

INSPECTION REPORT

ROSEMARY NURSERY SCHOOL

St Jude's, Bristol

LEA area: Bristol City

Unique reference number: 108898

Headteacher: Mrs S Burns

Reporting inspector: Ms A Coyle
20603

Dates of inspection: 7 - 8 May 2002

Inspection number: 230351

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 - 4 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Haviland House Great Ann Street St Jude's Flats Bristol
Postcode:	BS2 0DT
Telephone number:	0117 903 1467
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs S Carter
Date of previous inspection:	July 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Area of learning responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
20603	Ms A Coyle	Registered inspector	Personal, social and emotional development Communication, language and literacy Creative development English as an additional language Equal opportunities	How high are the standards? How well are the children taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9614	Ms C Webb	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for the children? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
24760	Ms S Barton	Team inspector	Mathematics Knowledge and understanding of the world Physical development Special educational needs	How good are the curricular, and other opportunities, offered to children?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Rosemary Nursery School is situated in St Jude's Flats in the city of Bristol, within the local authority's Education Action Zone. It serves the immediate area, which consists of families housed in local authority properties. The number of children on roll is similar to when it was last inspected in 1998; there is currently a full-time equivalent number of 41 girls and boys, all of whom are three or four years old. Children are admitted to the school on a part-time basis when they are three years old. Attainment on entry varies, but it is generally much lower than nationally due to the very high percentage of children with language needs; 68 per cent of children are from ethnic minority backgrounds. Apart from English, the main languages spoken at home are Somali, Urdu, Punjabi, Malayalam, Spanish and Italian. Many children are known to be eligible for free school meals (63 per cent) and many have been identified (24 per cent) as having special educational needs. The school also has 15 per cent of children from refugee families.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a friendly, lively nursery school in which the children make good progress overall. It provides a warm and welcoming learning environment where children are taught by a hard working team of dedicated staff. The school is managed soundly by the headteacher who promotes a happy, stimulating environment for the children and staff.

What the school does well

- Children achieve good standards in creative development and personal, social and emotional development.
- Attitudes to learning are good. Personal development is good; children relate well to others and they behave well.
- Teaching is good; all staff work very well together as a team and manage the children well.
- The school provides well for children who learn English as an additional language.
- Good provision is made for developing children's moral, social and cultural awareness.
- The school has good links with parents and the local community.
- The rich, cultural diversity of the school is celebrated well.

What could be improved

- Planning is not consistently focused on a specific Foundation Stage curriculum, such as the Early Learning Goals, or based securely on assessment information.
- Management and monitoring procedures are not fully developed by the staff and governors.

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 satisfactory improvements since its last inspection in 1998. The quality of teaching has improved, and much is now good, because staff have developed the daily organisation of activities to include a greater balance of group story sessions and snack times, as well as a wide range of practical activities. However, there is still more to be done in developing planning and the use of assessment to make it more consistently focused. Classrooms are prepared well before the children begin each day, and colourful displays help to create a stimulating environment.

STANDARDS

The school has generally maintained the standards reported at the last inspection. Children in the Foundation Stage¹ currently attain sound standards in most of the areas of learning, and the majority achieve the green stepping stones², as expected within the Early Learning Goals³, by the time they leave in knowledge and understanding of the world and physical development. Not all children attain the expected outcomes in communication, language and literacy or mathematics, because many require and receive additional support for language acquisition and special educational needs, but all make good progress and the most capable children achieve well. Standards are good in personal, social and emotional development and in creative development; all children achieve particularly well in these areas of learning.

CHILDREN'S ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Children show keen interest and involvement in activities.
Behaviour	Good. Children behave well during indoor and outdoor play.
Personal development and relationships	Good. All children play together happily. Relationships between them are very good.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Children attend willingly the nursery and do so punctually.

Children's relationships with each other, and with adults, are a strength of the nursery.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of children:	3 – 5 years
Sessions seen overall	Good

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

The quality of teaching and learning is at least sound almost all of the time, and often good; it is occasionally very good. Teachers and nursery nurses have secure knowledge of the six areas of learning. A particular strength of teaching is that all adults work together very well as a good team and they make good use of praise to encourage the children. Practical activities are purposeful and staff employ questioning techniques skillfully to challenge and extend the most capable children. Plenty of well-organised opportunities are given to children to help

¹ **Foundation Stage** - this stage of learning refers to children aged between three and six years.

² **Stepping Stones** - within the 'Early Learning Goals for children's learning', the green stepping stones contain a set of skills, knowledge and understanding that children might be expected to achieve by the time they are four years old in: communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; knowledge and understanding of the world; creative development; physical development and personal, social and emotional development. The blue stepping stones represent the skills, knowledge and understanding that might be expected by the age of three.

