

INSPECTION REPORT

HILLSIDE NURSERY SCHOOL

HASLINGDEN

LEA area: LANCASHIRE

Unique reference number: 119093

Headteacher: Mrs Marilyn Dawber

Reporting inspector: Michael Hewlett
1569

Dates of inspection: Monday 19th November – Wednesday 21st November 2001

Inspection number: 230378

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
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Cedar Avenue Haslingden
Postcode:	BB4 5NH
Telephone number:	01706 214162
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Appropriate authority:	Lancashire LEA
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Dorothy Atkinson
Date of previous inspection:	09/03/1998

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OIN 1569	MICHAEL HEWLETT	Registered inspector	Communication, Language and Literacy	How high are standards?
			Mathematical development	How well are pupils taught?
			Knowledge and Understanding of the World	How well is the school led and managed?
			English as an additional language	What should the school do to improve further?
OIN 11084	JANE HUGHES	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
OIN 11321	JUNE HUNTER	Team inspector	Physical development	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
			Personal, Social and Emotional development	
			Creative development	
			Special educational needs	
			Equal opportunities	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Hillside Nursery is an average sized nursery school situated on a small housing estate in the Longshoot area of Haslingden. There are 80 children, aged between three and four years old, of whom 35 are girls and 45 are boys. They all attend part time. The school serves a wide geographical area, including some outlying villages, but the majority of children live close by. Parts of Haslingden are identified in government statistics as areas suffering from deprivation. The children are taught by three teachers, including the headteacher, two of whom work full time. There are two full time nursery nurses and one other who works part time supporting children who have special educational needs. Fourteen per cent of the children have been identified as having special educational needs. This is a higher figure than when the school was last inspected. Eleven per cent of children come from homes where English is not the first language. This is also a higher figure than that found by inspectors when the school was last visited. Community languages spoken include Bengali, Cantonese and Hincoh. Children's attainment on entry to school varies considerably but is average overall.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Hillside Nursery is an effective school that provides a good education for its pupils. They make good progress and the majority of children are on course to meet or exceed the standards expected in the Early Learning Goals. (These are the targets children are expected to reach by the end of reception year). The teaching, leadership and management are good. Children enjoy coming to school, work sensibly and their behaviour is good.

What the school does well

- Teaching is good
- Promotes very good relationships
- Children have positive attitudes to school and their behaviour is good
- Takes good care of the children, values their efforts and is sensitive to their needs
- Makes very good use of imaginative play to extend children's learning
- Maintains a good partnership with parents and provides very good information
- Support is good for children who have special educational needs, those learning English as an additional language and higher attainers

What could be improved

- Children's attainment in information and communications technology
- Making closer links between the assessment of children's progress and teachers' planning
- Opportunities to increase children's independence

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in March 1998. It has made good progress since then in addressing most of the areas for improvement. Standards have improved in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development although more children are arriving in school with special educational needs and are learning English as an additional language. There are now better systems for checking on children's progress and this helps staff to build up detailed records. Closer links are still needed between the assessments that are made and the curriculum plans that follow. Monitoring different aspects of the school's work is now more rigorous, for example, staff are given written feedback following observations of their teaching. This helps to ensure that strengths and weaknesses in teaching are identified, allowing good practice to be shared and weaknesses remedied. The school is well placed to build on the progress it has made so far.

STANDARDS

Children follow the Foundation Stage curriculum which is recommended for both nursery and reception classes. They work towards the Early Learning Goals, a standard they are expected to reach by the end of the reception class year. In most of the areas of learning, children's early progress through the different stages known as 'Stepping Stones' indicates they are on course to achieve the expected standards. These consistent levels of achievement are found in most aspects of children's personal, social and emotional development, knowledge and understanding of the world as well as in their physical and creative development. Standards are higher in their communication, language and literacy skills and their mathematical development. This represents particularly good achievement because the vast majority of children arrive in school with average standards.

All children achieve well. Staff are good at identifying the needs of particular groups and make sure they remove the potential barriers to learning. For example, children with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress towards the targets set for them in their individual education plans. Small steps in learning are set out for them and their achievements are celebrated. In the same way, higher attainers are identified early on and given work that is harder and makes them think. There is no significant difference between the achievement of boys and girls or between the achievements of children from different cultural backgrounds.

CHILDREN'S ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Children have good attitudes to learning; they are proud of their school and take interest in activities.
Behaviour	Good overall. Most children follow the rules and respond well to adults.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are very good but children have too little opportunity to take the initiative and make their own decisions.
Attendance	Satisfactory. The majority of children are punctual.

Children's eagerness to participate and their developing trust in the staff ensures happy yet purposeful classrooms; they settle well at the school.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	
Quality of teaching	Good

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

The majority of the teaching is good or very good and the rest is satisfactory. This is better than when the school was last inspected when some of the teaching was found to be unsatisfactory. The quality of the teaching is consistently good across most areas of the curriculum. Staff set high standards for the children and make sure that lessons are well organised by making good use of the resources available. They are skilled at encouraging children to record what they have seen, for example, letting them 'write' about the story they have heard and helping them to complete the captions on their pictures by acting as scribes. Staff know the children well, particularly their individual language needs, setting tasks at just the right level of difficulty and building on what children know. They plan most of their work thoroughly but the links between the assessments made of children's work and the subsequent plans are not close enough. The present arrangements do not always allow for plans to be changed on a weekly or daily basis. The majority of lessons move at a brisk pace and children stay actively involved but there are a few occasions when the teaching is less successful though still satisfactory. For example, during some lessons in personal, social and emotional development and creative development, opportunities are sometimes missed for children to learn independently because adults give out work and there is not always an expectation that they will tidy away themselves. Teaching of literacy and numeracy is successful. This is because staff have adapted parts of the national strategies for older pupils to meet the needs of nursery age children. A good example of this was seen in the way staff actively involved themselves in children's imaginative play. They used the 'home corner' successfully to recreate a family scene, taking turns to look after the 'baby' and extending children's language through the questions they asked. They were also able to make sure the play remained purposeful and worthwhile.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides a broad range of learning activities which meet the needs of all the children. Appropriate emphasis is placed on improving literacy and numeracy skills.
Provision for children with special educational needs	The school makes good provision. Children's individual needs are quickly assessed and planned for. Sensitive support and good teaching enable children to achieve well and make good progress.
Provision for children with English as an additional language	Good. The children make good progress and they are encouraged and supported by all the staff. The school makes sure that children experience the full range of activities through effective deployment of staff.
Provision for children's personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good provision overall is made for children's personal development. Early experiences in the development of spiritual, moral and social aspects are sensitively encouraged through well planned activities and careful explanation. Fewer opportunities are provided for introducing children to other cultures.
How well the school cares	Staff have a good understanding of, and are sensitive to, the individual

