

INSPECTION REPORT

Longshaw Nursery School

Blackburn

LEA area: Blackburn and Darwen

Unique reference number: 119084

Headteacher: Mrs J. Bennett

Reporting inspector: Mr P. M. Allen
Rgl's OIN 17531

Dates of inspection: 4th – 5th December 2001

Inspection number: 230560

Short 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:	Crosby Road Blackburn Lancashire
Postcode:	BB2 3NF
Telephone number:	01254 698832
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Appropriate authority:	Blackburn and Darwen Borough Council
Name of chair of governors:	Cllr. Mrs F. Oldfield
Date of previous inspection:	16 th March 1998

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Longshaw Nursery is an average sized nursery school situated on the outskirts of Blackburn in an area of social deprivation which is designated as an Education Action Zone. The school is on a large estate of part council and part housing association homes, with a number of properties being demolished, a number being refurbished and a number which are empty. Up to eighty children attend part-time for either the morning or the afternoon session. There are a similar number of boys and girls. Virtually all the children come from the immediate area of the school. There are a few children for whom English is an additional language. At the present time virtually all children attend the Nursery for one complete year, prior to starting school, most of them at the neighbouring infant school; from January 2002, due to fewer children attending the school, a number of autumn born children will start school and attend for five terms. The school uses a range of screening materials to check attainments on entry which, for the vast majority, are below what could be expected, especially in aspects of language, including speaking and listening, and in personal and social skills. There are nine children on the register of special educational needs. Around 20 per cent are eligible for free school meals.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an effective nursery school with a caring, community ethos. It gives children a good start to their school lives. Children make good progress during their time in the Nursery and grow in confidence and independence. If the current rate of progress is sustained, most of the children are likely to achieve the Early Learning Goals which have been identified for young children. The overall good quality of teaching enables all children to achieve well relative to their abilities. The school is inclusive of all groups of children in all of its practices. The school benefits from the commitment of its headteacher who provides good leadership.

What the school does well

- ◆ The children are provided with a broad and imaginative curriculum.
- ◆ There are very good induction arrangements which contribute to the very good relationships with the parents and carers.
- ◆ The very good standards of accommodation and learning resources make a significant contribution to the learning environment.
- ◆ The school provides a supportive ethos with a high standard of care.
- ◆ There is very good provision for the children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

What could be improved

- ◆ The arrangements for group times, including the involvement of the nursery nurses.
- ◆ The arrangements for the assessing, recording and reporting of the children's attainment and progress.
- ◆ The promotion and monitoring of attendance.
- ◆ The opportunities for children to take books home.

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, when it received a positive report. Since then it has steadily improved. The issues have been well addressed. The provision for large outdoor climbing equipment has been extended and the old sandpit has been replaced by a new one which provides a very useful resource. Improvements since the last inspection include better links with parents, more thorough planning and better provision for writing, for information and communication technology and for creative work. The accommodation has been improved in many respects, such as the replacement of the roof, the toilets and the windows. Amongst the staff there is a shared commitment to further improvement and a shared capacity to succeed.

STANDARDS

There is no standards table for nursery schools as children normally leave before the end of the Foundation Stage.

The national Early Learning Goals establish expectations for most children to reach across six areas of learning by the end of the Reception year in primary schools (the Foundation Stage). In personal, social and emotional development virtually all the children are likely to meet the goals. In the physical area of learning, in knowledge and understanding of the world and in the creative area of learning, all the children are likely to meet the goals. In communication, language and literacy and in mathematical development, all children are likely to meet most of the goals, but a significant minority may not achieve the higher level competencies in these two areas. Across the six areas, only a very small minority of children are likely to exceed the goals. Across the areas of learning all children are helped to achieve well relative to their abilities.