³ **Early Learning Goals** - from September 2000, QCA (Qualifications and Curriculum Authority), have introduced a set of 'Early Learning Goals for children's learning'. These goals are a set of skills, knowledge and understanding that children might be expected to achieve by the end of the reception year in: communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; knowledge and understanding of the world; creative development; physical development and personal, social and emotional development.

them use their literacy and numeracy skills, although daily planning is not tightly focused on a specific Foundation Stage curriculum, such as the stepping stones recommended in the Early Learning Goals. All teachers and nursery nurses provide good displays of children's colourful artwork and the classrooms are bright and cheerful places, with plenty of exciting photographs of children at work and at play.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory overall. The curriculum is organised appropriately to provide a suitable balance of activities, but some of the current curricular documentation is out of date and in need of review.
Provision for children with special educational needs	Satisfactory. The school responds appropriately to the Code of Practice ⁴ for children.
Provision for children with English as an additional language	Good. Children are integrated well in activities and supported well by staff. Bilingual support staff are deployed carefully to support small groups of children.
Provision for children's personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. Children's moral, social and cultural development is particularly well promoted.
How well the school cares for its children	Satisfactory. Children are cared for appropriately within a warm and welcoming environment.

The rich cultural diversity of the school is celebrated well, and good partnerships with parents, carers and the local community help staff to provide a welcoming ethos.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory. The nursery is led and managed competently by the headteacher who is committed to the school and the children. She is supported closely by her staff.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors are supportive of the nursery school, but their monitoring roles are not fully developed; they do not act as a strong critical friend or have sufficient strategic vision.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The roles of the co-ordinators are not fully developed in monitoring and evaluating outcomes and provision.

⁴ **Code of Practice** - this gives practical advice to schools and local education authorities about their responsibilities and tasks to ensure that pupils who have special educational needs receive the most appropriate help to further their learning and personal development. This is a statutory duty under the 1993 Education Act.

The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. All resources are deployed appropriately and sound value for money is achieved.
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Leadership and management are satisfactory overall, but there are shortcomings in the monitoring and strategic development of the school.

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 like coming to the nursery. • Teaching is good. • Behaviour is good. • The school works closely with parents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No significant concerns.

The inspection findings agree with all of the above views expressed by parents.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and children's achievements

1. Since the last inspection, the nursery school has generally maintained the standards attained by children. The good provision for children aged between three and four years enables them to make good progress overall. Entry assessments, conducted when the children first begin nursery education, indicate that their competency and confidence with language and mathematical skills are much lower than those expected for their age because of the high number who require help with language acquisition, and the significant proportion who have special educational needs. The children are provided with a good start to their education and most develop their skills well in the areas of learning.
2. All children make good progress in personal, social and emotional development and they achieve well by the time they leave because teachers and nursery nurses place a strong emphasis on developing children's skills. Since the previous inspection, the nursery has made improvements in promoting children's development by providing more opportunities for them to extend their social skills by taking part in group story sessions and snack times.
3. Children make good progress in communication, language and literacy because teachers focus well on promoting this area, and there are plenty of opportunities to extend the oldest and most capable four-year-olds to prepare them for entry to school. Not all children attain the expected outcomes, because many require and receive additional support for language acquisition and special educational needs, but all make good progress and the most capable children achieve well. Children pay good attention to adults and listen when being given instructions and guidance on their activities. Speaking skills are developing well through good use of bilingual support; the most capable children exhibit confident use of language and are beginning to write clearly.
4. Children make sound progress in mathematical development from a very low starting point. By the time they are ready to leave the nursery school, most children are working well within the green stepping stones of the Early Learning Goals, and they enjoy the regular opportunities provided for learning number rhymes and songs. Children make sound progress in counting in sequence to five, and sometimes beyond. With help, they can identify simple shapes, such as circles and squares. Several children understand the value of numbers, and the most capable achieve appropriately in this aspect because there are suitable activities for them to use numbers in daily sessions.
5. Children achieve the expected standards for their age in knowledge and understanding of the world and physical development. They investigate objects and materials, using all their senses, and show great delight when tasting their own freshly prepared fruits. Children develop their observational skills well. They are eager to find out about eggs in the incubator and the growth of runner beans. They understand how materials, such as flour and water, change when helping staff to make cakes, and good opportunities are provided for them to build and construct models, pedal tricycles, and take part in imaginative outdoor activities in the play house. Children make good progress in creative development and achieve well. For

example, they enjoy painting and are able to mix primary colours together successfully, showing great delight at their imaginative and highly colourful results.

6. The school strives successfully to raise the standard of achievement for all children with special educational needs and those who learn English as an additional language. Systems are in place to assess learning difficulties and the need for support in languages such as Somali. The information gathered is used appropriately to help staff support individual children. Children make good progress overall and they are integrated well in all activities.