for its children	needs of the children.
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The headteacher is very good at making sure communication with parents is regular and presented in a lively way. Parents are encouraged to participate in a range of activities to increase their understanding of what their children are learning. The school provides good quality information about the progress children make.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher and staff have created a positive environment for children's learning. They work well as a team.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body is very effective. It meets regularly. School and individual members have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses because they are often in school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good systems have been set up to collect information about the progress of individual children but this information is not used to check on the school's overall performance. The school has started to set itself targets for improvement from which it can then measure its success.
The strategic use of resources	Available resources are generally well used and accommodation is used to its potential. An attractive learning environment has been created and this keeps children interested in their work. The school does not have a delegated budget but seeks value for money when making spending decisions.

Staffing is adequate to meet the needs of the children. Accommodation is adequate for the numbers of pupils on roll and resources for learning are generally good, although more are needed to support the teaching about other cultures. They are generally well organized but more emphasis is needed on making them more easily available to children, encouraging them to be independent.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff are approachable and friendly. They are always ready to discuss concerns with parents. • Teaching is good. • Good support is offered to those children who are learning English as an additional language and to those who have special educational needs. • Encourages children to be polite and well mannered. Boisterous behaviour is well handled. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Car parking is inadequate and the entrance becomes very congested at the start and end of sessions. • Some parents would have liked a formal meeting for parents before children started school.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The school has a good reputation locally and has good resources. | |
|--|--|

The inspection findings confirm parents' positive views about the school. Children enjoy coming, the teaching is good and suitable support is offered to all children. Parents receive a very good level of information before their children start nursery and, although there is no formal meeting, they are given ample opportunities to find out about school. Inspectors share parents' concerns about congestion near the school entrance which, at present, makes it difficult for children to arrive and depart safely.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Children enter the nursery with standards that are average when compared to children of a similar age. Standards on entry to school are similar to those found during the last inspection.
2. All children, including those learning English as an additional language and those with special educational needs, make significant gains in their learning. In most areas of learning, children are well on line to achieve the Early Learning Goals, which are the standards they are expected to reach by the end of the Foundation Stage. In communication, language and literacy and in their mathematical development, most are on course to exceed the expected standard. The standards in these two areas are higher than those found during the last inspection.
3. Improvements have come about because staff plan more closely together and the headteacher monitors the teaching more rigorously. Greater emphasis is placed on assessing children's progress and then sharing that information with staff and parents. However, not enough use is made of the information to change teachers' planning.
4. Children are happy to leave their parents and confidently settle into the routine of the school day. Most work contentedly individually, in pairs and in small groups for activities and story. All show respect for adults and each other. Children share tools and equipment in the role play area, offering the stethoscope to others without any prompting by adults. Children are encouraged to be kind, helpful and sensitive to the needs of their friends. All children handle equipment and materials with care but few tidy away resources at the end of activities.
5. Children listen very well in most situations and respond positively when asked to do something. This was seen when they took a message to another group or recalled an activity they had enjoyed. Their vocabulary increases because adults make good use of most opportunities to engage children in conversations, helping them to find the right words. Imaginative play is a particularly positive feature of the school's work and children show good gains in their learning because of their growing confidence. Children talk animatedly about books they know and many are able to explain how they can use them to gather information. Many write their own names clearly and suitable emphasis is placed on improving this aspect; for example, children generally write their own name on their books.
6. Numeracy skills are particularly good with most of the children able to count to ten and many counting much higher than this. They are given regular opportunities to reinforce their skills in this area by applying their knowledge in practical situations. An example of this was seen in the way in which groups of children were able to use simple addition and subtraction sums to work out how many drinks would be needed at snack time. Children have a good understanding of mathematical language and are happy to talk about position and shapes they can recognise in the nursery.
7. Children are introduced to simple investigative skills and can recognise similarities and differences in the world around them. They observe what happens during simple experiments and can explain what living things need if they are to survive; for example, how babies need a lot of care and attention. Children have good levels of competence when using computers but do not have enough opportunities to practise their skills.

8. Most children confidently handle small tools such as pencils, chalk, paintbrushes, and glue sticks to paint pictures and make collages. Outdoors, they pedal and steer tricycles, negotiating the inclines and bends of the path with care. Children have a good awareness of space as they follow the arrows and manoeuvre their vehicles to ensure they do not collide. With adult help and encouragement, many are able to throw and aim beanbags at a large target. More confident children can climb, balance and slide down a ramp. Tasks are set at a suitable level so that all group members are able to experience the right level of difficulty.

9. Children make good progress in creative development because of the good quality teaching they receive. They select from a range of materials, such as feathers, sequins and shiny paper with confidence to develop their own designs. Most children are aware of different textures as they trickle fine sand through their fingers or mould and squeeze dough. All children use a range of percussion instruments with enjoyment to express rhythm.

10. The fourteen per cent of children identified as having special educational needs, learn at a good pace when compared to their previous attainment. Some of them have complex needs and the school is very successful in identifying them early and providing skilled support. Many are already moving swiftly through the stages of the Code of Practice (the system which determines the level of support a child should receive). They are given a wide range of interesting and challenging tasks which meet their individual needs and requirements. Children learning English as an additional language make progress at a similar rate. Staff make good provision for them by ensuring they are able to take part in the full curriculum range and that every chance is taken to practise their language skills. Boys and girls make similar rates of progress and there are no significant differences between children from different backgrounds. Some higher attainers have been identified early in the school year. Their needs are met well because staff make sure that they are continually challenged when they are asked questions about their work and are set tasks that are harder.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. Children show good attitudes to their learning. They are happy at school and most respond well to the friendly and caring staff. All children are interested in the activities offered during sessions and persevere well with them. For example, children were eager to bring their parents to the Trail Day during the inspection and proudly took them around the school. Excitement and surprise reflected equally on their faces as they realised how different the nursery looked that day and they pointed out their favourite areas to their parents. Children are friendly to their peers and most listen to or chat easily with staff; this helps to establish a purposeful working environment.