CHILDREN'S ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	The children have good attitudes to learning. They are enthusiastic and keen to learn and their enjoyment is clear to see.
Behaviour	The behaviour is good. Children respond well to instructions and the high expectations made of them.
Personal development and relationships	Personal development is good and relationships are very good. Children are encouraged to be kind to one another and are becoming increasingly independent learners.
Attendance	The level of attendance is unsatisfactory, being below that expected for nursery schools. The school does not sufficiently monitor attendance or sufficiently promote good attendance. A significant minority of children are late on a regular basis.

The school promotes positive behaviour and positive attitudes to work and this is central to its ethos, having a significant impact on the quality of learning.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of children:	
Quality of teaching	good

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

The quality of teaching by teachers and nursery nurses is good overall. The quality of learning is good overall. The school is largely successful in meeting the needs of all the children, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. The teaching is more effective in the small groups than it is with the larger groups, especially in the involvement of children and in the promotion of speaking skills. The good skills of the nursery nurses are put to effective use in leading the small groups but not in the larger group (class) time, when they sometimes have the role of observer.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is broad and balanced and provides an interesting and imaginative range of experiences which capture the children's interests. Although around half of the children benefit from the toy library, at the time of the inspection there was minimal provision to enable children to take books home. The school is well aware of the need to review its curriculum in light of the children who will spend five terms in Nursery, starting in January.
Provision for children with special educational needs	Good provision is made for children with special educational needs. They are well supported enabling them to make good progress.
Provision for children with English as an additional language	The children are well provided for, enabling them to gain confidence and make appropriate progress.
Provision for children's personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The provision is very good and the children respond well in each of these areas. The staff prepare the children well for life in the multicultural society in which they are growing up.
How well the school cares for its children	The care for each child is basic to the school's ethos and every child's contribution is valued.

The school has a very good partnership with parents who have great confidence in the school. The assessment, recording and reporting of children's attainment and progress is, in some respects, inconsistent and insufficiently developed.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The Nursery benefits from the good leadership of the headteacher. The staff work together effectively with a common purpose to meet the aims of the school. Staff are committed to improving standards.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body is supportive of the school and its headteacher and benefits from an enthusiastic and loyal chairperson. Governors fulfil their responsibilities appropriately.
The school's evaluation of its performance	A positive start has been made to school self-evaluation with firm plans to further develop the monitoring of teaching and learning.
The strategic use of resources	There is very good strategic use of resources. The effective bidding for and deployment of specific grant funding is having a positive impact on the quality of the provision.

The school benefits from a good level of staffing and spacious, well cared for accommodation. The school is well resourced in all areas of learning. Although the school does not have a delegated budget, it seeks to make the best use of its resources through careful financial planning. Good consideration is given to the principles of best value.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ The quality of the teaching and the progress children make. ◆ The behaviour of the children, the expectation that they will work well and be helped to become responsible. ◆ The information given on progress, the school's approachability and its partnership with parents. ◆ The leadership and management of the school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ There were no areas identified for improvement.

The evidence collected fully justifies the parents' confidence in the school and the inspection team endorses the positive views of parents.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

The children are provided with a broad and imaginative curriculum

1. The school provides a good range of imaginative and worthwhile learning opportunities for its children in a rich curriculum which is broad and balanced. It caters well for all its children including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language. The curriculum is planned carefully to ensure equality of access and opportunity for all children. The school is well aware of its need to make the curriculum inclusive to all, children and acts accordingly.

2. The work is planned around a cycle of topics which generally run for a term or half a term. Among the topics are ones on Colours, Celebrations, Pattern and Shape and Minibeasts. Much imaginative work is produced in art and also in the area of knowledge and understanding of the world. The school makes good use of visits and visitors to extend the curriculum. Successful visits have included local ones to the library, a garden centre, a DIY supermarket and to Sunnyhurst Woods. Visits further afield have included ones to the Martin Mere Centre, the Freshfield Squirrel Sanctuary and the Sealife Centre at Blackpool. A visit to the butterfly house at Williamson Park in Lancaster led to the children watching caterpillars change to butterflies which were subsequently released in the school garden.