Children's attitudes, values and personal development

7. Parents are very pleased their children can attend this popular nursery, and they are delighted with the positive attitudes and values the staff teach their children. All are warmly welcomed as they arrive and the very good relationships between staff, parents and children are evident as soon as one crosses the threshold. Children are enveloped in the warm, friendly atmosphere and thrive within this. The nursery school is a good example of a fully inclusive multicultural and multiethnic community.
8. Children like coming to school and their attendance, dependent on their parents, is satisfactory overall, although some parents take their children to buy shoes, for instance, during nursery school time, and others are reluctant to allow their children to attend school during wet or very cold weather. Punctuality varies, but children are enthusiastic and keen to get started once they arrive. They rush in to take their coats off, decide quickly what activities they want to do during the initial planning session with their parents, and begin. Parents record their decisions, sometimes in Somali, in books for this purpose.
9. All children are busily engaged throughout the sessions and concentrate well on tasks they choose, although these may well differ from their original intentions! Social development is good. In one small group, children were sensibly discussing where the roots and shoots might come from on their beans and were looking forward to planting these to see if their assumptions were correct. After hearing the story of *'Happy Hippo'*, others responded well to the teacher's questions, demonstrating how hard they had listened. In the art area, children were creating handprint paintings; so keen were they on this activity, that the paint continued dripping long after they had left the room! Fascinated children watched the snail leave a silvery trail on grey paper, speculating whether or not this might dry. On being allowed to hold a fertilised egg from the incubator, a few children were surprised that it felt warm, but the whole group was well aware that the baby birds will crack open their own shells and they look forward to this.
10. Children relate well to each other. They learn quickly what is expected of them and help others to abide by the rules: sharing and co-operation are an important part of the school ethos and behaviour is good. None want to disappoint their teachers and all try very hard to do what is asked, although frustrations occasionally lead to outbursts. Generally, staff are good at 'pointing' children in the right direction if their behaviour falls short of expectations.
11. Outside, much of the play is exuberant with those using the tricycles and bicycles, almost exclusively boys, pedalling as fast as they can go whilst many girls, crowded into the small play hut, operate this as a café and thoroughly enjoy their game. Negotiations between children, when for instance a collision occurs between two vehicles on the 'road' in the playground, on how to resolve this problem are effective

and amicable. No one is left on their own, and no bullying or malicious behaviour was observed. There have been no exclusions.

12. Children's personal development is good. They are keen to help teachers and carry out any duties allocated happily and well, and they also sort out their own work without being asked. 'Tidying up' is a happy and purposeful activity with the majority anxious to show how well they can do this. At lunch time children behave well, conversing with their friends and enjoying this social occasion. Their manners are good. Teachers provide good role models and relationships throughout the school are very good. Every opportunity is taken to boost children's self-esteem: for example, the birthday child felt very special when presented with a card, carefully printed on the computer by two friends and took round a chocolate cake for all to share, having helped to cut the pieces. Children from all nationalities and backgrounds are well integrated and assimilated into the nursery school community. Children with special educational needs and those who are learning to speak English as an additional language are supported well by specialist staff and the other children.

HOW WELL ARE CHILDREN TAUGHT?

13. Since the last inspection the quality of teaching has improved well. It is currently good overall, and rarely less than satisfactory. The quality of teaching and learning in personal, social and emotional development is consistently good. All staff involved with the children throughout the nursery school have a clear understanding of the needs of this age group and plan a wide variety of opportunities for the children to develop their skills. The children enjoy the activities, which contribute to their growing levels of confidence and joy in learning. All children, including those with special educational needs and those who are beginning to learn English as an additional language, make equally good progress in relation to their very low prior attainment, building particularly well on their social skills.
14. Teaching and learning in communication, language and literacy are good. Teachers and nursery nurses have good knowledge of the children they teach and the consistent reinforcement of basic skills, the good expectations, combined with the pace and stimulating content of activities, ensure all children make maximum gains in their learning. Staff provide work which makes increasing demands on children's skills, knowledge and understanding and the children practise and refine these, constantly improving previous standards through stories such as, '*Walking in the Jungle*'. One of the main strengths is the good attention paid to the development of vocabulary. Literacy has a high focus on the curriculum and opportunities to reinforce vocabulary and extend language are seized in many activities. For example, children are taught to communicate with each other when describing the similarities and differences in fruits from other countries.
15. Basic mathematical skills and numeracy are taught appropriately. Teachers have high expectations of children's behaviour and they provide useful opportunities for children to extend their knowledge and understanding of number and shape. For example, all children are grouped according to mathematical shape names. Children are encouraged to practise counting, matching and sorting in class groups and on their own. Teachers use correct mathematical vocabulary to encourage and develop the children's use of language. Relationships are very good and children respond well to adult interaction. Children join in a range of number rhymes and action songs, such as '*Five Jelly Fish*'. Opportunities are provided for children to explore capacity through filling a variety of containers with sand using different sized utensils.

16. Good questioning helps to deepen children's knowledge and understanding of the world and computers are used appropriately to support learning across the curriculum. Teachers provide ample opportunities for children to understand the world around them through in topics such as '*Growth and Change*'. For example, teachers and children make observations of eggs in an incubator and study the shell and yolk of a hard-boiled egg. Children are taught well in creative activities, because the resources are used well to help children develop their imagination through painting, role-play and musical sessions. Staff guide children's physical and directional skills appropriately when using wheeled toys to move left, right, forward and back.
17. Teachers' planning has been improved satisfactorily since the previous inspection to include more opportunities for group story sessions and snack times. Much discussion goes on in planning meetings, which are held regularly. All staff are involved in these sessions and this all adds to the good quality of the teaching overall. However, planning is not firmly based specifically on a Foundation Stage curriculum, such as the stepping stones contained within the Early Learning Goals, or on the assessments of children's prior attainment and this is still an area for development.
18. The management of children is good and the strategies to improve behaviour are firmly enforced. This ensures that time is used productively. Teachers promote a classroom atmosphere that encourages a calm, orderly ethos and an enjoyment of learning.
19. Nursery nurses and learning support assistants are deployed well and they work in very good partnership with teachers. They know what they are expected to do and they enable children to make good progress. They are well trained and prepared, and they make a positive contribution to the quality of children's learning.
20. Teaching of the children with special educational needs is good overall. The teachers and support staff are aware of the children on the register of special educational needs and ensure that extra support is given when needed to promote learning. They show patience and understanding of children with extra needs.
21. All staff provide well for the many children who learn English as an additional language. The good specialist support for languages such as Somali, Punjabi and Urdu helps children to achieve well in relation to their needs. In addition, some teachers are keen to develop their knowledge of languages, such as Italian, in their own time. This shows a strong commitment to meeting the needs of the children.

