

INSPECTION REPORT

BASNETT STREET NURSERY SCHOOL

BURNLEY

LEA area: LANCASHIRE

Unique reference number: 119101

Headteacher: Mrs M. Ivers

Reporting inspector: Michael Hewlett
1569

Dates of inspection: Monday 21st January – Wednesday 23rd January 2002

Inspection number: 230379

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:	Basnett Street Burnley
Postcode:	BB10 3ES
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Appropriate authority:	Lancashire LEA
Name of chair of governors:	Cllr. S. Large
Date of previous inspection:	11/03/1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Area of learning responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
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?
			Creative development	
			Personal, Social and Emotional development	
			Special educational needs	
			Equal opportunities	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Basnett Street Nursery is an average sized nursery school situated near the centre of Burnley. There are 73 children, aged between three and four years old, of whom 33 are girls and 40 are boys. They all attend part time. Children travel to the school from a wide area and it is usually oversubscribed. This year is an exception and, as a result, some children were admitted at the beginning of January to fill the places. The children are taught by three teachers, including the headteacher. One of the teachers works part time. There are four nursery nurses, one of whom is bilingual. Two work full time and two part time with the part time staff supporting children with special educational needs and those who are learning English as an additional language. Eight per cent of the children have been identified as having special educational needs. This is a similar figure to that found when the school was last inspected. Eighteen per cent of children come from homes where English is not the first language. Again, this is a similar figure to that found by inspectors when the school was last visited. Community languages spoken include Urdu and Punjabi. Children's attainment on entry to school varies considerably but is average overall. However, more children are arriving in school with delays in their communication skills and in their personal, social and emotional development, than previously.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an effective school that provides a good education for its children. They make good progress and the majority of children are on course to meet the standards expected in the Early Learning Goals (the targets children are expected to reach by the end of reception year). The teaching, as well as the leadership and management, are good. Children enjoy coming to school, they have a good attitude to their work and their behaviour is very good.

What the school does well

- Teaching is good
- Promotes very good relationships
- Children have positive attitudes to school and their behaviour is very good
- Takes good care of the children, values their efforts and is sensitive to their needs
- Support is good for children who have special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language

What could be improved

- Making sure opportunities to improve children's reading and writing skills are not missed.
- Increasing children's independence skills
- The pace of some activities is too slow

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 the areas for improvement. Standards have been maintained and the school day is better organized now, so that lessons are more productive. The quality of teaching is better now that greater detail is included in the planning of lessons although more work is needed in checking how successful these have been and in assessing the progress that children make. A bilingual assistant has been deployed to work with children learning English as an additional language and this has helped to address the weaknesses found in this area last time. The provision for this area is now good. 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 all 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 children's personal, social and emotional development, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world as well as in their physical and creative development. They are on course to reach the standards in their communication, language and literacy but, occasionally, opportunities to improve their reading and writing skills are not taken.

All groups of children make similar rates of progress when compared to their standards on arrival in nursery. This is because staff recognize the particular needs of all the groups and make sure they receive the support they need to make good progress. Children are given work that they can cope with successfully and this helps them to gain in confidence. Similarly, higher attainers are spotted and given work that is harder and makes them think more. 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	Good; they really enjoy school and are eager to participate in activities.
Behaviour	Very good. Children are calm and listen carefully to instructions.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are very good. Children make the most of any opportunities offered to them to become independent.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Children arrive at school on time.

Children's positive attitudes and very good behaviour ensure a happy and orderly learning environment. They quickly settle into 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, some is very good and the rest is satisfactory. The quality of the teaching is consistent across all areas of learning. Staff have good relationships with the children and make sure that lessons are well organised by making good use of the resources available. A good example of this was seen when children used computers. The software was linked to the themes of the lesson and staff working with them knew the children well enough, particularly their individual language needs and computer skills, to set tasks at just the right level of difficulty. They successfully built on what children knew. Staff plan most of their work thoroughly but evaluations of how successful the teaching has been are informal and are not always used when the next stage of work is being arranged. Most lessons move at a brisk pace and this keeps children actively involved. As a result of this, children learn more quickly. There are some occasions when the teaching is less successful. For example, snack time is a pleasant social occasion, but there are times when opportunities to encourage children to be more independent are missed as adults give out the food and drink. Similarly, children are not always encouraged to tidy away when they have completed an activity or to attempt to write their names on pieces of work. Teaching of most aspects of literacy and numeracy is successful. This is because staff make good links between different curriculum areas. A good example of this was seen during a story time when children were asked to pick out the mathematical shapes of the houses where the characters of the story might live.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides a broad, balanced curriculum which meets the needs of all the children. Planning is detailed and helpful to the teaching. Systems to check on the success of the planned activities are informal and are not always used to help with the next stage of the planning.
Provision for children with special educational needs	The school makes good provision. Children's individual needs are carefully 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 the expertise and effective deployment of the bilingual staff.
Provision for children's personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good provision overall is made for children's personal development. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Interesting and well planned experiences are carefully used to support this aspect.
How well the school cares	Pastoral systems are good and staff are caring. Health and safety

for its children	issues are taken seriously and every effort is made to ensure children's welfare.
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Parents appreciate the school's good levels of care. The headteacher ensures good links are maintained with parents and that regular information about what children can do is given to parents.

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 work well as a team and create an atmosphere which supports children's learning.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body is effective in its role. Individual members visit regularly and they have a good understanding of what the school needs to do next. It fulfils all its statutory responsibilities.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has begun to collect data which it can then use to measure performance but this is still at an early stage.
The strategic use of resources	Good use is made of the available resources. The school does not have a delegated budget but seeks out value for money when making spending decisions.