3. As part of their topic on Minibeasts, children enjoyed their visitor who brought with him 'Bug Boxes' of small creatures for them to touch and study. This topic gave opportunities for the children to draw and paint woodlice and ladybirds and to study pattern and colour in butterflies. They design and print a 'bug' on the computer. They draw spring flowers and paint pictures of the cherry blossom tree in the garden at the front of the school.

4. They draw Elmer the Elephant and enjoy learning about P. B. Bear. Children are given good opportunities to design and make things such as a hat and a chair. They look at the work of famous artists such as Van Gogh and Matisse and create their own sunflowers and snails. They look at the work of Goldsworthy and then go out and collect materials from the woods to create their own pictures in a similar style. They make up a puppet show for their friends and all children enjoy taking part in the Christmas production for parents.

5. Imaginative learning opportunities were observed during the inspection when the children were undertaking activities on a Christmas theme. Children enjoyed making play dough Christmas cakes which they carefully decorated. Using a variety of sizes of brick and Father Christmases they built a sledge to carry him. Using a magnetic Christmas tree and Christmas shapes the teacher encouraged them to 'make a Christmas tree the same as mine'. In 'Father Christmas's Workshop' they were encouraged to write Christmas cards and to make lists of presents. At the computer, they 'dragged' decorations across the screen to adorn a colourful image of a Christmas tree.

6. The learning opportunities observed during the inspection and the ones featured in the school's booklets of photographic and other evidence all indicate that the children are provided with a broad and imaginative curriculum which helps to instil in the children the idea that learning is fun. This is one of the reasons why children arrive at each session enthusiastic and full of anticipation.

There are very good induction arrangements which contribute to the very good relationships with the parents and carers

7. The school's induction arrangements have improved significantly since the previous inspection. Parents and children have the opportunity to visit prior to starting school, partly through an involvement in the Toy Library. The school provides home visits and this is appreciated by the parents who are very helpful in providing a lot of useful information which makes up the early part of each child's Record of Achievement. Starting arrangements are flexible and geared to the needs of the individual child. Initially attendance is part-time, spent in small groups, with parents and carers welcome to stay for as little or as much time as is deemed appropriate.

8. This early contact often forms the basis of the very good relationships which characterise the Nursery. All parents spoken to during the inspection held the Nursery in high esteem and a number referred to the helpful induction arrangements. The previous report identified the headteacher's 'strong commitment to effective partnership with parents' and this is still very much the case. The area in which the Nursery is situated influences the aims of the school. The school sees the community and parental involvement as very important in enabling the parents to view themselves as partners in their children's education.

9. Parents are supportive of fund-raising events and give generously, both financially and with their time, raising funds to improve the school. An example of this involvement was the Christmas Fair, planned to take place just after the inspection. Parents are happy to volunteer help whenever asked, such as on trips out of the Nursery to such places as Blackpool Zoo and the Sealife Centre. Parents appreciate the school's approachability and the way that they can call in at anytime to see the staff and to look at the Records of Achievement. During the inspection, unusually for the Nursery, one child was reluctant to leave her parent. The headteacher reassured the parent and suggested that she telephone the school a little later in the morning to confirm that her child was fine.

10. One strong feature of the partnership is the provision for parents to become involved in useful training activities such as the 'Parents as Educators' course. This runs at the school and is well supported. Some parents become involved in a Teaching Assistant Course, run jointly with the local college. Involvement in this type of activity is popular. Parents help in school and contribute to creating resources such as puppets and the popular Storysacks.

11. At the end of each child's time in the Nursery, the ownership of the Record of Achievement passes to the family, marking the end of that phase of education. From the induction to the conclusion, the very good relationships between the school and the parents have a positive impact on the quality of education provided by the Nursery.