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

22. Children receive a satisfactory introduction to learning through balanced activities. The curriculum provides appropriately for areas of learning in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical and creative development. A broad range of interesting and lively activities based on practical experiences meet the children's needs. They include good opportunities for the development of play and progression of skills.
23. Work has been undertaken since the last inspection to solve the inconsistencies in the planning documentation, but there are still a few areas that remain unsatisfactory. For example, a few schemes of work written for the curricular areas of learning and

agreed by the governing body are very out of date. The schemes of work in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world do not contain sufficient detail, and they are not linked specifically to a Foundation Stage curriculum, such as the Early Learning Goals, as commonly used in most other nursery schools. Although the school regards the personal, social and emotional development of children to be of great importance, there is no separate policy or scheme of work identified or agreed. The school intends to develop its planning during future staff development opportunities to address this lack of consistency. Policies for the creative and physical development of children have been updated recently in line with the Early Learning Goals and these are appropriate.

24. Since the last inspection, greater consistency in the approach to lesson planning has been implemented through teachers planning together to ensure the same opportunities are offered to each group. Plans take account of individual children's needs and children with special educational needs are well catered for and included, with satisfactory support within the system. The headteacher monitors the content covered at the end of each topic to ensure a balance of areas of learning for each group of children over the year.
25. Parents are involved in the planning of their child's activities for each day. These plans help to ensure children enjoy their activities. The activities are reviewed by the teacher and child, and comments written in the child's book for parents to read. Storybooks, many of which are dual language to support children with English as an additional language, are borrowed from the school by parents to share with the children. This good practice helps to extend children's learning and interest in books. Where the expertise of staff is further developed children are provided with wider experiences and there is a positive outcome in the extending of learning. For example, when a local artist worked alongside the children, and through training in information and communication technology. Children are well prepared for the next stage of education.
26. The opening of the new community annex provides very good links with, and widens the support offered for, families and younger children within the immediate area and organisations further afield.
27. The provision for the spiritual development of children is satisfactory. Children display tolerance for a wide multicultural mix within the school. For example, children were observed chatting about a visit to a duck farm and one gently stroked the hair of a friend's doll, displaying good sensitivity and a sense of awe. During story time children reflect on how characters feel within stories and why. For example, the story of the '*Gorilla*' showed caged animals that the children thought looked sad. They were quick to recognise that the gorillas did not want to be behind bars. Opportunities are provided for children to reflect on the wonders of the world in which they live. They experience new life being brought into the world through the incubating of eggs and hatching of chicks and ducklings, as well as observing tadpoles. Children reflect on photographs of themselves and marvel at how they have changed. They are quick to investigate and study wild life within the grounds, for example the wonder of a shell which moved, and a woodlice which gave birth to its young whilst being watched.
28. The provision for children's moral development is good. A moral code is being positively and sensitively encouraged, ensuring children know the difference between right and wrong. There is a very caring ethos based on respect and concern for one another. The adults are good role models encouraging fairness and honesty.

Children value and appreciate their school and its equipment and resources and display a caring attitude for all living things. Children are encouraged to have positive self-esteem, accepting themselves as individuals and happily comparing their differences.

29. The school provides good opportunities to develop children's social skills and attitudes. This is evident in their good behaviour within class. The quality of relationships between adults and children is good. Children co-operate when working in groups, learning to share resources and playing well together. They are encouraged to take responsibility for their learning through their individual planning and willingly help through well-established routines such as clearing away. Children are friendly and polite, welcoming visitors to the school. Children from refugee families and those with special educational needs are integrated well into the school.
30. The provision for children's cultural development is good. Their awareness of their own culture is encouraged through sharing dual language books, when appropriate, as well as responding to the traditions of their country of origin appropriately. Visits to places of interest related to the curriculum, for example the zoo, enable children to recognise animals from other countries and climates and extend the children's learning opportunities. Events and special occasions are celebrated within the school to help children identify with local and international events, for example, through the celebration of the Chinese New Year. Children also participate in community events such as the St Paul's Carnival. Visitors to the school also add to the children's cultural understanding. For example, children listen to Indian stories, speak Urdu and celebrate the festival of Diwali. Visitors are welcomed and enhance the children's range of cultural learning and development. Children listen to recorded music and play instruments from other countries.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS CHILDREN?