12. Standards of behaviour are good overall. Most children have a developing understanding of the school rules and they try to meet the high expectations held by staff. Children with particular behavioural problems respond best when adults set very clear boundaries, even in unusual circumstances. For instance, one little boy found it very difficult to stay with the adult taking him around the 'trail' but he settled down well after a nursery nurse reminded him how important it was to stay in sight of an adult and to listen carefully.

13. Relationships are very good at all levels and make a positive contribution to children's learning as they feel valued and well-cared for. Staff set a good example for children and work well as a team. Children generally share toys and resources well and take turns when asked, queuing quite politely to use the computer with their parents, for example.

14. Children's personal development is good overall, as they take every available opportunity to become increasingly independent. Many are already quite self-assured as they move around the

nursery, confident about where to find things and in the daily routines. Some are becoming increasingly mature and chat to visitors about what they are doing or about aspects of their home life. Children are not given, however, enough opportunities to extend their independent learning skills sufficiently by selecting their own resources.

15. Levels of attendance are satisfactory for children of this age. Most children are brought to school on time and parents usually inform the school of any reasons for absence. This regular attendance helps children to settle more quickly into school routines and lays a good foundation for their full time education.

HOW WELL ARE THE PUPILS TAUGHT?

16. The quality of teaching is good. This is a better picture than when the school was last inspected. On that occasion, fewer good or better lessons were observed and a small number were unsatisfactory. It has improved for a variety of reasons. Tasks set for the children are well organised and planning is more detailed with all staff involved in deciding what is taught. For example, what teachers want children to learn is more clearly stated in the “learning objectives” described in the planning. All staff contribute to the planning and this helps it to be more consistent so that children receive a similar range of curriculum experiences regardless of who teaches them. Children of all levels of attainment and backgrounds are well catered for. They learn faster because of this.

17. Staff know the children well and have a good knowledge and understanding of the needs of young children. They are familiar with the Early Learning Goals and organize activities that engage children’s interest and curiosity. They are successful in applying some of the principles of the national literacy and numeracy strategies for older children. For example, they use group times successfully to reinforce counting skills and make sure that children are beginning to apply their developing numeracy skills in practical situations. On one occasion seen, children worked out how many drinks were needed and made sure sufficient beakers were made available. Some higher attainers were then encouraged to work out the difference between those who wanted milk and those who wanted water, adding and subtracting where necessary.

18. Most activities are well organised and the teaching caters for children of all levels of attainment. As a result, children learn faster and most sessions move at a brisk pace. An example of this was seen during a library session when children were listening to a story about families. The adult working with them knew the individual needs of each group member very well and asked them questions at a suitable level. For example, higher attainers were asked to talk about their own family, pick out words from the book that they recognized and then explain what sort of books they really enjoy. They really had to think hard and use their good vocabulary because the adult would not settle for the first answer she heard. Others found the tasks very challenging at first and the teacher’s attention focussed on them, offering advice and suggestions but making sure that each child was able to make a contribution. Good teaching such as this made sure that each group member had acquired new knowledge and made progress during the lesson.

19. Good quality teaching is found in most areas of children’s learning. This degree of consistency is better than when the school was last visited by inspectors. On a few occasions, the quality of the teaching falls below the best standards, although it is still satisfactory. Some opportunities to increase children’s independence are missed because children are not given enough chance to select their own resources or tidy away after activities. An example of this was seen during a craft activity when the final pieces of work completed by the children were similar because the teacher had selected the materials. There were not enough chances for them to use their initiative.

20. A significant proportion of children have special educational needs and, for some, listening for long periods and taking turns is difficult. Occasionally, they demonstrate challenging behaviour but adults manage them well. Staff insist on good standards of behaviour and children are very clear about these expectations as they are constantly reinforced throughout the school day. Very good relationships are apparent and children feel confident and secure within well ordered classrooms. Staff also make good use of resources to support their teaching. For example, work in the imaginative play area is carefully planned so that staff who play there with the children take every opportunity to extend their vocabulary and try out new words. However, there are fewer times when children can practise their skills in information and communications technology and this limits what they can achieve. Staff confidence in teaching in this area is lower than in other areas of the nursery curriculum.

21. All groups of children within the school are equally well taught. This is because the staff identify their needs early on and then track their individual progress. Some good examples of this were seen in the way in which higher attainers are given harder work when they have completed a task so that they are always challenged. Similarly, children who have special educational needs are also taught well. They each have a detailed plan which sets out targets for them to work towards. All staff know these plans when organising activities and skilfully ensure that no one is left out. They set tasks that build children's confidence and encourage them to take on new challenges. The tasks also take full account of children's knowledge and understanding. For example, during a mathematical activity, one boy was supported by a nursery nurse because he had complex special needs, found difficulty in expressing what he wanted to say and could not hold the equipment the rest of his classmates were using. The adult working with him showed great patience and supported his attempts to find the right word to describe the shape he was holding. She offered ideas and suggestions including the initial letter sound 'r' of rectangle, but did not offer a solution. The boy knew that his contribution was being valued and he persevered until he managed to answer correctly. The rest of the group celebrated his success, adding to his enjoyment.

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

22. The school has a good curriculum, which covers all areas of learning. It prepares children well for the next stage of education.

23. The school has continued to develop a system for curriculum planning which identifies the six areas of learning and ensures that they are well linked to the current Early Learning Goals of the Foundation Stage. All staff, including teachers, nursery nurses and support nursery nurses, are involved in planning the curriculum and there is a good balance of activities.

