouraged to take part alongside everyone else in the nursery.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

<b>Teaching of pupils:</b>	
Quality of teaching	Good

The quality of teaching overall is good in personal, social and emotional development, communication language and literacy and knowledge and understanding of the world. It is very good in creative development and satisfactory in mathematical and physical development. All staff have a very good understanding of the way in which young children learn. The children are provided with many activities which involve investigating, creating, repeating and consolidating their learning. There is a good balance between activities the children choose to do themselves and those which are supported by adults. Because of the high ratio of adults to children there are very few areas where there is no adult support, nevertheless children shared books independently and sustained concentration as they engaged in their own role-play. Planning is effective and gives appropriate priority to teaching the basic skills. Staff are very skilled in being able to play alongside the children and develop their learning as they do so. The deployment of staff is effective. Assessment is carried out constantly to contribute to the detailed records of achievement kept for all children. The teaching of children with special educational needs is very effective by the specialist speech therapy support and by the children's individual carers who skilfully direct and redirect children to activities in which they can easily take part, such as the stroking of the guinea pig. The trusting relationship between staff and children contributes significantly to the progress children make.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. The nursery provides a broad range of interesting and stimulating activities in all areas of learning. Children have equal access to all activities.
Provision for children with special educational needs	A strength. Children with severe and moderate learning difficulties are totally integrated into the nursery and their needs are met exceptionally well through the daily provision and by the specialist support provided by the Local Education Authority (LEA) on a regular basis. Detailed records of their progress are kept and reviewed as required each term to set further targets for development.



Provision for children's personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	There is very good provision for the children's personal, spiritual, moral and social development. Children learn to respect each other and to show concern and compassion. The moral code is promoted consistently in all aspects of the day-to-day work of the nursery. Children are encouraged to respect their environment and all living things. An awareness of cultural diversity is satisfactorily promoted through sharing celebrations and the customs of other countries. A high priority is given to inclusive practices which value the contribution of everyone to the ethos of the nursery.
How well the school cares for its children	Very good, the children are well cared for and all procedures for child protection are in place. There is very close liaison with parents before the children start in the nursery and their progress is recorded and assessed in several ways through photographs recording achievements, examples of what they can do and assessments completed each term against each area of learning. This area of the nursery's work has improved since the previous inspection.

### HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher has a strong vision for the future of the nursery when it becomes part of the Sure Start centre in the near future. She takes an equal role with all the staff in her teaching role and through this very effectively leads by example. As a result, there is a strong focus on teaching and learning.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The nursery does not have a governing body. The LEA is the responsible authority. To support the needs of the nursery a management committee meets termly along with all other nursery schools in the authority to provide support to the nurseries. The headteacher values the opportunity to meet regularly with colleagues. In addition, the nursery is supported on a more regular basis by the early years adviser who has monitored the work of the nursery and provided feedback. The management committee has a clear strategic view of the future developments and is providing the headteacher with a good level of support.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Self-evaluation is a strong aspect of the work of the headteacher and her staff. As part of performance management arrangements, the award of Investor in People and the work being carried out to achieve the Basic Skills Quality Mark, evaluation of the work of the nursery and its impact on the children is given a very high profile. The monitoring of teaching by the headteacher is rigorous and identifies areas for improvement which are now embedded in the targets set for staff and whole school development. The headteacher has tackled the introduction of performance management with a very high level of professionalism aimed at continuing to improve the quality of education for children attending the nursery.
The strategic use of resources	The key roles of additional staff to support children with special educational needs are the main recipients of additional financial resources. Training for the staff in the responsibilities of the special educational needs Code of Practice have been targeted. The nursery is scheduled for a move to new premises in the near future so monies are sensibly targeted on the most powerful resource: staffing.

The nursery is in the early stages of applying best value principles. It seeks to get the best value in the appointment of appropriate staff.

### **PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

<b>What pleases parents most</b>	<b>What parents would like to see improved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Their children like coming to the nursery.</li><li>• The teaching is good.</li><li>• Parents are kept well-informed about how their children are getting on.</li><li>• Their children make good progress.</li><li>• The school is well led and managed.</li><li>• The approachability of the staff in school when they have problems.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• There were no areas that parents would like to see improved.</li></ul>

The inspection team agrees wholeheartedly with the views of the parents and carers. They support the views of those parents who praised the quality of care and education of children with special educational needs. The parents have a high level of trust for the staff with responsibility for the care of their children.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL**