31. The school makes satisfactory provision for the health, safety and welfare of children. The headteacher is the designated person responsible for child protection and she updates her training regularly. However, there is currently no-one with an up-to-date certificate for first aid, although courses have been booked for members of staff.
32. Attendance is effectively promoted and monitored by the school. Parents are reminded that this is important and that their children should arrive punctually, although allowance is made when older siblings have to be delivered to primary schools. Any absence without explanation is followed up swiftly, but assistance from the education welfare officer is seldom needed. All staff have high expectations of behaviour and staff follow good positive management guidelines consistently. Disappointment is the most effective sanction, but all adults are careful not to erode confidence or self-esteem when talking to children about their behaviour. Staff are aware of the cultural attitudes and differing traditions within the school's diverse multiethnic community, and they use their knowledge well to help children learn.
33. The school has satisfactory procedures for assessing children's attainment and progress and good systems for supporting and monitoring their achievement. All staff know the children, their circumstances and abilities very well. Each child has an individual education plan, and one of these is chosen as the focus for discussion at the daily staff meeting, thereby ensuring that all are reviewed regularly. Despite the detailed assessment records and useful information collected, neither are yet used well enough when planning the curriculum to ensure that appropriate tasks are set for

all. Reports sent to parents are glowing about children's achievements, and they occasionally give pointers to parents on how to help future improvement.

34. Procedures for monitoring and supporting children's personal development are good, despite the lack of a specific policy. Good and detailed records are kept. Children are encouraged to make decisions for themselves, as is evidenced in their daily planning at the beginning of each session, and they are expected to resolve any minor dispute by negotiation. Teachers keep close watch on the children and give sympathetic encouragement and guidance: this, rather than intervention, is their aim. As a result of the school's friendly, lively ethos, children are aware of those who need extra help and the majority try hard to give this. Friendships and trust are important to them all.
35. Staff have extensive knowledge about all children and are well aware of children who have additional education or other needs and of those who are learning to speak English. Procedures for including and supporting language needs are good: one of the teachers speaks French, and Somali children are effectively supported through the bilingual teacher who promotes their own language and traditions.
36. The school provides appropriately for the support of children with special educational needs. A register is maintained. The detailed individual education plans compiled by the teachers and support staff are discussed regularly and learning targets modified accordingly. The overall quality of the individual education plans is satisfactory overall. When they contain detailed and clearly focused targets they have a positive impact upon the progress that the children make in their learning.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

37. The school's partnership with parents is good, and a strength of the school. Staff are always seeking to improve on the good links now established. Parents, for their part, are very pleased with the warm relationship both they and their children enjoy with all staff and appreciate not only the school's efforts to include them at all times but also the availability of staff to talk to if they have any concerns. Home visits are valued as a good introduction to the nursery, and parents regularly attend formal and informal meetings.
38. Many parents are present at the start of the school day, settling their children and planning activities with them, although very few are able to stay for the whole session and most leave after the first half hour. The school welcomes their presence and is grateful for any help they can give. Many parents accompany their children on the popular school trips, and all are very proud when invited to see their children perform.
39. The quality of information parents receive is good. The attractive prospectus and user-friendly governors' annual report, plus regular newsletters and other communications, ensure that parents know what is happening. Although none are translated into languages other than English, letters are posted on the notice boards and much of the valuable communication is transmitted verbally, with parents happily translating for one another. A member of staff is always available to explain or to help with form-filling if this is needed. Parents receive written reports about their children's achievements, but these tend to be too general and too full of praise. They lack detail on where children need to improve and how to achieve this. Parents try to help their children at home, but with the rich diversity of cultures, nationalities and languages, the assistance they can give is limited though satisfactory overall. In order to help parents, the school has arranged successful courses, such as family learning, and is always looking for other ways in which to assist.

40. The parents of children with special educational needs work in partnership with the school to provide the best start for their child's education. Early contact is made with all parents as concerns are noted about their children and there is involvement in all stages of special educational needs support. They are involved in regular reviews of their child's progress.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

41. The headteacher provides sound leadership for the school. She receives close support from her staff. Under her guidance, staff work well together as a strong team, committed to the pastoral support of the children. All adults consistently promote equality of opportunity for the children and the school provides additional support for the many children who learn English as an additional language and those with special educational needs. The school is a lively and friendly community, in which the stated aims are reflected in its daily work and children are constantly encouraged to be thoughtful and show respect for others.
42. The management of the school is satisfactory overall, but there are shortcomings in the roles of the co-ordinators and the governors. Members of staff have been allocated specific areas to manage, as appropriate, but they are not sufficiently involved in monitoring and evaluating learning and the curriculum. The governing body meets regularly to oversee the work of the school. Governors are keen to support its improvement and have a shared commitment to the future success of the school. The chair of governors meets with the headteacher on a regular basis. However, the role of the governing body is not yet developed fully to ensure monitoring of the school's strategic development, nor does it act as an effective critical friend. Nevertheless, the school's capacity for further improvement is satisfactory.
43. A useful school improvement plan is in place that provides broad details of how the school will maximise children's progress, increase the use of the annex, extend the professional development of staff and increase the provision for creative activities. Although the plan is not fully costed, it is used to determine the focus of in-service training and the use of school resources, and there is a separate business plan.
44. The management of the provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. The co-ordinator is experienced in her co-ordinating role, and becoming familiar with the new Code of Practice. She ensures that all pupils have access to any necessary support and their needs are met. The co-ordinator liaises well with all adults within school, teaching and support staff and involves external agencies, such as the educational psychology service, as concerns arise.
45. Staffing levels are appropriate, with sufficient well-trained teachers, assistants and nursery nurses, all committed to supporting the children in their care, both pastorally and with their learning. Post-graduate students value the support they have been given and speak warmly of the welcome they received on arrival. A good team spirit is evident throughout the school community and all, including the cheerful caretakers, secretary and kitchen supervisor, share the workload to enable others to have non-contact time. Since the last inspection, the procedures for performance management and professional development have been introduced satisfactorily. The provision of in-service training is carefully targeted to address identified individual training needs. This is managed appropriately and staff are positive about the levels of professional support and development that they receive. Targets are negotiated and agreed in the useful performance management interviews, and all staff members are encouraged