The very good standards of accommodation and learning resources make a significant contribution to the learning environment

12. The previous report identified that the school was well resourced and the accommodation well used. Since that time the school has systematically built up and developed its level of resources and made significant improvements to the accommodation. The school has been successful in making bids for extra funding, for example; through the 'Green Grant' and the 'Seed Challenge'. This has led to many of the physical improvements. Additionally the school has gained resources through being part of the local Education Action

Zone. All the developments have had a positive impact on the learning environment and the quality of education provided. The school provides a very attractive welcoming atmosphere. When parents, carers and children arrive for each session they are warmly greeted in the entrance corridor which displays a wealth of helpful information. There are very good quality displays throughout the school which celebrate the children's work and reflect the interesting and imaginative curriculum; for example, the attractive display on Diwali, the festival of light.

13. On the staff training day, prior to the inspection the staff had transformed the Nursery to reflect its focus on Christmas. There were a great many high quality displays with good use of lights, drapes, books, plants and artefacts, such as a display based on the book 'Farmyard Tales Christmas'. Part of the room was made into 'Father Christmas's 'Workshop'. When the children walked into the Nursery the following day, the first day of the inspection, their pleasure and excitement was clear to see. The quality of the visual environment reflects the ethos and values of the school.

14. The main room is well organised to support the teaching and the learning. It is divided into four areas, one for language and literacy, one for art and technology, one for mathematics, science and construction work and one for sand, water and malleable materials. Each area is very well resourced with a good range of materials. The school reviews its provision on a regular basis, always seeking ways of improvement; for example, in the year prior to the inspection around a thousand pounds was spent in developing materials to support the mathematical area of learning.

15. The school benefits from an extensive, imaginative and well resourced outdoor play area with climbing equipment which benefits from safety flooring. Additionally the outdoor area includes a store, a cycle track, a ball skills area, a new sandpit, a role playhouse and a wildlife planting area. The good use made of the wealth of resources has a positive impact on children's achievements in the physical area of learning.

16. Since the previous inspection a number of improvements have been made to the physical characteristics of the building including the renovation of the toilets, new windows, a new roof and a store which is used for parking prams.

17. The school's building and grounds are clean and tidy. The conscientious site supervisor maintains the school well. The school takes care to ensure the provision of a safe environment which is well resourced and supports the quality of education provided by the school.

The school provides a supportive ethos with a high standard of care

18. Before new children start at the Nursery a member of staff visits the home and ensures that a detailed profile of the child is recorded. When the children arrive at the school, they receive a warm welcome from the adults. The caring staff know the children well and provide good supervision in a sensitive manner. The children are made to feel special. The group sessions at the start of the day help to build the very good relationships, although disruption to these sessions due to several latecomers was observed during the inspection.

19. The school has good procedures for supporting the children's personal development. There is a very good staff handbook. The school has seven carefully written aims, which include a high emphasis on promoting the children's self-esteem. All staff and other adults,

such as the parent helpers and work experience students, are well versed on the requirements of the school's policies. The school has appropriate procedures in place for pastoral care; for example, child protection and behaviour. The staff encourage good behaviour and positive attitudes by the frequent use of praise. Prompt action helps to eradicate misbehaviour; for example, when one boy knocked over another child's wooden block construction, the teacher required him to pick up all the pieces and carefully explained why such behaviour was inappropriate.

20. Welfare provision is good. The school places a very high emphasis on the personal, health and social education. Hygiene and healthy lifestyles are well promoted. A teacher was observed checking all children who had visited the toilet to see if they had washed their hands. Staff are trained in first aid and the school keeps a comprehensive accident record. There is good support from external agencies, such as the medical visitors. Safety is given a high profile, with regular visits from police and fire officers; road safety is practised in the playground using replica crossings.

21. The way the school is well maintained, clean and tidy reflects the high standard of care. There is a very good health and safety policy and regular inspections are undertaken. The problem identified in the previous report, with regard to the sandpit, was quickly corrected by the school. No obvious safety concerns were noted during this inspection. The accommodation has been improved in many respects in recent years, such as the windows and the roof.

22. All children, including those with special needs and those with English as an additional language, are valued as individuals. The school functions with due regard to social inclusion and equal opportunities. The school succeeds in meeting its aims. In accordance with its mission statement, the school provides 'a welcoming, caring, happy and safe environment, where every child feels valued'. This comes about because of the school's very supportive ethos and high standards of care.