24. Teachers' planning has been updated and is in line with the Early Learning Goals. Most planning now identifies clear learning objectives and has sufficient detail to be helpful to the teaching. The school regularly assesses what children know, understand and can do, and keeps records for each child. However, this useful information from assessment and children's records is not always used productively when planning activities and new challenges for them. Links between assessment and planning are not firmly established. Adults rely on their personal knowledge of each child to intuitively ensure the needs of all children are taken into account when supporting activities.

25. The school provides a wide range of learning opportunities. The areas in the nursery, designated for particular activities, are well organised and well equipped with suitable resources and learning materials. A computer is available in the nursery but is not used often enough. Children have too few opportunities to practise and consolidate their skills. However, there are times in the creative area, when children cannot readily access all these resources. Adults choose a small selection for them and

opportunities for children to have independent selection and choice from the wide range of resources are missed.

26. A high priority is given to developing children's personal, social and emotional skills, communication, language and literacy and mathematics. The school has effective strategies for teaching the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. These are carefully planned so that they are included throughout the activities the children undertake.

27. All children have equal access to the curriculum but not enough opportunities are provided for the children to make choices, take decisions and develop as independent learners. Following the last inspection, children are regularly monitored as they move around the activities so that their involvement and progress in all areas is recorded. This ensures that some children who initially only visit a narrow group of activities are guided by an adult to any areas they have missed.

28. The school makes good provision for all the children with special educational needs. Some of the children's special needs are already identified before they start at the nursery through the good links the school has developed with local agencies such as health visitors. Adults know the children well and any giving cause for concern are quickly identified. The sensitive support the children receive ensures they can all take part in their chosen activities and have equal opportunities in all aspects of the curriculum. Detailed assessments and records are kept for the children with special educational needs. This information is used effectively to plan the next stage in their development and to ensure individual needs for support are not overlooked. The children's progress is regularly reviewed and they all make good progress towards the targets set in their individual educational plans.

29. The provision for children learning English as an additional language is good. Staff are aware of these children and help them gain confidence to communicate with both adults and other children. Good support by the staff, for example, in explaining instructions carefully and giving the children plenty of time to answer questions, ensures the children can take part in their chosen activities and have equal opportunities throughout the nursery.

30. The school continues to make good use of a range of visitors and visits to enhance the children's learning opportunities. For example, a mother brought her baby to school so that children could watch it being bathed. This event supported the current topic on 'Christmas and Babies'. Similarly, a visit to a nature trail stimulated ideas for the current development of the outdoor area of the school.

31. Links with the primary schools to which the children transfer continue to be good. School staff come to visit children in the nursery setting and children are encouraged to become members of 'busy bee clubs' at their prospective new school before transfer. The nursery sends a detailed record for each child and also their record of achievement file to the transfer school which helps the move go smoothly.

32. Overall, the school makes good provision for children's personal development. This is similar to when the school was last inspected.

33. All adults provide good role models and encourage honesty, fairness, respect and care for others. They teach the children to be courteous and have good manners. The school is successful in helping children to understand the difference between right and wrong. All members of staff are skilled at promoting good behaviour, using praise readily to reward good behaviour and effort. Adults know children well and if a child starts to misbehave there is early intervention and the child is directed to a more suitable activity. Children understand the nursery rules and know they are applied consistently. They are encouraged to socialise with one another and to relate effectively to others when working in

pairs and small groups. During role play in the 'Baby Clinic' for example, the adult ensured all children took part in the play, encouraged them to work together amicably and to take turns with the different resources. The nursery gives children many opportunities to take responsibility, such as choosing which activities they will develop and which curriculum area they will work in. However, at the end of activities, children are not consistently encouraged to tidy up and put things away.

34. The provision for children's spiritual development is good. It is carefully promoted through a variety of planned activities. The visit of a mother and young baby was used to good effect to support the current topic of 'Christmas and Babies'. Children who did not have any experience of babies marvelled at his small hands and toes. The nursery routine provides opportunities for children to talk about their experiences and feelings in role play and small group time. Children playing in the role play area, for example, suggested that every one should be quiet so the 'babies' would not be frightened and would go to sleep. The adult sensitively supported the children as they discussed what frightened them. Adults use spontaneous moments well to encourage an awareness of the world around them. A group of children discussing the weather, for example, were given time to observe the dark grey sky and to look at the trees blowing vigorously in the wind. Similarly, children blowing bubbles outdoors, were encouraged to stand and watch them as they floated away and disappeared over the school roof.

35. Provision for children's cultural development is satisfactory. The curriculum provides opportunities for children to learn about their own culture as well as developing some knowledge of other cultures. Children listen to traditional stories such as 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears' and learn and take part in the traditional songs such as the 'Grand Old Duke of York'. Children celebrate some festivals from different world faiths, such as Christmas and Easter, Eid, Diwali and the Chinese New Year. However, more resources and planned experiences, such as visitors wearing traditional dress and preparing the traditional food of others are needed to support this aspect of children's development.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

36. Standards of pastoral care in the school are good overall and some aspects of provision are very good. Staff work hard to ensure that they know as much as possible about each child and this ensures children receive appropriate levels of support for their learning.

37. Issues of child protection are very well addressed by the headteacher who is the adult responsible for this area. A teacher supports the headteacher in this aspect of care and deputises for her in her absence. Adults receive clear guidance about procedures to follow and appropriate support is requested from outside agencies. The headteacher is very conscientious in her duty of care and pays close attention to any children giving cause for concern. Staff show great sensitivity when dealing with any care-related issues. Adults caring for 'looked after' children appreciate this aspect of the school's provision.

38. Effective procedures are in place to ensure parents bring children to school regularly and on time. The school has a detailed attendance policy and requires parents to sign a home school agreement that focuses specifically on attendance. Attendance registers are accurate and staff monitor unusual situations well, such as parents and children coming and going at different times during 'Trail Day'.