Staffing and accommodation are good and they are well organized. Resources for learning are also good but are not always arranged so that children can select them independently.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children enjoy school and they behave well • Teaching is good • Children make good progress during their time in school • Staff are approachable and friendly • The school is quick to identify those children who need extra support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some would like more information about how well their children are doing • A few felt print was not evident enough in displays around the nursery or in children's work

The inspection findings confirm parents' positive views about the school. Children enjoy coming, the teaching is good and a good level of support is offered to all children. Parents receive a good range of information, including written reports that help them to understand how well their children are doing. The comment about the 'printed word' around the nursery is supported by inspection evidence because opportunities to increase reading and writing skills are not always taken.

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 are similar to those found during the last inspection.
2. The children progress well so that all children, including those learning English and those with special educational needs, make significant gains in their learning. In all 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. There is a greater consistency about the standards children achieve than when the school was last inspected.
3. There has been considerable improvement in pupils' achievements since the last inspection. These have come about because staff plan lessons in more detail and the headteacher checks on the quality of the teaching more rigorously. Greater emphasis is now placed on sharing information on children's achievements with their parents.
4. The majority of the children's attainment in personal, social and emotional development is in line with the expected steps towards the national standard. They make good progress in this area. Children are confident and are eager to try new activities and experiences. They are friendly and most speak readily to both adults and children. Some seek out their special friends and walk around the nursery holding their hands. They work with a sense of purpose and handle equipment and materials with care. All play happily together, for example, taking turns fairly to be the driver on 'Thomas the Tank Engine' without adult help. Children are courteous and polite and many say 'please' and 'thank you' spontaneously at snack time. All children behave very well and understand the rules of the nursery.
5. Listening skills are a particularly strong feature of the children's work and they respond enthusiastically when asked to do something. Good examples were seen as a child takes messages to another group or describes activities that have been undertaken. Their vocabulary improves as a result of this and adults make good use of most opportunities to engage children in conversations, helping them to find the right word. Children talk with confidence about books they know and a few are able explain how they can use them to gather information. Some recognize and write their own names but not enough emphasis is placed on improving these aspects.
6. Children demonstrate good skills in early numeracy. They are given regular opportunities to reinforce their skills in this area by applying what they know. An example of this was seen in the way in which children were able identify which mathematical shapes would provide a 'stable' house, with most settling for a square or rectangular design.
7. Within the wide curriculum on offer, children are introduced to simple investigative skills. They observe what happens during simple experiments and can explain what living things need if they are to survive; for example, how some of their pets need a lot of care and attention. Children have good levels of competence when using computers, a big improvement from the levels of achievement found when the school was last inspected. Standards have risen because children have more access to better machines and staff are more confident.
8. Children make good progress in their physical development and are on line to reach the expected standard by the end of the Foundation Stage. Children show good skills when using tools such as

scissors to cut out pictures for a collage. Most successfully climb on the 'caterpillar' climbing frame, balance on the top using their hands and feet and then safely slide down the other side. Children travel through and crawl around the caterpillar with a good awareness of space and others. Outdoors, they run, jump and chase their friends. Most can change direction successfully and stop and start at a given signal.

9. Good progress is made in acquiring and practising creative skills Children are expected to meet the standards by the end of the Foundation Stage. Children explore and make good use of their imagination by using a variety of materials such as paint, clay, dough and collage. All play on 'Thomas the Tank Engine' with great enthusiasm, for example, as the driver, fireman and passengers. Children make observational drawings of themselves, adding the detail of features and hair. They enjoy music, moving successfully to different rhythms. Most sing tunefully to the well-known songs they are taught.

10. Eight per cent of the children have been identified as having special educational needs. They learn at a good pace when compared to their previous attainment. The school is very successful in early identification of children who need extra support and follow up well with skilled adult support. Many are already added to the special needs register (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. Eighteen per cent of children are learning English as an additional language and they, too, are making 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. Bilingual support has been added since the last inspection and this has resulted in much improved provision for these children and better results. Boys and girls make similar rates of progress and there are no significant differences between children from different backgrounds. The school is just beginning to identify higher attainers with individual programmes of work planned for this group. Their needs are well met because staff make sure that the work set for them is at the right level and they are challenged to find the right word when they are asked questions.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. The school has maintained this positive aspect of its provision since the last inspection; in particular, standards of behaviour have improved.

12. Children show good attitudes to their learning and parents report that their children really enjoy coming to school. They are interested in the variety of activities offered by staff and some are fascinated by the new experiences they encounter. One little girl, who is just beginning to learn to speak English, watched quietly as other children 'experimented' with a corn flour and water mixture. After some gently coaxing by the teacher, she tentatively held out her hands to accept the ball of 'dough' offered to her. Her amazed expression as the solid ball melted and dripped through her fingers was very telling and she participated eagerly from that point onwards. Children are keen participants in all that they do and many take comfort and gain in confidence from the good levels of support they are offered by adults leading activities. Even children who have only just started to attend look comfortable in the nursery environment and are clearly beginning to form secure relationships with staff.

13. Standards of behaviour are very good in all areas of school life and this is one reason why children make the most of their time. Children are generally very sensible and listen well to teachers' instructions. They are very careful when using equipment and treat both objects and other people with respect. For example, one boy sat with a teacher to look closely at a map and photographs of the surrounding area. The teacher encouraged him to use a magnifying glass to look at the photographs in detail. He balanced the photograph album carefully on his knee and very slowly raised the magnifying

glass towards his eyes. He was very careful and completed the task with great success. Children have a very firm grasp of the school's high expectations of their behaviour and they copy the very good examples set by adults. No raised voices were heard in the nursery and this harmonious learning environment makes a strong contribution to children's learning. No instances of unacceptable behaviour were seen during the inspection and parents report that they are pleased with how children behave in school.