There is very good provision for the children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

23. The provision in these areas has improved since the previous inspection, when they were judged to be good. Provision for children's spiritual development is very good. The children are given a good range of opportunities to develop their natural imagination and curiosity. They benefit from many educational visits. The wonders of nature are studied at the Sealife Centre in Blackpool and at the Butterfly House at Lancaster. In school the children are able to handle some of the insects brought in the "Bug Box". The story of "Little Robin Redbreast" was observed being read by one of the nursery nurses to a group of children; the well-planned lesson and good use of resources led to gasps of amazement and excitement. The school ethos embodies clear values and enables the children to develop insight into the beliefs of others.

24. The curricular theme during the term of the inspection was 'Colour' with a focus on Christmas at the time of the inspection. The school had put a lot of effort into the various displays; in particular the pictures and collages on winter colours were of a very high standard. Objects such as candles and stars were laid out to promote a spiritual focus. The Christmas theme included the 'special star'. After a teacher read the book 'Was that Christmas?'

subsequent discussions with the children included reflection on what decorations the children liked and why.

25. The school teaches the principles that distinguish right from wrong. Through talk and by example, the children learn to care for and respect each other and their environment. The staff have high expectations. They work hard to promote good behaviour, using plenty of praise and sometimes stickers to reward the children. Good work is celebrated in the children's special Record of Achievement book, which is shared with parents. Discipline is taught sensitively. Even though at the time of the inspection many children had been in school for less than one term, they were beginning to know what is expected of them and to behave accordingly. The children work and play together well, co-operating in the use of resources.

26. Very clear priority is given to the children's social development. This is underpinned by the very good relationships and the school's caring, supportive ethos. The adults provide very good role models. The children work and play together in a variety of situations. Group time, especially with the smaller groups, helps to promote self-esteem and the free activity choice allows the children to make their own decisions and develop their independence. The children are given opportunities to perform in front of an audience and the good links to the neighbouring infant school include joint events such as a Fun Day. There are also strong links to Newfield and Broadland Special Schools, with handicapped and disabled pupils visiting Longshaw.

27. The children learn to share; for example, a group playing with toy farm animals took turns to stand up and play the tape recorder. They are learning to take responsibilities, such as helping to tidy up at the end of activities and helping to give out the milk. When asked if she was able to use a pencil, one child fetched a Christmas card from a windowsill to proudly show how she had written her name inside.

28. One of the school's stated aims is 'to develop an awareness of, and respect for, the needs of others and so prepare the children for life in a diverse society'. Opportunities for cultural development are provided in some areas of the curriculum and by use of the local environment. The children learn about their own heritage and the books in the Nursery promote and reflect the cultural diversity of the world. The 'Happy Birthday' poster includes the phrase written in many different languages.

29. The school celebrates many festivals, such as Chinese New Year. During the inspection displays featured the 'Diwali Lights'. The children take part in the celebrations by hearing stories and tasting examples of food. The school supports charities, such as Red Nose day. Family life is important with parental involvement encouraged through events such as the Planting Day and the celebration of Mothers' Day. The provision for the children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good and the children respond well in each of these areas.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

The arrangements for group times, including the involvement of the nursery nurses

30. Each session in the Nursery starts and ends with time spent in groups (classes) when the teachers spend time with up to eighteen children. Sometimes little or no use is made of the skills of the nursery nurses during the times in 'class'. For one part of each session children

spend time in 'colour' groups when the nursery nurses become fully involved, enabling the children to be in four groups which are approximately half the size.

31. During the inspection a number of group times were observed and the most effective were those with the smaller groups. These were more effective in promoting speaking and listening skills and enabling children to be more closely involved in the interaction. In one large group time observed, the children listened to a story from 'Farmyard Tales Christmas'. Some found it difficult to settle in the large group and very little speaking was promoted. Towards the end of the session, the nursery nurse was an observer with no involvement in the teaching and learning. At a different time, in a short activity involving virtually all the children in the Nursery, they were helped to learn 'Five Snowmen Fat'. This became a noisy activity, partly because of all the children's enthusiasm to 'be' one of the snowmen.