39. Staff promote good behaviour in a consistent manner to support the school's detailed behaviour policy. Adults maintain high expectations of children's behaviour and children are increasingly aware of these. The best examples of very good behaviour management by staff were when they were dealing with the most difficult children. On one occasion, a nursery nurse expressed her deep disappointment at the behaviour of one child at snacktime. She explained very clearly why she was upset and encouraged the boy to think why this should be so. He thought hard about what he had

done, why this would upset others and then sat with the adult while he told her about the work he had just completed on the computer. She was very fair and firm and the outcome was very positive – both for the boy and for the other children listening at the same table. Their understanding of the rules and expectations for behaviour in the school were consolidated at the same time.

40. Health and safety procedures are effective and are familiar to all staff, including students on work placements. Accidents are carefully recorded and care is taken with the administration and provision of first aid.

41. Sound systems for the assessment of children's work are in place; they have improved since the last inspection when they became a key issue for action. Staff collect a large amount of information about each child during pre-school home visits and in other discussions with parents; this forms the basis on which children's progress is measured throughout the year. When children leave school, a detailed work file accompanies them to their primary school, along with termly records of what they have achieved. The school also draws from this information in written reports to parents.

42. Although the school has made a good start at improving assessment procedures, more work remains to be done in this area. Current planning does not show a direct link with assessment and there is still no clear system in place for staff to amend their planning in light of children's prior attainment.

43. Staff have a good understanding of children's emotional and personal needs and provide effective support in this area.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

44. Parents and carers hold very positive views of the school. They feel well informed about how their children are getting on, feel the teaching is good and, above all, that their children like coming to the school. Parents and carers with specific concerns about their children are very appreciative of the sensitivity shown by staff and the support they are offered. Inspection findings confirm these views.

45. The headteacher and staff establish effective links with parents and this helps them to feel welcome in school. The high quality induction programme is detailed and provides a clear overview for parents of the school's expectations and aims. Daily communication between staff and parents is informal but professional and any concerns are speedily addressed. The school prospectus is written and presented in a lively style and the important messages within it are clear to parents. Parents value the regular newsletters, colourful photographic displays and notice boards provided by staff. Parents are encouraged to use the library as often as they like and to help in school once their children are settled. They have open access to their children's records of achievement folders throughout the year. Information about the progress their children make during the year is clearly expressed and parents appreciate the regular parents' meetings held during the year. The school offers flexibility on reporting to parents and will issue additional interim written reports if parents make a specific request. The school also seeks more formal feedback from parents in the form of questionnaires, for example, about the education targets set for their children.

46. Parents value the school's provision for their children and make a satisfactory contribution to the life of the school and their children's learning. Few parents come in to help but the majority have signed the home school agreement and manage to bring their children to school regularly. The vast majority of parents participate in the occasional 'Trail Days', organised by the school for their benefit. These give parents an opportunity to work directly with their children and to see at first hand some of the activities children tackle at school. This helps parents to support children's learning better at home.

Some parents were unsure about how to help their children during the latest trial. The headteacher recognised this and will now provide specific information for parents so they can help their children more effectively as they learn.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

47. Leadership and management are good and progress has been made in a number of important areas. For example, monitoring the work of the school was seen as a weakness when it was last inspected. Now better organized, it is having a positive effect on the quality of the teaching and children's learning. The headteacher observes staff teaching and gives them written feedback on how their performance might be improved. Because this is organized within a positive and constructive environment, advice is taken and changes are made. An example of this was seen in the way approaches to the teaching of writing have been changed following discussions and observations. Similarly, the school has already identified gaps in its provision for information and communications technology, where most staff lack confidence and resources are not readily available for children to use.

48. Staff meet regularly to discuss their work and planning for lessons is better organized now. Assessments of children's progress are very detailed and staff have a good understanding of their needs. There are still some gaps because this information is not always used to plan the next stage of work and year on year comparisons of the school's progress are not carried out. Once again, the school's monitoring and self evaluation procedures have picked these up and work in these areas are identified as a priority in the school's future plans.

49. The headteacher is hardworking and very supportive of all staff members, ensuring that everyone is able to make a contribution to decisions that are made. An example of this can be seen in the way in which everyone is able to contribute to decisions on the school's current priorities. The views of all partners feature in the school development plan. Priorities are accurately costed, sensible timescales agreed and the plan provides suitable guidance for school improvement.

50. There is a very positive ethos within the school that is geared towards providing good educational opportunities for the children and offering them a safe and secure environment. The school's aims and values are regularly reviewed and can be seen in its life and work. Good examples of these aims, seen in practice, are the way in which staff and children show care and consideration for one another.

51. The governing body is very effective and fulfils all its statutory responsibilities. It meets regularly and provides good support for the work of the school. An example of this was seen when an activity day was organized. Many of the governors worked alongside staff and parents to provide the children with an extensive range of valuable experiences. Individual governors visit regularly and they have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school.

52. The school operates efficiently, with responsibility for the administration shared between the school secretary and the headteacher. Financial resources are allocated by the local authority and the most recent reports indicate that systems in the school are efficient. The school is prudent in its use of financial resources, for example setting priorities such improving the outdoor area then building up capital so these plans can come to fruition. This explains why the budget figure carried forward from one year to the next might, at first glance, seem too high.

53. There are suitable numbers of well qualified and experienced staff to teach the children. Funds allocated to support children who have special educational needs are used well. Children receive good levels of support that allow them to access the full curriculum range. The inspection found that staff working with different groups of children, including higher attainers, focused accurately on their specific needs and made sure that they were working successfully towards the targets set for them.

54. Resources are good for most areas of learning, although provision for information and communications technology is underrepresented. Similarly, more resources are needed to support the teaching about other cultures. Not enough computers are available for children to practise and consolidate new skills. Resources are mostly used well to support the curriculum but not enough emphasis is placed on letting children choose for themselves. Accommodation is adequate for the number of children on roll and the outdoor area is a useful resource. The school works hard to improve the learning environment through displays that celebrate children's achievements.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- (1) Improve children's independence by:

Providing more opportunities for children to select their own resources
E.g. giving out musical instruments, selecting their own craft materials.