14. Relationships throughout the school are very good. Staff work well together and establish a warm rapport with the children in their care. As a result, children are very happy at school and make the most of their time there. Many chat to one another during activities and are happy to lend a hand to their peers, some of whom have specific physical disabilities requiring practical help from time to time. Mutual caring features prominently in the school and children demonstrate small acts of kindness quite naturally. For instance, one younger girl could not clip her piece of art paper to the easel so another girl took the bulldog clip from her, deftly positioned the paper and attached it to the easel so that her friend could begin painting without waiting for an adult to come.

15. Children's levels of personal development are good overall. They are keen to extend their independence and to carry on without adult intervention. They manage to put their cups back on the trolley at snacktime and hang up aprons after messy activities. From time to time, children are not offered enough opportunity to build on this personal development even more. For example, children do not self-register at the start of the sessions, they do not play a strong role at snacktime in collecting or serving what they are going to eat and drink and, during the course of the inspection, they did not regularly tidy away at the end of activities. However, many children happily look after their own personal needs, and use the well appointed bathroom and toilets independently. They are not able to use soap to wash their hands after using the toilet or participating in messy art activities as the bars of soap are kept out of reach on window ledges. The majority of children are capable of doing all these things.

16. Levels of attendance are satisfactory and regular patterns of attendance allow children to settle more easily into school routines. Parents are conscientious about informing the school of any reasons for absence and a high proportion of the children arrive on time. This ensures a prompt start to sessions.

HOW WELL ARE THE PUPILS TAUGHT?

17. 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 thirteen per cent of the lessons were judged to be unsatisfactory. Now none of the teaching is unsatisfactory and the picture is much more positive. Tasks set for the children are well organised and planning is more detailed with all staff involved in deciding what is taught. They work much more closely together so that children receive a similar range of curriculum experiences regardless of who is working with them. Children of all levels of attainment are well catered for, with higher attainers given work which challenges them to think harder.

18. Staff understand of the needs of young children well, particularly those who have special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language. They support children by generally setting tasks at just the right level and then making sure they are available to help if any of the group members start to struggle. They keep valuable records of what children have achieved and evaluate the success of the lessons. The school recognizes this is an area in which it could improve by making sure these evaluations are consistently used to plan the next lessons. It happens some of the time but not always.

19. Literacy and numeracy skills are generally well taught. For example, staff share stories with their groups during most sessions and practise counting using number rhymes. A particular feature is the successful way in which some staff manage to make valuable curriculum links to other areas when they are working with their groups. A good example of this was seen during a story session with a large group. The adult read a story about 'Snuffle's House'. The house had been destroyed and needed to be replaced. She allowed lots of interruptions as children made their suggestions and contained their enthusiasm, challenging them to think logically. His new house had to be designed in a certain shape if it was to be successful and so they all considered which would provide most stability. "It needs to be a square or a triangle or it will rock if we use that circle" said one child. "No it won't", said another, "it will roll if it's built in a circle and that's no use is it?" As a result, children learnt faster because the adult would not settle for the first answer and encouraged children of all ability levels to make a contribution and try harder. The adult working with them knew the individual needs of each group member very well. This meant she was able to work out just the right level of questioning and she could also integrate the right amount of English and mother tongue words into the lesson, meaning that everyone could be successful.

20. Teachers place a high priority on children settling well into school, as well as improving their personal, social and emotional development. They carefully explain how children should behave themselves and the children respond accordingly by moving sensibly between activities showing consideration to their classmates. Snack times are much pleasanter, social experiences for the children than was found when the last inspection took place. Children are in smaller groups and so they have more time to talk to an adult, sharing news and talking about tasks they have worked on.

21. The consistency of the teaching across each area of the curriculum is a particular strength. This helps to improve children's learning opportunities because it means there is always a wide range of interesting and worthwhile activities available for them to choose from. Mathematical development is taught successfully through other areas of learning where children are encouraged to apply what they know; for example, counting the number of children allowed to play with the water and working out if there are any spaces left. It is only on a few occasions that the quality of the teaching does not meet these standards, although it is still satisfactory. Some opportunities to encourage children's independence are missed when adults tidy up for them following creative lessons and opportunities to build on reading and writing skills are not always taken. For example, children do not self register as they arrive each day. Similarly, the pace of some activities is slower than it might be. An example of this was seen when children were asked to listen, in turn, to the sounds made by two musical instruments. The large number in the group meant they had to wait for others, not everyone got a turn and some became unsettled.

22. A feature of the school is the way in which adults encourage children to behave well. They insist on good standards 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 enough to try new experiences. Staff also make good use of the available resources to support their teaching. For example, information and communications technology is used more often than when inspectors last visited the school, children are well taught and there is greater access to modern computers and suitable software. Similarly, teaching in the area of knowledge and understanding of the world makes imaginative use of equipment and materials to grab children's interest. A good example of this was seen when materials were mixed to produce different textures.

23. All groups of children within the school are equally well taught. This is because the staff identify their needs early on. Some good examples of this are seen in the way in which staff were beginning to offer higher attainers more challenging tasks. Children who have special educational needs are also

taught well and they each have a detailed plan, which sets out targets for them to work towards. Because staff know the children's needs so well, tasks are set that build children's confidence and encourage them to take on new challenges. For example, during an activity which involved completing a jigsaw, one girl, working with a bilingual assistant, found difficulty in understanding how the pieces could be fitted together. The adult working with her showed great patience and supported her attempts to find the correct position, reinforcing the learning by referring to positional language such as "could that piece go above or below?" She offered ideas and suggestions but made sure the girl produced her own solution.

24. The pupil was confident and knew that if she tried and made errors it did not matter. She persevered and eventually managed to complete the task.