to go on courses, with the expectation that the information gained will be shared with colleagues.

46. The accommodation is satisfactory. With the recent and very welcome addition of three new community rooms, this purpose-built nursery school now covers most of the ground floor area of the block of flats and has generous accommodation for the number of children who attend. The headteacher has her own office, as does the secretary. Although the decoration and cleaning are good, a sour, rather offensive smell pervades the entrance hall. All is tidy and activities are organised well for children long before they arrive, thus addressing one of the weaknesses identified in the last report. Good examples of children's work, which are also strung across the ceiling, enhance the walls of the entrance hall, the large airy classroom and the small group room adjoining this. The art area is festooned with paintings, some of which drip with evidence of the amount of paint children have used for their handprints!
47. Outside, the large enclosed and secure garden has been landscaped to provide satisfactory hard play and grassed areas for children, the latter surrounded with attractive flowering shrubs and trees contains a 'road' around the perimeter, along which children pedal furiously, although the number of collisions is surprisingly low. The small playhouse is used for a variety of purposes, and the slide is suitably surrounded with a soft landing surface.
48. The school is resourced well to deliver the nursery curriculum in the new community rooms, provided through the local authority. New equipment and resources provided by the Education Action Zone initiative, are of good quality. The range of outside play equipment is good, although some of the wheeled vehicles are not new, but all are enjoyed when the weather permits. Classroom book stores contain a good variety of fiction and non-fiction books and some are in dual text. Parents are encouraged to borrow these as well as the story sacks. The good selection of art materials is used well by the children. Other resources include the tadpoles, now developing legs, in their small tank and eagerly watched by children who want to see the frogs, and the ducks' and chickens' eggs, turned regularly in the warmth of the school incubator. All are waiting with bated breath for the first little chick or duckling to break their shells and face the outside world. These provide children with a real experience of nature and for increasing their understanding of the world about them. Local community groups are encouraged to use the school's accommodation and a parent and toddler and parenting groups are just two of many who use the new community rooms regularly.
49. The school secretary carries out her administrative duties effectively and is central to the efficient running of the school. The school is trialling new technology for nursery schools with the support of the local education authority. However, this does not cover all areas, such as petty cash and school fund, which continue to be manually controlled. The local authority manages the main staffing budget, as appropriate. The school has a partially devolved budget and is responsible for providing equipment and resources. Specific grants received by the school, such as funding for staff training and for special educational needs, and the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant are being used effectively for the desired purpose. The school is part of an Education Action Zone which attracts additional income. The headteacher has been instrumental in seeking additional funding for the community annex which includes bids for the 'Surestart' initiative. This has enabled the school to widen their support for families and younger children.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

50. The headteacher, staff and governors should:

(1) improve the planning and use of assessment by:

- updating the curriculum documents in line with the current recommendations for the Foundation Stage;
- focusing daily planning more consistently to the curriculum guidance;
- reviewing how assessment information is used to guide teachers' planning.

(paragraphs 17, 23, 24 and 33)

(2) improve the management of the school by:

- strengthening the roles of the co-ordinators to include the monitoring and evaluation of learning and the curriculum;
- extending the strategic role of the governing body as a critical friend, and formalising its monitoring procedures.

(paragraph 42)

There are a few additional areas for improvement noted in paragraphs 31, 33, 39 and 46 that relate to:

- reports to parents;
- first aid;
- accommodation.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of sessions observed	23
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and children	14

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	2	10	10	1	0	0
Percentage	0	9	43	43	4	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 four percentage points.

Information about the school's children

Children on the school's roll	Nursery
Number of children on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	41
Number of full-time children known to be eligible for free school meals	26

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery
Number of children with statements of special educational needs	0
Number of children on the school's special educational needs register	10

English as an additional language	No of children
Number of children with English as an additional language	12

Child mobility in the last school year	No of children
Children who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	12
Children who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	6

Attendance

Authorised absence

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	n/a
National data	5.6

	%
School data	n/a
National data	0.5

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)	3
Number of children per qualified teacher	14

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

Number of children per FTE adult	8
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	n/a ⁵
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	£
Total income	*
Total expenditure	*
Expenditure per child	*
Balance brought forward from previous year	*
Balance carried forward to next year	*

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	0
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	0

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.