Making sure children are encouraged clear away equipment after they have used it

- (2) Raise attainment in information and communication technology by:

Providing more opportunities for children to use computers and practise their skills
Increasing staff confidence and expertise in this area
Extending the range of suitable software that is available for children to use

- (3) Make closer links between the assessments made of children's progress and planning the next stage of work so that:

The detailed assessments made are used successfully to improve the lessons that follow

Staff can evaluate how successful their lessons have been

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of sessions observed	32
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	15

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	8	17	3	0	0	0
Percentage	0	29	61	10	0	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of sessions observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each session represents approximately three percentage points. In addition four sessions were observed where there was no direct adult input.

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)	40
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	NA

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	
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	9

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	2
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	1

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and support staff

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	2.1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	82

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

Financial information

Financial year	2000/2001
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	£
Total income	31224
Total expenditure	26846
Expenditure per pupil	639
Balance brought forward from previous year	407
Balance carried forward to next year	4785

The high balance carried forward is due to capital income earmarked to spend on outdoor play development in subsequent years

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.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	80
Number of questionnaires returned	35

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	91	9			
My child is making good progress in school.	46	51			
Behaviour in the school is good.	46	54			
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	20	29	6		20
The teaching is good.	71	26			
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	69	23			3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	89	11			
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	60	26	3		6
The school works closely with parents.	71	29			
The school is well led and managed.	94	6			
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	54	31			3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	34	29	3		11

N.B. 3% = 1 response

Positive comments:

- Children like coming to school
- Teachers are always accessible to parents
- Teachers provide useful, informal, progress reports for parents
- Staff take exceptional care of children

- Children's needs are the top priority in school
- Children and families with special educational needs are well supported
- Staff are very welcoming and parents are encouraged to come into school
- The school enjoys a very good reputation in the local community

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

55. The school provides a happy, purposeful atmosphere where children settle quickly into the routines of school life. All children, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, make good progress. Most of the children are on course to meet the expected standards in their personal, social and emotional development by the time they reach the end of the Foundation Stage. This is due to the sustained support they receive from all adults and the enthusiasm of the children who are keen to learn.

56. Children's growing confidence is demonstrated well at the start of the day when they hang up their coats, place their name card on the wall and readily say goodbye to their parents. Many greet adults and other children, some seeking out their special friends. They look around with interest at the activities on offer and are eager to take part.

57. Most children work with a sense of purpose, persevere and show good ability to sustain concentration. For example, children mixing porridge for the three bears worked for a long time at the activity until they felt sure the texture was just right. When they complete one activity, most children start the next one without being directed by an adult. They handle equipment and materials with care.

58. Children work contentedly individually, in pairs and, with sustained adult encouragement, most cooperate in a large group to work at tasks such as music or to celebrate a birthday. However, there are occasions when a few children find it difficult to be members of a large group and to concentrate for a suitable length of time. The adult, for example, taking the birthday celebration had to focus and refocus some children, constantly reminding them to sit appropriately and to listen, before she could light the candles on the birthday cake.

59. Behaviour is good overall. Adults in the nursery expect good behaviour and children respond well. Most children are beginning to understand the rules of the nursery and remind others to keep to them. A child, for example, who saw a toddler in the corridor, quickly alerted an adult because he knew children had to be accompanied in that area of the nursery.

60. All children are encouraged to be kind, helpful and sensitive to the needs of their friends. For example, a child with more experience of spoken English than her friend, included her in the role play. She gave her a baby doll and then played alongside her, talking to her in her home language and some English.

61. Children enjoy being the daily helper, for example, to give out the drinks and sandwiches or biscuits at snack time. Most put on aprons as a matter of course when working with water or art materials and hang them up when finished. However, opportunities to develop responsibility and independence are

missed at 'clearing away time'. When the music signals the end of activities, for example, many children rush into group areas, leaving activities and resources on the table or floor for adults to clear away.

62. Most of the teaching in this area is good or very good and the rest is satisfactory. In the best lessons, teachers and nursery nurses have good relationships with the children. They are patient and kind and give them every opportunity to answer questions and develop confidence. A good example of this was seen when the birthday child was encouraged to choose two friends to sit with him at the front of the group. He was asked questions about his birthday and sensitive prompts ensured he succeeded.

63. In some lessons, the pace of children's learning is slower. This happens at small group time when children, who are directed to sit on different shapes of carpet, take a long time to settle because they want to choose the shape to sit on. Opportunities for some children to report back on their afternoon's work and discuss their favourite colours were missed as the adult moved the activity on to ensure that there was sufficient time for all to have their drink and snack.

64. The provision for children's personal, social and emotional development is incorporated into the activities planned for all areas of learning. Adults provide a good range of activities.

65. Detailed assessments and records are kept for the children with special educational needs. This information is used effectively to plan the next stage in their development and to ensure individual needs for support are not over looked. Although careful assessments note the progress of the rest of the children, this information is not always used productively when planning activities and new challenges for them.

Communication, Language and Literacy

66. The majority of children enter nursery with speaking and listening skills in English that are in line with the expected levels for children of their age. As a result of the skilled teaching they receive and their keenness to learn, most are on course to exceed the standards expected by the end of Reception class. They are progressing rapidly through the 'Stepping Stones' which are the suggested stages of development that children move through as they work towards the Early Learning Goals.

67. Children talk confidently to their classmates and adults, for example, describing what activities they had enjoyed and what snacks they preferred to eat, 'I don't want my biscuit now but I'm really thirsty so I'll drink my juice'. They understand how conversations require them to wait their turn and listen to what others have to say.

68. Children enjoy using the writing area which is set up as an office. The majority can hold a pencil well and write pretend messages as they answer the telephone. A particular feature of this aspect is the way that many of the children play for extended periods without direct adult support. Their play and conversation remains purposeful because they behave well and the resources they have to use are interesting and relevant, such as a keyboard, telephones and directories. Skills in this area are good, with many of the higher attainers able to write their name unaided. They are given regular opportunities to practise their skills, which are valued and praised by the adults working with them.

69. Children recognize their own names as they 'self register' at the start of each session. Print features prominently in the attractive displays which are used to encourage children to link the print they see with meaning. Children enjoy listening to stories and sharing books with adults. For example, during the activity day when large numbers of parents and friends worked in the school, many of the

children chose to look at books in the library area. They regularly select books and share them with an adult. They model their reading on stories that they have heard and explain why they like a particular story with sentences such as 'that one's best because I like the happy ending'.