#### **Is effectively led and managed by the headteacher**

1. The headteacher's leadership style is characterised by a strong sense of leading by example. She has developed strong team spirit in all those involved in the nursery at every level. Staff work extremely hard and take on considerable responsibility for planning and assessment arrangements. Voluntary helpers give readily of their own time to provide additional support to all the activities available. The organisation and management of the three key groups gives children time to work in a smaller group and talk to their group leader regularly throughout the session without it becoming too regimented. The balance created in the session between the needs of the full-time children with special educational needs and the part-time children works smoothly. External, specialist staff are welcomed and, despite limited space for specialist treatment, children's needs are met well. Good progress has been made in dealing with the two areas for improvement identified in the previous inspection.
2. The future change in status of the nursery school when it becomes integrated with the Sure Start centre due to open in the near future is being led by the headteacher. She does this with a strong sense of purpose and a clear sense of direction to meet the future needs of children from six months to four years of age. She is ably supported in this by the management committee, which has responsibility for the nursery school along with all the other nursery schools in the borough.
3. Performance management has been implemented rigorously throughout the school. Staff are working effectively towards their targets, which are both personal and school related. Training needs have been identified and currently they are met as courses have become available. Staff feed back information from their training to all staff. Training on the requirements of the special educational needs Code of Practice has yet to take place. Nevertheless, the special educational needs co-ordinator has begun to take account of the new requirements in her work.

#### **Includes children with special educational needs effectively**

4. The integration of the children with special educational needs is very good. The children come to the nursery by bus from all around the borough. The children are allocated to a group leader who has responsibility for assessing their progress towards the early learning goals. As additional support, children with severe learning difficulties, for instance limited mobility, are very effectively assisted by a special educational needs support assistant to join in with all the activities available. The children work with other children all the time, except during the lunchtime period between the part-time sessions. At that time the children play games together in a small room. Several innovative modifications have been made to equipment to make it accessible to the children, especially those with limited mobility. For example, the water trays have been raised by the caretaker to allow children in their wheelchairs to reach the containers and so help them to learn about emptying and filling using their own easily accessible supply of water. Other children are caring and tolerant of the children, especially during snack-time where those children with underdeveloped social skills pose a considerable challenge to the staff.
5. The sensory stimuli is outstanding in some parts of the nursery, for example, in the space centre the impact of the flashing lights, well-resourced launch pad and evocative

strains of space music helped the children to use their sensory skills. They listened to a range of sounds and observed the actions of other children as they prepared for the lunar landing, well equipped with their survival packs and dressed in their sparkling, reflective space suits. The improvement in the communication skills of some children as they tried to verbalise their sense of delight was very evident. On another occasion, the children were encouraged to explore the lunar landscape using their hands to move the space people over the frozen jelly, large blocks of scented soap and a myriad of coloured stones. Again tactile skills were developed which helped the children begin to articulate experiences they were exploring. All children, but especially the children with special educational needs enjoyed such exploratory activities as they discovered how to attribute a word to a sensation that was new to them.

6. Achievement is very good according to the records kept of the children's progress. All children have an individual education plan, which is reviewed termly. The targets are achievable, and in line with the requirements of the new special educational needs Code of Practice. They are limited in number and where possible, parents attend the nursery for meetings to review progress towards the targets each term. The individual education plans are sent home to parents, unable to attend the review meetings, in the daily home/school diary and are returned with their comments. Communication with, and support by, a wide range of specialist support workers such as physiotherapists, speech therapists and members of the pre-school support is very effective. Records of progress and next-step actions are provided for those children receiving external support. Weekly plans do not make enough reference to the small steps to check the progress of the special educational needs pupils, but the nursery is aware of this and the special educational needs co-ordinator is currently attending a training course. Parents spoke very highly of the effortlessness of the inclusion of their children and how quickly they settled into the nursery. Parents do not always find it easy to drop in to see their children, but those that could spoke very positively about the welcome they received. Overall, parents are highly supportive of the work of the nursery.

### **Provides a broad and balanced curriculum, including outdoor play**

7. The curriculum is based on the six required areas of learning. Weekly planning covers all areas of learning and highlights the planned opportunities for learning outside. However, due to poor weather during the inspection very little evidence was gathered to show how effectively children learn outside. The children are taught each of the areas of learning as part of an integrated topic covering areas of immediate interest to the children. During the term of the inspection, children had been learning about all the ways in which they travel around. Very effective use is made of visits to places such as the bus depot and a journey on a train to provide children with direct experiences which help to promote language development and an understanding of experiences with which they are unfamiliar.
8. In personal, social and emotional development all children achieve well. Children take the initiative; they show a great sense of pride in the work they complete. Children are highly involved in activities and can sustain concentration when required to do so. For example, a group of three children took part in a self-initiated role-play of a picnic to the moon based on a familiar story. At other times children take responsibility for giving out biscuits during snack-time and taking their responsibilities sensibly. Not all group times were used so effectively to give children responsibility. Children learned to develop their writing skills in their play as they recorded the food they would take to the moon. An automatic expectation of all children is that they can write their names on their work. They learn to do this and make good progress in their early writing development. At all times they are encouraged to talk about what they are doing. For example, several

children explained what happened when adding different ingredients to a cake mixture and why the jelly texture changed. Older children know the difference between pictures and text. They showed good levels of confidence as they shared books with each other and talked about the story. Mathematical development is planned along with other areas of learning. Children learn to use counting in their play. For example, as the rocket was launched they counted backwards to 'blast off'. However, opportunities for mathematical learning are not always given a high enough priority in planning to assist teaching of mathematical skills in all areas of learning.