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

25. The school curriculum is good and provides children with stimulating opportunities for learning.

26. Curriculum planning is good. Following the last inspection, the school has reviewed all stages of planning and it is now linked to the Early Learning Goals. The curriculum is covered through the use of school topics, which take account of children's interests. The topic 'All about me' is covered in the first few weeks of the school year when a high priority is given to children's personal, social and emotional development. The six areas of the curriculum are planned in detail identifying, for example, what staff want children to learn, key questions to ask, vocabulary to be taught and who will be helping them. There is a good balance between those activities which children choose for themselves and those led by adults.

27. Teachers, including part time staff, nursery nurses and support staff work very well together. They all take an active part in planning the curriculum, which provides a clear structure for the teaching to be undertaken and the organisation and management of the nursery.

28. 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. There are times, however, when the teaching of children's writing skills is not always emphasised enough throughout the nursery. For example, there are some occasions when adults write children's names on paintings instead of encouraging them to write it themselves. There are few examples of children's written work on display around the nursery.

29. Good provision is made for the children's personal, social and emotional development. The school's work in this area is well linked to other aspects of the curriculum. For example, emphasis is placed on healthy eating and children learn about different foods.

30. Most areas in the nursery are well equipped with suitable resources and learning materials. However, there are times, in the creative area, when adults choose a small selection of resources for the children and opportunities for them to have independent selection and choice from a wide range of resources are missed.

31. Good provision is made for children with special educational needs. Some children's special needs are identified before they start at the nursery through the good links the school has developed with local agencies such as health visitors and general practitioners. Adults know the children well and any

giving cause for concern are quickly identified. Suitable work is planned for them and the caring, sensitive support the children receive ensures they all can take part in their chosen activities. Progress is regularly reviewed and they all make good progress towards the targets set in their individual educational plans.

32. All children have equal access to the curriculum. Frequent opportunities are provided for the children to make choices, take decisions and develop as independent learners. Children are treated as individuals. Boys and girls have the same choices and care is taken to make sure that they become fully involved. Adults know the children well and they are monitored informally as they move around the activities. This ensures that any children who initially only visit a narrow group of activities are guided by an adult to any areas they have missed.

33. The school now makes good use of the local community facilities to support and extend children's learning. For example, children visited the Post Office to send letters and pictures to a member of staff who was ill. Similarly, they go to the shops to buy ingredients for snack time. Children also select books from the library bus to add to the school book collection. Visitors come to the school, such as the Road Safety Officer, an artist and a magician. All these experiences broaden and enrich the children's learning.

34. There are good links with colleges of further education. The school welcomes students such as nursery nurses in training and students on work experience. There are established links with other nursery schools to share good practice and for training purposes. For example, members of local nurseries and feeder schools have met to devise a Foundation Stage Pupil Progress Record. 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 go to visit their prospective new school. The nursery sends a record for each child to the transfer school, which helps the move to go smoothly.

35. Overall, the school makes good provision for children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This is an improvement from the last inspection.

36. Provision for children's spiritual development is good because the nursery environment is a place where awe and wonder is a continual feature of every day. Adults use spontaneous moments well to develop a sense of amazement. For example, children working with corn flour marvelled as the powder changed to a mixture when water was added. The nursery routine provides opportunities for children to talk about their experiences and feelings in small group time. For example, an adult introducing the song, 'If you are happy and you know it' encouraged children to discuss what makes them happy. With sensitive adult support, most children contributed to the discussion and offered suggestions, such as 'stories about bears,' 'my birthday' and 'ice cream'. Children's efforts were valued and no one felt pressured into replying. All then sang the song with great enjoyment.

37. The provision for moral and social development is good. All adults encourage honesty, fairness, respect and care for others. The school is successful in helping children to understand the difference between right and wrong. All children's behaviour is good. Adults teach the children to behave with self control, to be tolerant, courteous and have good manners. They listen well to each other, respecting what others have to say. During role-play on 'Thomas the Tank Engine' for example, the adult ensured all children took part in the play, encouraged them to work together amicably and to take turns to be the driver.

38. 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.

39. The provision for children's cultural development is good. Children learn traditional songs and take part in ring games, such as 'Here we go round the mulberry bush.' Visitors, such as road safety officers, an artist and a female magician give children an understanding of the work of people in the wider community. Respect for and the valuing of other cultures is introduced through the celebrations of festivals and special days. Children celebrate Eid, Divali, Christmas and special days such as birthdays. Effective use of stories from around the world reinforce children's learning. The story of 'Handa's Surprise' stimulated children's interest and all enjoyed the experience of eating the exotic fruits referred to in the story. While there is a wide range of resources to support this provision, more dual language books are needed.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

40. Standards of pastoral care at the school are consistently good and provision is better than at the time the school was last inspected.

41. Effective child protection procedures are in place. The headteacher is the adult designated responsible for this area and she has received the appropriate training. Staff are kept up to date with any changes to the local guidance and all the necessary local authority documentation is available. The school provides good levels of support for children with special educational needs and effective liaison takes place with outside support agencies. Children who are learning English as an additional language are offered effective support from a bilingual teacher; this provision has improved since the last inspection. These children are helped to settle at school more easily and feel secure, as they can understand what they are being asked to do.

42. Good systems ensure children's health, safety and general well being. An appropriate number of staff have first aid training, any minor accidents are carefully recorded and emergency drills are practised regularly by staff and children. Care is taken to ensure children's safety when they learn and play outdoors as well as in classrooms.

43. Registers are carefully completed at the very start of each session by a member of staff who greets children and their parents in the entrance hall. This system is an improvement on the one previously used as it provides an accurate headcount from the very start of the session. Attendance is monitored by staff and most children come to school regularly. The headteacher reminds parents of the importance of punctuality and very few children are brought to school late. This allows a smooth start to a session with little wasted time, and children have a clear understanding of what is happening as they do not miss teachers' introductions to activities.