70. Teaching is good. Staff are particularly skilled at developing children's language skills and increasing their vocabulary. They often do this during imaginative play where they take a full and active part, supporting children and offering ideas on how it could be improved. For example, one adult took on the role of the parent in the 'baby' bedroom', talking to children about the tasks they were undertaking and asking them questions. These were asked in such a way that all those in the group were able to make a contribution at his or her own level. For example, one boy who has special educational needs found it difficult to express himself and could only use a few words such as 'baby, bed and cot'. The adult was very patient and encouraged him to model some of her answers with questions like 'does your brother sleep in a cot like this?' He enjoyed his work and found success because he was able answer the question at his own level. During the same activity, a child who had a better vocabulary was asked questions which extended her. She was encouraged to try new words as she described her family and how preparing the baby for bed was such an important part of the day. As a result of such good teaching, children made rapid progress and learned quickly.

71. Not all the teaching was as good as this. In the more ordinary lessons, the pace of the learning was slower. An example of this was seen during a group activity when some children demonstrated challenging behaviour and distracted some of the other members of the group. The adult working with the children managed the situation well but the progress made was not as fast as usual.

72. Most children respond well to the teaching. They stay actively involved and are able to sustain concentration for long periods even at this early stage in the school year.

73. Children who have special educational needs are identified early and they receive a good level of skilled, adult support. Eleven have speech and communication difficulties and they are given detailed programmes of work which give them the opportunity to make consistently good progress. For example, small steps for them to achieve are identified by staff, included in the plans and successes are celebrated. They provide interesting activities and children experience success in what they do. Similarly, staff have identified those children who are higher attainers and they make sure the work they do and the questions they are asked are sufficiently challenging. However, the good examples of linking assessments of children's progress to their next stage of work are not found in all of the school's work.

Mathematics

74. The majority of children are on course to exceed the Early Learning Goals by the time they reach the end of the Foundation Stage. This is despite a higher proportion of children arriving in school with special educational needs than when the school was previously inspected. All adults work hard to make sure that mathematical development features throughout the school day and good links are made with other curriculum areas. This means that most are capable of applying their knowledge of number in practical situations, for example, counting up the numbers in the large group activity and then recognizing some of the figures as they are written on the whiteboard.

75. Although most of the children have only been in school for a short time, many are already counting to ten. Some higher attainers are very confident and have no problem in counting much higher than this, using these skills to work out simple calculations. For example, a small group, working with a teacher, discussed dates, times and weather. Two or three within the group of nine could pick out the figures that represented ten and then explained how nineteen would have to be written in numbers.

They use their knowledge of number rhymes and counting games to reinforce this learning and attractive displays help them to consolidate.

76. Children have a good understanding of shape, space and measure. They make comparisons and confidently sort objects, according to size or colour. Most use simple mathematical language to describe what they are doing and a particular feature is the way in which all group members are able to make a contribution. An example of this was seen when a group assembled to talk about their work and prepare for snack time. They all selected a carpet tile and described it according to its size, shape and colour. One member of the group was supported by a nursery nurse so that he could access the full curriculum range. Everyone waited patiently while he thought about the shape he had and to the delight of his classmates, he described it as a rectangle, a term he had just learned.

77. Children learn well and they make good progress in their mathematics. This is because they receive a good level of skilled support. Their work is closely checked and detailed assessments of progress are made, although these do not always influence the next stage in the planning process. Most children behave well and are keen to succeed. Those that do not are consistently well handled. They have positive attitudes towards their work and concentrate well on activities that interest them. At present, they have few opportunities to select activities and equipment for themselves because most is set out for them by an adult. This reduces their opportunities to become more independent.

78. The quality of teaching in mathematics is good overall which is better than when it was last inspected. Some of the most successful lessons are based around role play. The theme of 'babies' was a major feature of the curriculum during the inspection and staff used the home corner very effectively as they supported children who 'weighed and measured' their dolls. Most used terms such as 'bigger' and 'smaller' confidently and some were able to predict and estimate. For example, as they lay their dolls on the changing mat they said 'my baby is bigger than yours, let's measure him now' before using their own hand spans as the standard measure. They pointed out to the teacher that it would be unfair to make comparisons with her hands because 'your hands are much bigger'.

79. The last inspection report criticised monitoring procedures in the school but these are better now staff have a better knowledge of the needs of individual children. An example of this was seen when children counting out the snacks they were about to receive were asked questions at just the right level to make them think. All groups, from children with complex special needs to higher attainers were able to achieve some success.

Knowledge and Understanding of the World

80. The majority of children make good progress and are on course to reach the standards expected for children of this age at the end of the Foundation Stage. There is an attractive and stimulating range of experiences within the nursery. Through their role-play activities, children demonstrate their understanding that babies need clothes to keep warm. They talk confidently about how they care for their dolls in the home corner and relate these experiences to their family and friends.

81. In small group activities, children show curiosity as they manipulate play-dough when making different shapes. They observe the changes that occur as the dough is rolled more thinly or when water is added to the mixture. When preparing baby food, they describe the consistency when more flakes are added, 'This is really sticky and I can't get it off my hands, let's put some water in'. Children are becoming aware of different textures and comment 'it's less sticky' as more water is added.

82. Children make good use of construction material to improve their skills in this area. Most of the blocks or shapes are pre-selected by adults but children make good use of them to develop their own designs. They complete quite complex structures because they concentrate on their work and share their ideas with their friends. When asked to join materials, they use different tools such as scissors and glue sticks safely.

83. Children show some good skills when using the computer. They know what the mouse does and how what they produce on the screen can be printed out for them. Only one computer was available for children to use and so they had few opportunities to practise and consolidate the skills they had learned.

84. They do know that significant personal events, such as birthdays, are celebrated so staff focus on these occasions, helping children to increase their vocabulary. A good example of this was seen when a boy celebrated his birthday in school with the rest of his group. His friends talked about their own birthday celebrations and what they planned to do. Children know about other cultures through their participation in festivals such as Christmas, Eid and Easter. They learn about similarities and differences in people's lives as they look at the photographs on display around the nursery. Throughout the year, children develop their understanding of the community in which they live through visits to local shops and the visitors who come into school to talk about the work they do.