32. There were a number of effective 'colour' group times observed. In one, a group of five children were helped by one of the nursery nurses to closely examine some holly leaves. This activity was well planned and inclusive to all children. The questioning of the children guided their understanding, enabling them to explain that the magnifying glass made the leaves look bigger. The quality of teaching and learning was very good with a very positive impact on the children's attitudes, behaviour and engagement in the activity. 'I want you to do a beautiful picture', started off the time for observational drawing and there was constant encouragement, praise and high expectations. The very good skills of the nursery nurse were fully used, enabling all the children to achieve well and promoting their self-esteem. Each child was enabled to develop their speaking skills in a way which would not be possible in a large group, where, inevitably, children often have to wait their turn to say something.

33. Many children start Nursery with attainment in speaking and listening which is below what could be expected and a small number of the children have speech and language delay. Because of these factors, the school needs to be as effective as it can be in promoting speaking and listening skills and in organising the groups and the deployment of the nursery nurses to best support this aspect of learning.

The arrangements for the assessing, recording and reporting of the children's attainment and progress

34. In the year prior to the inspection the school introduced a system of detailed formal assessments in communication, language and literacy, in mathematics and in personal and social development. These are undertaken shortly after the children start the Nursery and then again at the end of their time in Nursery. In this way each child has a 'value added' score at the end of the year, which gives useful indication that the children make good progress. The school is beginning to analyse the data to compare groups of children.

35. It is the ongoing monitoring of attainment which needs review. Each of the four key workers complete checklists of competencies acquired during the time in the Nursery across the stepping stones which lead to the Early Learning Goals in the six areas of learning. There is inconsistency in the record keeping so that some entries are dated, some not, some are annotated and some not with examples of arbitrary checking across the different areas.

36. The intention is that the information gained from the checklists informs the judgements made on children's competencies in their individual Record of Achievement. The links are unclear as the staff plan using the stepping stones, using ongoing assessment through the stepping stones, but then make judgements which do not closely relate to the stepping stones

or the goals. Also in the case of higher attaining children, most of the competencies identified in the Record of Achievement have been met before the end of the first term with no clear scope for recording beyond them.

37. The school has recently started to identify targets for individual children in the Record of Achievement but currently some of these are insufficiently specific, do not always closely relate to the stepping stones and do not identify a review date. Target setting for individuals, groups and cohorts is a clear area for the school to develop. The Record of Achievement also contains the end of year report for parents which is extremely brief, giving little information on the progress the children have made across the areas of learning. This reflects the need for the school to review its arrangements for assessing, recording and reporting children's attainment and progress in order to develop systems which are clear, consistent and, importantly, manageable.

The promotion and monitoring of attendance

38. The children register their attendance at school by collecting their name cards and placing them on the 'We are here today' boards. The school then completes its registers with attendance or absence marks. The school registers do not make any distinction between authorised and unauthorised absence. At the end of the school year each child's report shows the number of sessions attended, but the school does not tally these figures; therefore no formal attendance figure is available. It is important that the school can demonstrate that the funds provided for nursery education give good value for money.

39. Inspection of the 2000/01 registers shows that there is a high level of absence. Examining several typical weeks through the school year, the overall attendance was below 80 per cent. This low level of attendance is unsatisfactory. Many children had regular absence, which would adversely affect their education. In particular, it appeared that attendance was poor on Fridays and other days immediately before holidays. The level of attendance is further reduced by the school having to retain on its register some children who left before the end of the school year.

40. The school waits for children to be away for a week before chasing up unknown absence. Although the school does make some effort to promote good attendance, it is insufficient. Improved monitoring of attendance, including differentiation of unauthorised absence, would enable the school to better target such effort at the worst offenders.