44. There are effective procedures in place to promote good behaviour among children. Clear policies ensure staff are consistent in their approach to promoting high standards of good behaviour. They are always very calm and sensitive in their dealings with the children. As a result, children are relaxed and happy in this caring and supportive environment. Children are polite and very well behaved and have a basic understanding of what is right and what they are expected to do. Snacktimes are very orderly and staff reinforce good manners.

45. The school maintains good procedures for monitoring and supporting children's personal development. The induction programme is gradual and enables parents to stay with their children until they become familiar with the school environment. Staff know the children well and are quick to identify any children who require additional support.

46. The school has made a start in implementing assessment systems but recognizes that more work remains to be done. Staff assess children informally and intuitively put them on to the next level of learning. Checklists are colour coded to show what children can do by the end of each term and additional written comments are added from time to time. At present, ongoing information about how well children are doing tends to be shared with parents on a verbal basis.

47. The same basic system of assessment is used for children who are learning to speak English as an additional language. These assessments are more extensive as they are complemented by detailed daily analysis of how each child has coped with a task and gives a clear picture of how they have achieved.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

48. Parents have positive views of the school and are complimentary about the staff, finding them friendly and approachable. They wholeheartedly agree that their children like school. They also agree that the teaching is good and that children make good progress; inspection findings confirm these views.

49. The school establishes good links with parents so that they have a clear understanding of the school's expectations. Parents like the fact that they can talk to staff at the beginning or end of each session and that their concerns or problems are quickly addressed.

50. The quality of information provided for parents is good overall. Informative newsletters are sent to parents about what is happening in school and the topics to be covered that term. The school does not produce information in languages other than English, although, so far, at least one member of each family has been able to translate information sent home and this has not proved to be a problem. Noticeboards in the entrance hall display the school's planning for the term so that parents know what their children are going to learn. This helps them to support their children's learning at home. Staff are happy for parents to ask to look at their record books which show what children can do and also contain a small sample of work by each child. Unusually, two written progress reports are sent to parents each year. The first is sent halfway through the year and gives a brief overview of how well children are coping with each area of learning. At the end of the year, a more detailed checklist is sent to parents. This shows what children can do by the time they leave the school. Sometimes, additional comments provide a clearer indication of exactly what a child can do.

51. Parents make a satisfactory contribution to the school and to their children's learning. They bring their children to school regularly and ensure they are punctual. They make use of the school's book and toy library and some parents help to run this. Some parents are also involved in making Story Sacks for children to borrow and this helps to support their learning outside school. Two or three parents help in school with snacktime and most parents attend meetings about their children or the school. Many parents make a positive contribution to the school through their support of fundraising and social activities organised by the nursery. Recently, some parents also attended a programme of parent discussions run in conjunction with a health visitor that covered a range of subjects pertinent to parents of young children.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

52. Both leadership and management are good. There is clear evidence that progress has been made in a number of important areas where weaknesses were identified during the last inspection. For example, performance management has been successfully introduced and the headteacher regularly checks now on the quality of the teaching and learning. As a result, standards of teaching are higher

and activities are better organized. The school has also started to review its own performance by gathering information on the progress made by different groups of children. Work on this has only just begun and the school is using the data collected from individual records to create an overview. It has recognized that more accurate data will be required if this is to be of value in giving year on year comparisons.

53. Effective leadership encourages everyone to contribute to the school's plans and this results in a strong sense of teamwork where nursery nurses are viewed as valued partners. An example of this is seen in the way in which everyone helps to decide on the school's current priorities. These are then summarized in the school development plan. This clearly sets out how the school will progress over the year and what its priorities will be. It sets out targets for improvement over a limited timescale and describes what resources will be needed. Governors play an important role in the life and work of the school. They contribute to the plan and formally agree it. Governors meet regularly and are able to talk confidently about the school's strengths and weaknesses. The local education authority has overall legal responsibility for the school and fulfils all its statutory responsibilities.

54. The school's aims and values are included in the information booklet for parents and they are reviewed annually. They can be witnessed in the everyday life and work of the school. Good examples of these aims are the way in which staff and children show such care and consideration for one another. Most children take their turn when waiting for their snack and know that they have to listen to others during discussions.

55. Communication systems within the school are generally good. Staff are friendly and approachable, confirming the positive views expressed by parents at their meeting with inspectors and in their written responses. They feel confident to make contact with them if they have a query or concern. 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 working well. For example, the headteacher and governors seek out best value when purchasing materials and equipment.

56. There are good levels of well qualified and experienced staff to teach the children. Funds allocated to support children who have special educational needs are well used. Children receive extra support that allows them to access the full curriculum range and work towards the targets set out for them in their individual education plans (IEPs). Eighteen per cent of the children are learning English as an additional language, with many at an early stage of language acquisition. The inspection found that staff working with different groups of children focused accurately on their specific needs and made sure that they were working successfully towards the targets set for them. This is a better picture than when the school was last inspected. On that occasion, children learning English as an additional language had no specialist support available.

57. Resources are good for all the areas of learning. They are usually well cared for but they are not always organized in a way that makes it easy for children to make choices or to clear away after they have used them. Accommodation is good for the number of children on roll and the outdoor area is a useful resource.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- (1) Increase the opportunities to improve children's reading and writing skills by:
 - Raising the profile of print around the nursery, for example, encouraging children to self register

- Giving children regular opportunities to practise their skills
- Ensuring there is a consistency between staff about when children should be expected to make marks on their work
(paragraphs 21, 73, 74)

(2) Continue to increase children's independence by:

- Ensuring that they tidy away after activities
- Becoming more involved at snack time, for example giving out food
- Providing more opportunities to select their own resources and make choices
(paragraphs 15, 21, 30, 38, 57, 66, 70, 104, 105)

(3) Increase the pace of learning in some lessons by:

- Making sure that activities do not last too long and that children are given a chance to contribute
- Checking that adults do not provide too much support
(paragraphs 21, 76, 80, 103)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of sessions observed	38
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	2	29	7	0	0	0
Percentage	0	5	76	19	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 almost three percentage points. In addition three 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)	36.5
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	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	6

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	13

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	9
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	9

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	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	81

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

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.