85. Most of the teaching is good, some is very good and the rest is satisfactory. Staff set up activities which are interesting and keep children involved. As a result, they learn more quickly and are able to consolidate their learning through a series of related experiences. A good example of this was seen as a group of children were playing with sand using different tools. They quickly realized that using a small wooden rake, the patterns left in the sand would be different from those left when they used a paint brush. The adult working with them was very skilled at getting the children to make predictions about what might happen and how they could design their own tools. All contributions are valued and the children's learning is moved on through effective questioning based on their prior knowledge.

86. In the more ordinary lessons, some learning opportunities were missed. For example after a craft activity, most of the group left their tools and equipment for others to clear away. It meant that they lost the opportunity to take responsibility for their work and independence and self reliance were diminished.

Physical development

87. The school provides a wide variety of activities, both indoors and out, to improve children's physical skills. All children, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, achieve well. The majority of the children are on course to meet the expected standards by the time they reach the end of the Foundation Stage. This is similar to the last inspection report.

88. Children play out daily on the playground and tarmac pathway when the weather is fine. They make good use of the outdoor equipment including tricycles and pedal cars. Most pedal and steer their vehicles with developing skill, some negotiating the inclines and bends of the path with care. They are quickly learning an awareness of space. They ride in the correct direction following the arrows and making cautious manoeuvres to ensure they do not collide with other cyclists. Most children throw beanbags at a large target and some aim with accuracy. Others throw and catch large balls with staff members or roll quoits, keeping them in the designated area of the playground. In the climbing area, more confident children enjoy repeating the activity they have mastered. They climb up steps, balance on a series of raised boxes and slide down the other side with care and control.

89. In the classroom, children handle small tools such as pencils, paintbrushes, scissors and glue to paint pictures and make collages. They take great care to use the tools and equipment carefully as demonstrated by the adults. Some children roll, mould and shape dough enthusiastically. They enjoy the experience and stay at the activity to roll it firmly into sausage shapes or cut it into 'biscuits'. Some use a variety of construction kits successfully to build towers and models and complete a variety of jigsaws with dexterity.

90. The quality of the teaching is good in the majority of the lessons and it is never less than satisfactory. Where the teaching is good, adults carefully focused on the skill to be developed. An example of this was seen when children attempting to catch a large ball were shown how to hold their hands and told to watch the ball. The adult constantly praised the children and applauded their success. Teacher and nursery nurse interventions in activities, both indoors and out, are always positive. They help the children to manipulate tools and equipment with greater expertise. This helps the children to think about their work and encourages them to try hard to improve.

91. Where the teaching is less successful, the adult is not always consistent in encouraging the children to complete the activity. Sometimes, adults who have started children off on a task, allow them to hand it over to their watching parents to complete. This was seen, for example, when pupils were learning to hold scissors and cut along a line. Independence and consolidation of cutting skills are missed at this time.

92. Although adults carefully assess and record children's achievements, this knowledge is not always used to plan new challenges for them or to strengthen newly acquired skills.

93. Most children take good care of resources when they are using them but they do not willingly help to clear them away at the end of the session. An example of this was seen when children playing with beanbags and quoits dropped them on the playground and rushed indoors when the bell rang. The adult was left to tidy them away. The development of independence for these children was missed.

Creative Development

94. The majority of children are on course to reach the standards expected nationally at the end of the Foundation Stage. This is similar to the last inspection report. The children make good progress in expressing their feelings in creative activities such as painting, modelling, role-play and music making.

95. There is good provision to support children's creative development and they have access to a wide range of stimulating experiences. With adult encouragement, for example, children blow through a straw to make bubbles in the blue paint. They show delight and satisfaction at the different shapes and shades of colour imposed on the paper. Similarly, children begin to appreciate different textures through sand and dough. They make patterns in a tray of fine sand and take hold of a handful and let it trickle through their hands. Through well-planned activities such as these, children are beginning to explore colour and texture.

96. All children have free access to paint and paper at all times and draw, paint and make a collage with enthusiasm. Most children use scissors, brushes, spatulas and glue with confidence as they cut and stick feathers, sequins and pasta.

97. In the role play areas, the 'Baby Clinic' and the 'Baby's Bedroom', children mirror the activities of adults who provide good role models in caring for the 'baby'. Children play with great enthusiasm, for example, as family members getting the 'baby' up in the morning or taking him to the 'Baby Clinic'

because he is ill. Some children copy the mannerisms of the mother who had previously brought her baby to school and bathed it. All children, including those with special educational needs and those with limited spoken English can engage successfully in role play based on their own first hand experiences.

98. Music is used to good effect in the nursery. In group time, children are confident in handling a range of musical instruments and many are able to name them correctly. They understand the terms 'loud' and 'soft', and all wait patiently for a given signal before playing the instruments. They are able to beat out a simple rhythm, and stop and start playing at a given signal. Children march with great enthusiasm as they move around the nursery playing their instruments and singing 'The Grand Old Duke of York'. Sensitive support ensures all children, including those with special educational needs, participate fully in this activity and make good progress.

99. The quality of teaching is good or very good in most of the lessons and the rest is satisfactory. Activities are carefully prepared, managed and supervised well. Children learn from direct experience which successfully reinforces their understanding. In the role play areas, adults are on hand to support the play or intervene sensitively if required. For example, children playing in the 'Baby Clinic' welcomed the adult into the play and careful discussion between the adult and children introduced new vocabulary, extended the play and children's confidence and enjoyment were increased. However, there are times when adults give children too much support. This happens in music lessons when, for example, children wait to be given musical instruments individually by adults. The pace of the children's learning slows and opportunities to develop independence are missed.

100. There is a wide range of resources available to support creative development. However, these are not always used well enough. Children making a collage, for example, were restricted to selecting resources from a dish on the table containing a group of pre-selected items. The larger bank of resources was inaccessible to the children. Opportunities to have independent selection and choice were missed.