41. The registers are occasionally marked to indicate that a child was late. These late marks are not used for the children who arrive during the initial group time sessions. During the inspection, it was particularly noticeable in the morning that many parents arrived with their children five, 10 or even 15 minutes after the start of school. Regular late arrival results in children missing out on an important part of the school day, when the teachers give their welcomes and consolidate relationships. This is unfair on those children who have arrived promptly, because the group session is constantly disrupted.

42. There may be good reasons for parents arriving late; for example, the necessity to drop off older children at primary schools. Therefore, in addition to putting a higher emphasis on the need for prompt arrival, the school may need to review start and finish times to fit in with the needs of parents.

43. It is essential that the school ensures that parents are aware of the importance of attendance and prompt arrival. Whilst these matters may not be statutory for nursery schools, parents and young children should become accustomed to good attendance; if not this unsatisfactory characteristic could continue when the children start their formal primary education.

The opportunities for children to take books home

44. The school has a very good range of books, such as the excellent selection of Christmas ones seen during the inspection. During the autumn term, most children's first term in Nursery, there are no opportunities for children to take books home except as part of the weekly toy library provision. In the spring term children will be allowed to borrow books, although this will only be on a weekly basis. In order to better promote familiarity with, and a love of books, the school needs to consider maximising the opportunities for children to take books home. This can support the school in its aspirations for children to achieve well in the area of communication, language and literacy.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

The governors' action plan will set out how the areas for improvement identified during the inspection are to be addressed.

In order to further raise standards and the quality of education provided, the governing body, headteacher and staff should:

- ◆ improve the arrangements for group work by:
 - *reviewing the effectiveness of the larger and smaller groups;*
 - *more fully using the good skills of the nursery nurses;*
 - *identifying ways to improve children's involvement and the better promotion of opportunities for speaking and listening;*
 - *promoting talk through the review of children's work;*

- ◆ review and develop the practices for the assessing, recording and reporting children's attainment and progress by:
 - *ensuring that record keeping across the groups is consistent and manageable;*
 - *ensuring that the competencies identified in the Record of Achievement are further developed and more closely match the stepping stones;*
 - *further developing target setting for individual, groups and cohorts, especially in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and in personal, social and emotional development;*
 - *improving the end of year reports so that they give a fuller picture of children's attainment and progress;*

- ◆ improve the promotion and monitoring of punctuality and attendance by:
 - *emphasising the importance of this to parents in all documents and through personal contact;*

- *devising clear means of communicating attendance information to parents in order to promote the importance of this issue;*
- *devising a celebration of good attendance system for parents and children;*
- *the consideration of liaising with neighbouring schools regarding finishing and starting times;*

◆ increase the opportunities for children to take books home.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of sessions observed

23

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

37

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	5	10	8	0	0	0
Percentage	0	22	43	35	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's children

Children on the school's roll

Nursery

Number of children on the school's roll (FTE for part-time children)

27

Number of full-time children known to be eligible for free school meals

11

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

Nursery

Number of children with statements of special educational needs

0

Number of children on the school's special educational needs register

9

English as an additional language

No of children

Number of children with English as an additional language

3

Pupil mobility in the last school year

No of children

Children who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission

14

Children who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving

6

Attendance

Authorised absence

%

School data

N/A

Unauthorised absence

%

School data

N/A

Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and support staff

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	2.1
Number of children per qualified teacher	13.3:1

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	97

Number of children per FTE adult	3.9:1
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

* Notionally there is an overspend but this was with the local education authority's full knowledge and was contained within its overall maintenance budget held for all Nursery schools.

Financial information

Financial year	2000/01
	£
Total income	125,551
Total expenditure	131,594
Expenditure per pupil	3,290
Balance brought forward from previous year	0
Balance carried forward to next year	* - 6,043

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	55
Number of questionnaires returned	24

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	75	25	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	62	34	0	0	4
Behaviour in the school is good.	67	33	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	38	58	4	0	0
The teaching is good.	75	25	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	88	12	0	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	92	4	4	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	58	34	4	0	4
The school works closely with parents.	88	12	0	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	88	12	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	71	29	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	79	21	0	0	0