Financial information

Financial year	2000/2001
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	£
Total income	28805
Total expenditure	28517
Expenditure per pupil	713
Balance brought forward from previous year	2138
Balance carried forward to next year	2426

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.	97	3			
My child is making good progress in school.	69	20			11
Behaviour in the school is good.	69	29			2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	20	17	6		9
The teaching is good.	80	17			3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	54	34	3	3	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.	51	31			9
The school works closely with parents.	54	40	3		3
The school is well led and managed.	69	29			
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	71	23			3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	46	3			20

(The rows do not always add up to 100% because a number of parents did not respond to some of the statements)

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

PROVISION FOR CHILDREN WITH ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE

58. The provision for pupils who are learning English as an additional language is good. This aspect of the school's provision has improved considerably since the last inspection when it was criticised. It has improved because a bilingual assistant has been employed who works closely with children learning English as an additional language and their families. She plans activities carefully, keeps detailed records and is well supported by all the staff. Currently, eighteen per cent of the children are in this category and most of these are able to communicate in English and take part in all the areas of learning.

59. The majority of children have Urdu and Punjabi as their home language. During their time in nursery, they make good progress. This is because of their keenness to learn and the skilled teaching that identifies their individual needs and sets out a suitable programme of work. The majority are on course to reach standards expected in English communication, language and literacy by the end of the Foundation Stage.

60. The school has one nursery nurse who is employed to work with these children. She is of Asian heritage and able to speak Urdu, Punjabi and English. The school has been successful in removing many of the barriers to learning for children in its care. This is because of the way staff carefully build children's confidence and identify what stage they have reached in speaking and listening to English.

61. A particular feature of the provision is the way all staff work very closely together to promote language development. Children are offered an interesting range of suitable activities, with small groups or individuals targeted where necessary. These arrangements are flexible and meet the needs of the children well. For example, children who are new to the school are slowly introduced to group activities so that their confidence can be built.

62. Valuable records are kept of children's progress in acquiring language skills. A checklist of attainment is regularly updated by the bilingual assistant who works with these children. She also keeps information about progress made in other curriculum areas and this helps to ensure that strengths and weaknesses in all subjects are identified early.

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

63. Attainment for the vast majority of children in personal, social and emotional development is likely to reach the level expected by the end of the Foundation Stage. This is an area in which the teaching and development of skills are given a very high priority. Children of all abilities make good progress in all aspects of personal and social development. Children learning English as an additional language and those with special educational needs also make good progress. This is due to the good support they receive from adults.

64. Children are confident in the daily routines of the nursery. On arrival, most children hang up their own coats and readily say goodbye to their parents. They look around with interest at the activities on offer, and are eager to take part. Some children are very selective and go into both rooms before choosing their first activity. Children quickly develop friendships with other children and adults.

65. Children develop positive attitudes to their learning and persevere and concentrate on their work. When they complete one activity many children start the next one without being directed by an adult. They handle equipment and materials with care. Children work contentedly individually and most work well together in pairs or in small or large groups for activities and stories.

66. All staff encourage children to accept responsibility for some nursery tasks. For example, most put on aprons as a matter of course when working with water or art materials and hang them up when finished. All are taught to be responsible for their own coats when going outside. Many can put on their coats and a few can zip them up. Well-established routines ensure few need help with the toilet or to wash their hands. However, opportunities to develop responsibility and independence are not consistently promoted throughout the school session. At 'clearing away time' for example, many children leave resources and equipment for adults to tidy away when they move on to story or music time.

67. Most children are beginning to understand the rules of the nursery and some remind others to keep to them. A new child, for example, who was going outside to play without her coat on was reminded by others to go to the cloakroom and get her coat and put it on. All children are encouraged to be kind, helpful and sensitive to the needs of their friends. For example, others spontaneously helped a child with a sore leg. They realised that she had some difficulty walking so they collected her paintings from the teacher and gave them to her so that she did not have to stand up.

68. Adults encourage children to be courteous and polite to everyone in the nursery. Most say 'please' and 'thank you' readily and others say 'sorry' spontaneously if they accidentally knock against someone.

69. Most of the teaching of personal, social and emotional development is good. Teachers and nursery nurses have a very good understanding of how young children learn. They have good relationships with the children and understand their needs. All are patient and kind with the children, giving them plenty of time to answer questions and develop confidence. A good example of this was seen when an adult reading a story about 'A Bear Hunt' listened as a child explained that she always likes stories about bears. Other children wanted to explain their reason for liking the story. The adult sensitively supported each child's contribution, giving ready praise and encouragement as they tried to explain why.

70. On those occasions when the teaching is less successful, opportunities to encourage children to be more independent are missed. Although snack time now is a pleasant, social occasion there are occasions when adults give children too much support. Children sit at the table and the adult hands out the dishes of biscuits, cheese and fruit and gives out the drinks to each child.

71. 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.

Communication, Language and Literacy

72. Most children are on course to reach the Early Learning Goals, the standards expected by the end of Reception class. They make good progress during their time in nursery as they move through the 'Stepping Stones' which are the suggested stages towards the Early Learning Goals. Standards have improved in a number of areas since the last inspection when some aspects were criticized. Children's listening skills are much better. The majority are able to listen carefully for prolonged periods and then follow the instructions they are given. Good examples of this could be seen when they took messages

to other groups or told their classmates it was time to collect their snack. Children watch carefully and are able to join in the chorus of simple rhymes. This has helped them to increase their vocabulary.