9. Children have good skills in using tools and equipment on the woodwork bench and learn how to use tools safely. They learned how to manipulate materials such as clay to make an alien figure. Children learned how to design and make a moon buggy with the support of the teaching staff and the caretaker. Tools are used with good attention to safety and the children wear protective goggles. A more able child was able to explain how the rocket could be launched using a wedge of wood as a balance. Problem-solving skills were effectively developed as the children pondered over how to secure the wood to the clamp. On a recent train journey the children learned to recognise familiar features in the environment. The different ways in which the children travelled to the nursery were graphed as part of a display on journeys. Children demonstrate good control of the mouse when using the computers which enabled them to select sweets and move them to a large plate on the screen.
10. Planning for the outdoor area includes exploration and investigational opportunities in the wild area, practising and learning new physical skills with balls and equipment on the soft play area and an area to develop a sense of space and control over their movements through riding wheeled toys alone or sharing.

**Provides very effectively for creative development, especially learning through imaginative play**

11. The nursery has prioritised creative development in their school improvement plan in the current year. The inspirational leadership of the headteacher has contributed considerably to the richness of provision in the sensory area of the nursery and to promote learning in several areas of learning through imaginative play. Language development is significantly enhanced through the well-planned experiences in the imaginative play area and in the small world play. Tactile experiences are especially effective for the children with special educational needs. Previous sections have mentioned several examples of high quality imaginative play so they will not be repeated in this section of the report.
12. Children learned to make three-dimensional rockets using a selection of materials. Their learning was considerably enhanced by the support of an adult whose questions encouraged the children to think about the best materials to use and how to make them stick. Opportunities for painting are always provided. The children showed good levels of independence as they selected the paper to use, the appropriate size of brush and whether to use ready-mixed paint or to explore, with help, mixing powder paints together.
13. The music area is available daily. The children's skills in making use of the wide range of instruments have been enhanced since their work with a musician in residence. Photographic evidence showed the children experimenting with different kinds of drums and other instruments. This was effectively followed up in the music area where children learned to listen to various musical sounds to distinguish between the loud and soft sounds.

14. The imaginative play area was a space centre during the inspection. The very effective adult support gave the children the chance to apply mathematical learning as they counted down to 'blast off'. Language skills too were fostered as they clambered through the 'escape hatch', gathered their 'survival' packs and approached the 'lunar docking bay'. This is very high quality learning. Staff are skilled in playing alongside the children without dominating the play and inhibiting the children's involvement.

**Keeps effective records of achievement which give parents useful information about their child's progress**

15. As part of their work towards the Basic Skills Quality Mark, staff have given increased priority to the basic skills. Children in their second year in the nursery are set termly literacy and numeracy targets. Parents are encouraged to identify targets for their own children too. Assessment methods have developed in line with the actions required of the staff to be granted the Basic Skills Quality Mark. The records of achievement are accessible to parents to check their child's progress. They are very comprehensive and include, notes made by parents prior to entry to the nursery and detailed comments of their child's progress towards the early learning goals in personal, social and emotional development, communication language and literacy and mathematical development. Children are assessed each term against the appropriate stepping stones. (Stepping stones are the stages through which children develop towards achieving the early learning goals from starting in the nursery when they are three to leaving the reception class when they are five or six.) Assessments are based on the formative assessments completed by staff as they work with children on an activity which has been planned to teach particular stepping stones. Some of the children with special educational needs are at a lower developmental level and assessments against the stepping stones are inappropriate. The records for these children would be more comprehensive if account was taken of the small scale steps of achievement available for children with special educational needs.

**WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED**

16. **There are no significant areas for improvement, but the headteacher and staff may wish to consider the following:**
  - to include more information in weekly plans about the small scale steps of achievement for children with special educational needs;
  - to make sure all children are given the opportunity to develop independence during snack time;
  - to make more reference to opportunities for mathematical learning in the weekly planning.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of sessions observed	21
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	1	4	9	7	0	0	0
Percentage	5	20	43	33	0	0	0

Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each session represents more than four 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)	51.5
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	3

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	11

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

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	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
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	13

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	70

Number of pupils per FTE adult	6
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*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## Financial information

The nursery does not have a delegated budget

Financial year	2001
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	£
Total income (income in school budget only)	14,450
Total expenditure	4,450
Expenditure per pupil	2,832
Balance brought forward from previous year	N/A
Balance carried forward to next year	N/A

## 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)	1
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	95
Number of questionnaires returned	53

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	100	0	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	94	6	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	74	25	0	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	53	26	2	0	19
The teaching is good.	91	9	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	87	13	0	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	100	0	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	72	28	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	85	15	0	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	91	9	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	85	13	0	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	72	17	2	0	9

### Other issues raised by parents

All parents were very positive about the school. Nothing is ever too much trouble and parents feel welcome in school at any time.