⁵ Figures omitted because the school does not have a fully delegated budget. This is managed by the local education authority.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	41
Number of questionnaires returned	12

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	92	8	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	50	50	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	67	25	8	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	25	17	17	0	42
The teaching is good.	92	8	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	75	25	0	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	75	17	8	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	42	50	0	0	8
The school works closely with parents.	67	33	0	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	92	8	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	83	17	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	42	42	8	0	8

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

51. Children enter the nursery with limited personal, social and emotional skills but they make rapid progress and achieve well by the time they leave. The nursery staff place a clear emphasis on this aspect of learning as soon as the children start. As a result of the good teaching, children are very keen to be involved in all the activities offered and concentrate for good periods of time. Their behaviour is good and they establish very good relationships quickly with adults and other children. All the children settle quickly into the well-established routines in the nursery. They are confident to respond when their name is called, and they understand the routines as they come into the classroom, helping staff and parents to complete daily plans for the activities they wish to do. All children attain the green stepping stones within the Early Learning Goals, and many exceed these. They show a good level of independence when moving from whole group to individual activities and also when putting their coats on and fastening them for outdoor play.
52. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Relationships between adults and children are very good and this helps staff to promote good standards of personal, social and emotional development. The calm, quiet approach of all the team of nursery staff encourages children to respond well by settling to activities without fussing. Whilst working, teachers, nursery nurses and children interact well together and children are polite, respectful and confident. Since the last inspection, planning has improved to now include good activities to develop children's social skills. For example, during snack times, children help each other and they sit in a small group and chatter together happily. In story times, most of the children offer their own ideas and all the children listen carefully while others are talking. They take turns well when playing in the home corner with the toy telephones, shopping baskets, dolls, hats, wigs, bags and coats. The children who stay for lunch show a good standard of independence and skills when they eat. They use knives, forks and spoons skilfully and are able to cut up their own food. All the staff act as good role models and set high expectations at all times. The success of their work can be seen in the good behaviour, independence and confidence shown by the children.

Communication, language and literacy

53. Children make good progress in developing their communication, language and literacy skills from a very low starting point on entry to the nursery. Although the high proportion of children learning English as an additional language and those with special educational needs means that children do not attain all of the green stepping stones within the Early Learning Goals, they are increasing their language development at a good pace, and the most capable achieve well. All adults take every opportunity to develop children's skills and the staff introduce and reinforce new vocabulary regularly, especially for children with specific speech and language needs. Bilingual support for the Somali-speaking children effectively encourages them to communicate with others in their mother tongue and begin to learn new words in the English language. The children are keen to help adults to change books and take them home to share with parents and carers. Most children handle books carefully, hold them the correct way up and turn pages. Teachers and nursery nurses draw groups of children together regularly and talk to them about stories. They provide

close support to introduce the children to early writing skills. While their writing often consists of simple pencil marks on the paper, they are sometimes interspersed with letters. Some children can read their marks aloud to an adult confidently, and the most capable can write their own names fairly clearly.

54. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers teach the beginnings of literacy well and introduce the children to a suitable selection of children's literature in their topics. Plenty of good quality books are displayed well in the library area and these are used extensively by the children and staff. They include a good number of dual language books, such as Spanish, Vietnamese, Urdu, Chinese, Gujarati and Somali. There is also a good range of books from different cultures, such as poetry from Jamaica and the Virgin Islands. Teachers use support staff and the resources well, and children are provided with daily sessions when they share texts. One particularly good group reading time focused on the story, *'Walking in the Jungle'*. The teacher's use of her voice to portray the 'roar' of a lion and 'chitter-chatter' of a monkey delighted the children and helped them to guess the name of the animal. They joined in enthusiastically with actions of the 'snip-snap' jaws of a crocodile. All adults have good relationships with the children and they manage them very well. As a result, the children try hard to succeed, want to please the adults and work hard. They are interested, concentrate and behave well and have very positive attitudes to school. Adults make useful assessments of children's progress during activities and use their good knowledge of individuals to intervene when appropriate to support learning. The system for tracking the progress of each child is not yet used fully to assist planning for individual children or for groups of different capabilities, but the adults challenge the more capable by targeting suitable questions at their level to promote learning still further.

Mathematical development

55. Most children are working well within the green stepping stones of the Early Learning Goals for mathematics, and the most capable children are on line to attain the expected outcomes by the time they leave. Children make sound progress and are familiar with a variety of number rhymes and games, which have had a positive impact on learning, and recall of number. Most children can count to five with the support of counting aids. They are beginning to show confidence with numbers through, for example, choosing to draw the number four, a number that is familiar to them as their age. The most capable are beginning to use mathematical language with confidence such as big, tall and small and compare lengths of building blocks. They can sometimes count beyond ten with confidence and count pictures in an irregular arrangement. They are familiar with shapes and can name square, triangle and circle and can match like shapes to fit inside. The most able children can weigh items and read the scales, recognising numbers correctly. Children use number lines to reinforce counting larger numbers and begin to record the number of days to hatching the chicks on a bar chart. They solve simple number problems with the aid of pictorial representation. Children with special educational needs make satisfactory progress.
56. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teachers make good links to other areas of learning, and relevant everyday experiences. All children are grouped according to mathematical shape names. Opportunities for learning are varied within children's choosing of activities and teacher-directed group work. Children are encouraged to practise counting, matching and sorting in class groups and on their own. Teachers question effectively to extend and consolidate learning. They use correct mathematical vocabulary, thereby developing the children's use of language.