73. Children enjoy using the writing area when they are given the opportunity. The majority can hold a pencil well, some can write their own name but they are not always given enough opportunity to practise. For example, in a creative lesson, a few children made an attempt at writing their own name on their painting but most did not. They let the adult working with them write their name and did not attempt to copy it or write over it. On other occasions, when they were encouraged to write, they produced good results.

74. Children enjoy listening to stories and sharing books with adults. Most are able to retell parts of the story they have heard and also describe their favourite stories and why they like them. For example, one group listened, enthralled, as an adult read a story about a journey undertaken by a child. They spoke excitedly as they anticipated what might happen next and then explained why they thought the main characters behaved in the way they did. Some higher attainers were able to talk about what they had found when they had looked at other books from the library corner. Many children are able to recognise their own names but they have few opportunities to practise their reading skills. For example, they do not register using their own names at the start of the session and print does not feature often enough in work around the nursery.

75. Teaching is much better than when the school was last inspected. On that occasion, one in five lessons was unsatisfactory. Now the teaching is good and this helps the children to make faster progress. The lessons are planned in much more detail and adults are clearer about what they expect children to learn during the lesson. A good example of this was seen during a role play activity when the adult working with the children used their imaginative play very effectively to improve their language skills. Children had created 'Thomas the Tank Engine', complete with a seats for the driver, fireman and passengers. The whole group contributed and talked confidently about the role they were playing. Whenever the conversation slowed or children lacked confidence, the adult skillfully intervened, making sure the activity stayed purposeful.

76. In the more ordinary lessons, the teaching was satisfactory but pace of the learning was slower and some learning opportunities were missed. An example of this was seen during a group activity when the adult was talking to the children about colours that they could recognize. She asked them suitable questions but did not give some of the children long enough to answer, intervening with "Yes that one is dark blue isn't it." and then taking longer than necessary to discuss a colour with which they were all familiar.

77. Most children respond well to the lessons and cooperate. They stay actively involved and show good examples of sustained concentration.

78. Children who have special educational needs are identified early and they receive a good level of skilled support from the adults who work with them. They have detailed programmes of work which give them the opportunity to make consistently good progress. Children enjoy their work because staff make it interesting and children experience success in what they do. Similarly, staff are beginning to identify those children who are higher attainers and are setting work for them at a suitably challenging level.

Mathematical Development

79. Children make good progress and most are on course to reach the Early Learning Goals by the time they reach the end of the Foundation Stage. There is greater consistency in the standards found

during this inspection than when the school was last inspected. On that occasion, fewer children stayed on task during large group activities. These are better organized now and are used much more productively to improve children's mathematical skills. For example, children practise counting as they work out how many snacks are needed and some higher attainers are encouraged to try to describe the shapes they have drawn during their creative activities. The way in which children are encouraged to recognize mathematic shapes in everyday objects and then talk about their features is a strength of the mathematical work. Staff are successful because they encourage children to practise their skills regularly and consolidate what they have learned.

80. Many children count to ten, with some higher attainers counting up to twenty in the correct sequence. Few are able to recognize numbers or write them but they are confident in other aspects of their mathematical skills. For example, they are good at making comparisons and sorting small objects, according to size or colour. Similarly, their use of simple mathematical language is developing well as they talk about "more", "bigger" and "heavier" when describing the differences in the amount of water they have put into their containers. Many are already able to identify patterns and recreate some for themselves. For example, in one group the adult gave children jigsaws to complete. They were able to spot the repeating patterns and complete them quickly. Occasionally, the pace of children's learning during these jigsaw activities is too slow. This happens when the jigsaws used are too simple and not challenging enough for some of the children who complete them quickly.

81. The overall picture is, nevertheless, a positive one. Children learn well and they make good progress in their mathematics. They receive a good level of adult support and their work is set at the right level.

82. Children behave very well and are keen to succeed. This contributes to the standards they achieve because they have such positive attitudes towards their work.

83. The quality of teaching in mathematics is good overall which is better than when it was last inspected. In the most successful lessons, adults make good links with other activities. For example, during a story session children were asked to work out how many fruits had 'disappeared' from a basket being carried during a journey. To calculate the answer children had to 'add up' and apply their mathematical knowledge. Most of the group was successful because children found the activity enjoyable and the adult offered the correct level of support. Even those children, who found the adding up difficult, still made an attempt because they knew the adult would value their contribution even if it was wrong.

84. The last inspection report found inconsistencies in teaching. It is better now that the planning is more detailed and staff identify what they want children to know.

Knowledge and Understanding of the World

85. The majority of children are on course to reach the standards expected for children of this age at the end of the Foundation Stage. They experience a good range of interesting activities within the nursery and show curiosity about the world around them. They are keen to find out about different things, and are good at describing similarities and differences. An example was seen during a lesson when children handled different fruits. All the group members were able to identify some of their properties, using their senses to make comparisons. One child said "this banana skin smells but it is smooth" whilst another child talked about a pineapple that was "really rough and hard to get open".

86. In small group activities, children show a growing understanding of how materials can change as they add water. They talk about what they see and speculate what might happen if they add too much

water: "it will be really soggy". When questioned by adults, they can talk about other materials that change; for example, how candles melt when they are lit. They were keen to describe what happened to the candles in their houses over the Christmas holiday.

87. Children investigate construction materials, build tracks and decide which designs will work. They use different tools such as scissors and glue sticks safely, with some already mastering the necessary skills and techniques.

88. Computer skills are generally good and this is a much more positive picture than when the school was last inspected. Standards have improved because children have access to better machines and the school has introduced a wider range of suitable software that keeps children interested. For example, they practised their manipulative skills by changing pictures on the screen, 'dragging' objects using the mouse. Because the program was linked to the 'Thomas the Tank Engine' theme', all the children were keen to have a go and none left before they had completed the activity.

89. Most children know that significant personal events are celebrated such as birthdays and so staff focus on these occasions, helping children to increase their vocabulary. They are able to describe their parties and talk about some of the presents they have received. 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 through some of the stories they read with their teacher. For example, one group listened attentively to a story about the life of a young girl in Kenya and compared her experiences with theirs.

90. Throughout their time in nursery, children increase their understanding of the community in which they live through regular local visits, for example to the shops. The school was criticised during the last inspection because it had too few local links and so good progress has been made in this area.

91. Teaching is good and this is because the activities are better organized and carefully planned. Staff concentrate on encouraging children to talk about the world around them and carefully observe what they see. In the best lessons, adults provide opportunities for children to learn from direct experience. For example, they are given different materials to mix with water and children describe what they see. Through skilful questioning, the adults draw out children's own explanations about why things are as they are, such as "I'm sure that bottle will sink if we put it in the tray, it's too heavy". All the children's contributions are valued and this helps to build their confidence.

Physical development

92. 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.

93. Indoors, the children use a good range of small equipment with increasing skill when printing sticking and cutting. Children are developing increasing control as they use scissors, for example, to cut out pictures to make a collage. They use glue sticks competently to mount their pictures on backing paper to display on the classroom wall. Most children roll, mould and shape dough enthusiastically. They use rolling pins, cutters and plastic knives, taking great care to use the tools and equipment safely as demonstrated by the adults. All use a good range of construction kits successfully to build towers and models and many children can join train tracks with dexterity to make complex layouts.

94. An indoor climbing activity in the shape of a caterpillar is available for children to use throughout the session. This is an improvement from the last inspection when children did not have regular access to climbing equipment. Most children climb on the caterpillar's feet and other confident children climb

up onto the top, balance on their hands and feet and then slide down with care and control. Others crawl around and through the caterpillar, negotiating who will travel through first. All have a good awareness of space and each other as they move around the caterpillar.

95. The school planning and photographs indicate that children play out daily on the playground and makes good use of the outdoor equipment when the weather is fine. Although it rained heavily for most of the inspection, children were able to go outdoors for a short time in between the showers. Many children run and chase each other energetically around the playground, adjusting speed and changing direction to avoid a collision. They can all jump about using two feet and some can hop and jump on one foot. All behave with self control and stop and start at a given signal. Children behave sensibly and form a circle with others to play 'Here we go round the Mulberry Bush'.

96. The quality of the teaching is good, both indoors and out. This is an improvement from the last inspection. Planning is more detailed, with clear objectives, well prepared and effectively organised. Adults carefully focus on the skill to be developed. An example of this was seen outdoors when some new children had difficulty hopping on one foot. The adult demonstrated how to hop and encouraged the children to persevere until they succeeded. She constantly praised the children for their effort 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.

Creative Development

98. Children make good progress in developing their creative skills. Most are likely to reach the expected standards by the end of the Foundation Stage.

99. Children are enthusiastic and keen to take part in all aspects of the creative areas of development. Activities are available on a daily basis and children have free access to paint and paper at all times. They enjoy painting pictures using large brushes, and some showed delight and satisfaction as they made patterns, selecting different shapes of paper and using a variety of shades of blue paint. Children are encouraged to look closely at objects and make observational drawings using pencils and crayons. Similarly, they begin to appreciate different textures. Children explore and use malleable materials such as dough and concentrated for long periods when manipulating a mixture of corn flour and water. They worked initially with trepidation and then enjoyment as they made swirling patterns in the mixture with their hands.

100. There is a good range of opportunities to develop children's imagination through play, listening to stories and talking about events. Children enjoyed dressing up as the engine driver and passengers in the role-play area so they could travel on 'Thomas the Tank Engine'. This newly established area promotes creative and imaginative play.

101. Children dance to music with great enthusiasm. They respond to sounds and rhythm and some children can follow a series of movements. All enjoy songs and rhymes and take part with eagerness, often accompanying their songs with expressive hand actions. Sensitive support ensures all children, including those with special educational needs, participate fully in this activity and make good progress.

102. The quality of teaching is good in most of the lessons and the rest is satisfactory. Where the teaching is good, activities are well prepared and enable children to learn from direct experience. This successfully reinforces their understanding. For example, during a drawing activity the teacher carefully explained about self-portraits to the children. She then focused them on their reflection in a mirror, giving them plenty of time to look carefully at themselves. She gave ready praise and

encouragement as they drew the shape of their face and added the details of eyes, eyelashes, eyebrows and other features. Children developed enthusiasm and confidence as the teacher valued their individual skills and capabilities.

103. However, lessons do not always progress at a brisk pace. This happens during some music lessons in group time. For example, in one lesson in group time, children taking part in a listening game waited to be chosen to play two instruments or to be the listener. Some children were disappointed that they were not able to have a turn as the activity finished. The chances to develop all of the children's enthusiasm and enjoyment were missed here.

104. Opportunities for children to consolidate skills and develop independence when painting at an easel are sometimes missed. Some children hold paintbrushes in an incorrect grip and adults do not always correct them. Adults also take children's paintings away and put them on to the drying rack, rather than letting them do it for themselves.

105. The school has a good range of resources but they are not always accessible to the children. For example, children making a 3D model were restricted to selecting resources from a group on the table - blue paint and a dish containing a group of pre selected shapes of paper. The larger bank of resources was not made accessible to them.