However, planning is not firmly based on the stepping stones or on the assessments of children's prior attainment. Relationships are very good and children respond to adult interaction well. Children join in a range of number rhymes and action songs and practical play activities, which support their progress. Opportunities are provided for children to explore capacity through filling a variety of containers with sand using different sized utensils.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

57. Children have experience of the green stepping stones and are on line to achieve them by the time they leave. They select resources and construct and build models. They have a good sense of how blocks fit together and are imaginative in the way their construction can be used within their role play. Their ideas are developed with the support of an adult. Children are encouraged to learn from their surroundings and by direct use of their senses. They describe and compare objects by their feel and looks. For example, having looked at the eggs in the incubator the previous day, a group of children cracked fresh eggs and hard-boiled eggs. They made good observations of feel, consistency and taste. Their vocabulary was extended to include the shell and yolk of an egg. Children use their senses to describe and recognise similarities and differences in fruits from other countries so beginning to develop an awareness of foods eaten by people from cultures other than their own. Visits and visitors enhance the children's knowledge and understanding. For example, linked to the topic of *'Growth and Change'* the children visited a garden centre where they bought packets of seeds to grow. They know that seeds need sunshine and water to grow. They are beginning to record their observations in drawings, creative and mathematical representation. Good opportunities to investigate construction materials are provided and computers are used appropriately to support learning. Children are becoming familiar with using the mouse when using a simple language program. Children with special educational needs are supported closely in their learning and making satisfactory progress.
58. The teaching is good. Children experience a wide range of activities and learning. Some of the experiences are challenging and children respond well to being guided in their learning by adults. Children are managed well and encouraged to be patient and wait for their turn, which they do very well. Adults use praise and encourage children to extend their experiences. The teachers are actively engaged in demonstrating and extending learning through skilled questioning and repetition. Children are encouraged to think about what they have been doing at the end of each session.

Physical development

59. Children's achievement in physical activity is sound. By the time children leave the nursery they are working within the green stepping stones of the Early Learning Goals. Children move freely and with pleasure and confidence. They are developing an awareness of each other when chasing and using equipment. They run forwards and are beginning to move in other directions. They use the balance frames and large three-dimensional shapes to jump off and land safely as well as climb inside. Children swing on the frame and develop their muscles when riding tricycles, bikes and scooters. They kick and throw large balls with increasing accuracy, shooting at targets and acquiring skills appropriately. Children become familiar with sand using a variety of utensils to fill containers. They explore a variety of malleable materials and use paintbrushes and glue with increasing control. They use simple tools to effect changes to objects and materials. They cut an egg into pieces evenly using a knife safely. Children are developing a clear preference for the left or right hand when

writing and drawing. They use chalk to draw and practise writing and number formation, gaining in control and co-ordination. Children with special educational needs are challenged well and encouraged to achieve.

60. The teaching is sound overall. The resources provided are wide and varied and usually well supervised. Children develop their physical skills through outdoor activity when the weather permits. The children run, choose where they would like to play and with which pieces of equipment. Adults enable them to learn to share and take turns. However, the outside sessions sometimes lack real purpose and extension of physical development. Whilst children are encouraged to try something new, there is inadequate planning with clearly identified learning intentions.

Creative development

61. Children make good progress and are on course to exceed the green stepping stones by the time they leave. The good standards noted at the time of the last inspection have been maintained. The children are provided with frequent opportunities to use paint in different ways, to cut and stick materials for collage pictures and models, for singing songs and role play. Children find enjoyment in expressing their feelings and ideas through a range of experiences in artistic, musical and imaginative play. For example, they enjoy painting and making handprints, showing great excitement and wonder at the end product, especially when mixing primary colours together and when making collages of seeds, using dried peas, beans and pulses. They know the primary colours well and also know a few secondary colours like orange and green. They enjoy the discovery of clay modelling when rolling and moulding the shapes of snakes, elephants and frogs. They work happily with a wide range of media. Children enjoy singing and making music and do so tunefully, using actions enthusiastically in their rhymes and songs such as, *'Bob the Builder'*. They use the dressing-up clothes well to aid their imaginative play in the home corner and show confident social skills when playing with each other. Resources are good and the role-play areas are easily adaptable to a variety of themes during the year.
62. The quality of teaching and learning is good. All adults support children in their learning and ensure that they gain from the activities through discussion, as they work. There is a good sense of fun encouraged in musical sessions, such as singing songs like, *'The Grand Old Duke of York'* accompanied by the teacher playing an accordion. Children enjoy playing untuned percussion instruments such as triangles, shakers and bells as they sing along. Activities are organised well and suitably matched to the children's needs. A well-planned choice of materials in artistic activities helps the children to make good progress in developing their imaginative skills. For example, plenty of art resources are provided, including chalk, charcoal, paint and felt pens for the drawings of tadpoles, children's self portraits, paintings of *'Little Green Frogs'* and pasta pictures. These examples show good standards in children's use of colour, shape and form. Good displays of children's work help to create a colourful environment in which all children are valued as individuals.